Diaspora Philanthropy and its Influences: An Australian Perspective

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Abstract

Diaspora philanthropy is a growing global phenomenon. A number of international publications in the last decade have begun to examine diaspora philanthropy for what it might tell us about how diaspora communities give. However, there is a dearth of studies relating to diaspora philanthropy within Australia. This exploratory study seeks to address that gap. This study engages with the emerging field of theoretical and empirical enquiry in relation to diaspora philanthropy by seeking to understand aspects of the phenomenon, via reference to three specified diaspora communities within Australia. We find that available data is largely inconsistent and unreliable. Initial evidence indicates that the genesis of a diaspora influences giving practices. We also find evidence that the giving practices of the sample diaspora in this study change in nature with time and the weakening of original ties that accompanies the passing of generations.

Introduction

Australia is the home of many diaspora (ethnic) communities that have settled there at different times over the last century. While these communities have made Australia home, some have maintained cultural and linguistic links with their origin homeland. Many within these communities retain ties to kin and community in their country of origin, along with a broader sense of obligation to their original homeland. The most quantifiable and measurable form of this sense of obligation is that of remittances from the new community back to the community of origin, particularly in the form of direct monetary transfers to family members. Giving back to the community, however, is not always confined to family members alone and can be more ostensibly philanthropic in its form.

"Diaspora philanthropy" is a growing global phenomenon. A number of international publications in the last ten years (Dunn, 2004; Greene, 2002; Johnson, 2007; Sidel, 2008) have begun to examine diaspora philanthropy for what it might tell us about how diaspora communities give back to the culture/nation from which they

were dispersed. However, there is a noticeable dearth of studies relating to diaspora philanthropy within Australia. Sidel suggests that the characteristics and philanthropic role of established and fast emerging diasporas in Australia remains "woefully unstudied" (2008: 8).

Unlike any other scholarly investigation of which the authors are aware, this study seeks to address diaspora philanthropy from an Australian perspective. More particularly, this exploratory study seeks to understand the extent to which philanthropic activity is occurring in three different diaspora communities in Australia and to ascertain whether giving by these communities is directed primarily back to their culture or country of origin, and/or directed to the needs and interests of their respective diaspora communities within Australia. Following an overview of the role and significance of remittances in general, this paper focuses more specifically on philanthropic giving by diaspora communities in Australia by way of an exploration of qualitative insights drawn from 11 interviews conducted with representatives from three diasporas: Italian – post World War II migration and permanently settled; Vietnamese – a special case of migration in the 1970s as refugees "boat people"; and Chinese – a more recent and very quickly growing diaspora community in Australia.

These particular communities were selected to provide a range of different diaspora experiences in Australia. The three communities are different to one another in a number of aspects, including the length of time the diaspora has been in Australia, and the motivation for its members (as a whole) in relocating from their country of origin. The Italian community represents a substantial and well established community which arrived in Australia in large part before 1970. The Vietnamese community is a more recent diaspora entrant in Australia. The displacement of its members from their home country was driven primarily by political motivations and as political refugees they came from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. The Chinese diaspora has a very long history in Australia, but it is only recently (post the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989) that the Chinese have become the most rapidly growing diaspora community in Australia.

For each of these communities the diaspora spreads well beyond Australia. The focus of this study, however, is specifically on the diaspora in Australia. Representatives were interviewed from each of the three sample communities (Italy N=4; Vietnam N=3; China N=4). A semi-structured interview process was used to enable a consistent range of issues to be covered with each interviewee while also providing for individuals to be able to introduce and discuss issues that they considered of relevance and significance. Those interviewed were all resident in Australia and have either migrated here themselves or are descendants of migrants who left their country of origin to live in Australia. The interviews provide preliminary insights into the giving behaviours, perceptions and patterns of philanthropic giving of three diaspora communities in Australia (established, more recent and new). In this paper the authors begin by addressing a definition of "diaspora philanthropy"; and subsequently outline an Australian historical context for each of the three diaspora investigated. We then provide a summary of insights gained from interviews with representatives of the Italian, Vietnamese and Chinese diasporas and we conclude by

identifying a range of questions that we have identified for further research as a result of this exploratory study.

Diaspora Philanthropy

In this study our focus is primarily on diaspora philanthropy. Both of the constituent terms, diaspora and philanthropy, are generic and contestable. The concept of diaspora philanthropy is, therefore, doubly vexed. The definition of diaspora philanthropy provided by Johnson (2007) is a sound starting point:

> *(1) charitable giving from individuals who reside outside their homeland, who (2) maintain a sense of identity with their home country, (3) give to causes or organisations in that country, and (4) give for public benefit (Johnson, 2007: 5).*

We diverge from this definition only to the extent that we believe "charitable giving" is unnecessarily restrictive. The giving of private funds, for example, to sponsor a cultural visit from the community of origin to the new host country, would not align with a common understanding of "charitable" but it is certainly philanthropic, in as much as it involves the application of private funds for public benefit. This divergence from Johnson, nevertheless, serves to highlight the important inference in the final component of her definition, that as diaspora philanthropy involves giving "for public benefit" it necessarily excludes the majority of remittances that are directed to family members and other individuals (Poirine, 2006; Ratha & Mohapatra, 2009). The difficulty that this gives rise to is that at least some private remittances are used by the beneficiaries to contribute to public benefit outcomes such as building schools or otherwise enhancing educational infrastructure (Lindley, 2008; 2009; Poirine, 2006). Additionally, developing countries in particular view remittances as unquestionably of "public benefit", not the least because of the indirect benefits of remitted funds in increasing the income and purchasing power of beneficiaries in the receiving country (Riddle *et al*, 2009). Nevertheless, given the indirect nature of such benefit and given remittances by definition take the form of "private" payments, for the purposes of this paper, remittances are not included within our conception of diaspora philanthropy.

Diasporas in Australia and the Arrival of Italians, Vietnamese and Chinese

After 1945, the Australian Government developed a clear strategic direction to grow the population of Australia. A large part of this growth was undertaken through an extensive immigration program. The new immigrants came primarily from Britain and Ireland, though unintentionally large communities came from non-English speaking countries and also figured in the flow of migrants to Australia. Large numbers of Southern European immigrants were part of this intake, including immigrants from Italy and Greece, a flow that remained substantial right through to the late 1960s (Davie, 1985).

From the 1970s Australia experienced a significant inflow of Indo-Chinese refugees. One of the largest and highest profile inflows took place as a result of the

exodus of "boat people" fleeing from the War in Vietnam (Blainey, 1985) "with the first main wave of Vietnamese immigrants settling in Australian during 1975–76, after the fall of Saigon on 30 April 1975" (Trood & McNamara, 1994: 290). A new generation of Chinese immigrants to Australia followed, accelerated by the decision of Prime Minister Hawke following the Tiananmen Square protests in China in June 1989, to grant permanent residency to many Chinese students in Australia. This historically recent influx of Chinese people has served to supplement the already present Chinese diaspora whose presence and influence in Australia dates back to the 1800s.

    While the members of these diasporas settled and adapted to new customs, a new way of life and the English language, many sought to maintain connections in various forms with their country of origin. The three ethnic communities chosen for this analysis are unique in terms of their place in Australia's migration history. They are distinct in terms of their ethnicity, the period of their migration and the motivations for their dispersal from their community of origin and settlement in Australia.

Italian Migration to Australia

    Australia did not attract large numbers of Italy-born migrants until the 1950s. Though there were some Italians who arrived in Australia on Captain Phillip's First Fleet in 1788, and small numbers of Italian arrivals up until the mid-19th century, for the first century and a half of white settlement in Australia, the Italian community remained few in number and widely dispersed. At the time of the 1901 Census there were 5,678 Italy-born in Australia and by the time of the 1921 Census this number only increased to 8,135. Between 1928 and 1945, Italian migration to Australia was reduced to a trickle, primarily as a consequence of restrictive quotas on immigration from Southern Europe and the cessation of immigration during the period of World War II. The period after that marked the start of a spectacular increase in the number of Italy-born in Australia. By the 1947 Census the Italy-born population had reached 33,632 or 4.5 per cent of the overseas-born population and had become the fourth largest overseas-born group in Australia.

    The Italians were an integral part of Australia's post-war reconstruction and expansion program. In 1951 a new assisted passage scheme was agreed between Australia and Italy. Between 1951 and 1968 this scheme brought 42,000 Italy-born migrants to Australia. Nevertheless, during the three decades following World War II, the assisted Italy-born immigrants were outnumbered by those who migrated to Australia outside of that scheme, without assistance. By 1954 the Italy-born population had reached 119,897, more than three times its size in 1947 (33,632). By 1971, at the peak of Italian migration to Australia, the Italy-born population reached the figure of 289,476. As a result of this rapid and substantial flow of Italians to Australia, in 1961 Italy became the second largest place of birth for migrants (next to the UK) and remained so until the 1991 Census when New Zealand took its place. In the early 1970s Italian immigration to Australia came to a halt and due to economic buoyancy in Italy at the time, there was an increase in the Italy-born returning to their

home country. This, and the ageing of the Italy-born, led to a decline in the number of Italy-born in Australia. By 1981 numbers had declined to 275,883 and by 2006 to 199,120 (see Table 1).

Table 1: Number and Percentages of Three Communities Born Outside of Australia: 2001–2006

Birthplace	Number in 2001	Number in 2006	Rank in 2006	2001-2006 increase	2001-2006 % change
China*	142,780	206,589	4th	63,809	44.7
Italy	218,718	199,120	5th	19,598	(9.0)
Vietnam	154,830	159,846	6th	5,016	3.2

Source: The People of Australia (Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2008) and DIAC Community Information Summary for China, Italy and Vietnam (undated).
Note: China* excludes Special Administrative Regions (SARs) and Taiwan.

Vietnamese Migration to Australia

The migration of Vietnamese to Australia has largely occurred in the last 30 years, with the scale of the flow to Australia in part a result of Australia committing troops to the Vietnam War in 1965. After the fall of Saigon in 1975, Australia accepted refugees who feared reprisals from the new government and arrivals of Vietnamese in Australia increased quickly. The Vietnam-born population grew from just under 2,500 (2,427) at the Census of 1976, to nearly 160,000 (159,846) in 2006.

The Vietnamese refugees who arrived after 1976 can be categorised in four main groups (DIAC, 2008), with different but, in some cases, overlapping arrival times. The first group, arriving in 1975 were mostly elite Vietnamese, Chinese businessmen and Catholics who faced severe reprisals from the new government. The second group arrived over the period from 1976–78 and comprised a gradually increasing outflow of refugees from camps outside Vietnam. The third group, arriving in 1978, was composed of owners of private businesses closed by the Vietnam Government and other businessmen, especially Chinese, expelled by the Vietnamese Government. The fourth group were those most commonly described as "economic refugees" (DIAC, 2008), mostly small traders, rural and urban workers and the unemployed, who had made their way to refugee camps in Indonesia and Hong Kong and were looking for a more permanent home. It is this group which made up the majority who arrived in Australian waters on boats and became known in Australia as "boat people".

As the Vietnamese refugee crisis was resolved, the refugee component of Vietnam-born arrivals progressively reduced. From 1975 to 1981 almost all of the nearly 50,000 (49,616) Vietnamese entering Australia came as refugees. In the next half decade, from 1981 to 1986, more than 90 per cent of the 45,000 (44,972) arrivals were refugees. This changed significantly to the point that by 1999–2000 the Vietnam-born humanitarian arrivals were less than two per cent of the total Vietnam-born settler arrivals. Large levels of Vietnamese migration had essentially come to an end.

Chinese Migration to Australia

The first recorded presence of Chinese in Australia was of a few domestic servants and labourers who began to arrive in 1827 to satisfy labour shortages during the second quarter of the 19th century. Later, in the 1850s, the Chinese came in large numbers, attracted to the goldfields of Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia. By 1861 the population of the China-born in Australia had reached close to 40,000 (38,258) or 3.4 per cent of the total Australian population. When the goldfields were exhausted many Chinese remained in Australia and moved to the towns and cities where many set up small businesses. Nonetheless, because of their previous immigration history, the China-born were the third largest overseas-born group with 3.5 per cent of the overseas-born population.

Due to immigration restrictions introduced via the *Immigration and Restriction Act 1901* the number of Chinese born in the early part of the 20th century declined significantly. By 1921 the China-born population of Australia had declined to 15,224 or 1.8 per cent of the overseas-born population and by 1947 it had dropped to 6,404 or 0.9 per cent of the overseas-born population. The number of China-born in Australia increased very slowly until the mid 1970s. Most of the Chinese immigrants arriving in the 1970s and early 1980s were born in China but resident in other countries such as Cambodia, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam. The rise in immigration of the China-born that is evident after the 1976 Census can be attributed to the previously referenced abolition of the White Australia Policy and to the Chinese Government relaxing control over Chinese students studying outside of China.

In the mid-1980s the Australian Government actively began marketing educational services overseas and the number of China-born students increased markedly. After the repression of the pro-democracy movement in China in 1989, the Australian Government granted four-year entry permits to all Chinese students in Australia at the time (DIAC, 2008: 48). The China-born population in Australia had surged to 142,780 at the time of the 1991 Census and by 2006 had surpassed 200,000 to make China the fourth most common country of birth for Australians at that time (see Table 1). This means that at the time of the 2006 Census China as a country of birth for Australians ranked only behind Australia, Britain and New Zealand (in that order).

Insights into Diaspora Philanthropy

This study has sought to make initial findings from semi-structured interviews with 11 community leaders in three diaspora communities in Australia: Italian, Vietnamese and Chinese. The authors recognise the limitations of a small number of interviews. We do not believe that it is appropriate to seek to generalise, from the views of the interviews, a set of representative views characteristic of the communities they respectively represent. The views gathered from these interviews do however provide initial insights into what lies behind both the commonalities and differences in the ways in which diaspora community members in Australia approach giving.

There is a range of varying ethnic, socio-economic and temporal differences in the make-up of each of three diaspora communities that are the subject of this study. In the case of the Italians and Vietnamese, there is at least a superficial homogeneity with distinctions within a particular diaspora not always evident to the wider community. Nevertheless, the Italians tend to hold strong regional allegiances and the Vietnamese hold differing degrees of ideological hostility to the contemporary communist government. In the case of the Chinese diaspora, the rubric "Chinese" covers an enormous diversity of nations (including Chinese from Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia) and an array of diverse ethnic groups from within these countries.

Thematic analysis of the data gathered via the interviews enabled the authors to combine a multitude of contributing influences to identify three key themes pertinent to the antecedents of diaspora philanthropy. In the section that follows we explore these themes under the headings of Identity, Family and Connections. While the views expressed by the interviewees were descriptions of dynamic histories, influences and processes which inevitably intermesh with one another, the themes identified were both persistent and consistent across the interviews conducted.

Identity: "not a one-size-fits-all"

In the views expressed by the interviewees for this study, a significant influence over the way in which a community gives, is the way in which a diaspora conceives of itself, or more specifically the way in which members of a diaspora conceive of the culture of the diaspora to which they belong. It is important to emphasise the differential nature of identity even within an individual diaspora, as one of the clear insights gained from the interviewees is the significant diversity that characterises diaspora identity. The differences are not merely semantic. Within the Chinese community for example there are significant perceived differences:

> It's not one-size fits-all with Chinese. People may have come from Hong Kong, from Mainland China, from Taiwan, from Singapore, from Malaysia, from a number of countries before they came here to Australia, so even ethnic Chinese will have different groupings and different backgrounds (Chinese I, 2010).

In addition to articulating the cultural differences that are associated with geographic origins, this same interviewee provided an incisive profile of the way in which the Chinese community itself differentiates more finely between its members:

> [T]hose people we call "ABC" – Australian Born Chinese – are not very much linked-up with China, they are not. They are very Anglo **if I may say so**, very Australian (Chinese I, 2010 – emphasis added).

The use by this interviewee of the qualifying statement "if I may say so", highlights that the ABC differentiator has a pejorative connotation. The identity of the speaker is very closely aligned to country of birth and this differentiated identity is described as explicitly impacting on philanthropic behaviour. This insight highlights that within a broad diaspora community there are many differing approaches towards

engagement with their homeland, and by implication, with their resultant behaviours in relation to giving and to giving to their community of origin in particular.

The importance of identity by way of differences in geographic origins and the impact of these identity differences on giving were also expressed by members of the Italian diaspora. Unlike the Chinese, there are not different countries of origin, but regional differences are nevertheless keenly felt and integral to the sense of identity of many. One of the interviewees articulated the "divide" and addressed what that might mean for giving:

> *We are from the northern part of Italy and have quite a different perspective [on giving] from what someone from southern Italy … they probably do send a fair bit of money back to Italy but a lot of the migrants that came from the north came out here to attempt to do something better for future generations, so in doing that they are trying to focus more on the Italians in Australia rather than on the Italians back in Italy (Italian II, 2010).*

This interviewee clearly identifies with a particular part of her country of origin (the northern part) and also has a sense of pride in the focus of that community on directing its giving for the betterment of future generations in the country of their settlement.

The differentiation expressed by the Vietnamese refugees on the other hand did not include a geographic dimension. The important unifying element of identity for this diaspora is the circumstances which led to their relocation: their status as refugees. "[We are] a refugee community and refugee communities are quite different from a migrant community in the sense that they hold strong political views" (Vietnamese III, 2010). This refugee status is keenly felt – "they feel they need to return some of the good things that they have received when they came here empty handed" – and this has its own implications for the philanthropy of this diaspora:

> *We are refugees. We get away from the regime … In our culture if we get something we must find opportunity to repay for it. So therefore most of us in one form or another we find ways to repay back to Australia, so in the community view it is first priority that we repay to this country (Vietnamese I, 2010).*

From this quote and similar sentiments expressed by other Vietnamese interviewees, identification as refugees is significant for giving practices. The view articulated is that being political refugees granted refuge in a new country, gives rise to a heightened sense of reciprocal obligation which impacts directly on their giving behaviour by way of inclination to give primarily in the country that has accepted them. For subsequent generations, born in the country of settlement of those who themselves sought and received refuge, the strength of this emotional tie may not be so intense.

Family: "came here for a better life"

The importance of the family, both immediate and extended, and the strength of ties to family members both in the community of origin and the country of settlement is clearly a strong influence over the giving patterns of diaspora members interviewed. Where family members are in need, there is a shared sense of familial obligation for those who are better off to provide support. In the early periods of dislocation and/or relocation of diaspora members to another country, it is frequently those who remain behind who are in the most need and to who the obligation is most keenly felt: "Vietnamese people have no choice but to help the family out in Vietnam" (Vietnamese II, 2010).

Again, the passage of time tends to have an impact as both the needs of distant family members and the strength of the ties to them diminish:

> *Chinese people are very much of family thinking … so that is why they regularly sending money to their family members, it doesn't matter how many years they have been in Australia (Chinese II, 2010).*

The interviewee, while having a clear sense of familial obligation, captures the sentiment expressed by many of the interviewees of each of the communities. With the Italian community representatives it was clear that personal remittance payments are no longer relevant. Sending money back to family members in Italy "happened a lot in the past" (Italian I, 2010) and in particular in the first two decades of migration, but "that was a generation or so ago".

While the Vietnamese diaspora is more recently settled in Australia, a similar pattern was conveyed with initial refugees working very hard, working multiple jobs "not for themselves" but to do so that they could "send money back to support the family" (Vietnamese III, 2010). The recentness and rawness of the Vietnamese experience of hardship points both to the role of remittances and a broader impact on giving:

> *Because we are refugees we come to Australia or to other countries with nothing, with empty hands. We received a lot of help and generosity from other people; therefore we understand the difficulties and we understand the needs of our people and our country. When it is time to give I am quite confident that in the normal circumstances that we really do more to help, without even asking (Vietnamese I, 2010).*

The question of the influence on giving behaviours of diaspora communities with the passage of generations saw a high level of agreement amongst the interviewees for this study. There was a shared perception that generation change has an homogenising effect. As a result of the very process of being brought up in, socialised into, the community in which they live, those who are born in the country of diaspora settlement tend to feel more Australian and feel a diminished affiliation with their homeland, relative to their parents. Nevertheless, in the words of one interviewee "it's still very much in everyone's minds and hearts that the family came here for a better life" (Italian III, 2010).

For each of the diaspora communities interviewed, there is a strong sense that those born in the community of origin of the diaspora have the strongest ties to that community. This occurs at a practical level as those born in another place are most likely to continue to have family in that community to whom they feel close ties and a strong sense of familial obligation. The broader emotional tie to the community and/or country of origin is also strongest for those born in the country of origin of their diaspora and settled in a new country. It is the shared perspective of the interviewees that, in each of their communities, the strength of the familial tie to the community of origin is lessened for those who are born in the country of resettlement, in this case Australia. This translates into giving behaviours which reflect the dual sense of commitment and obligation, such that the Australia-born will continue to give to the community of origin of their family and will also give locally because "they have an affiliation with a cause, not because they are Italian or any other nationality" (Italian IV, 2010).

Connections: "it's not what you know, it's who you know"

Connections to family and friends in the home land, connections to family and friends in the host land, and connections to broader diasporic community in both locations play a part in the giving behaviours of diaspora community members. For the Vietnamese community, the discussion of giving was clearly located within the refugee experience and emotional wounds associated with the perilous journey by boat to escape a regime they despised. This distrust of the ruling authorities was very significant when it comes to their giving to individuals back in Vietnam. One of the community representatives was almost apologetic for providing familial remittances, as he indicates that doing so indirectly but almost inevitably assists the Vietnamese state:

> *You know the Vietnamese people just send money to their families and this money will then be exchanged into the Vietnamese currency; within real values it doesn't have much value at all but the dollars will eventually end up in the officials' pockets (Vietnamese I, 2010).*

While some struggle with the inevitability of financial help to their family being skimmed off by officials, for others the objection is so strongly held that they refuse to direct any funds back to Vietnam or to associate with the Vietnamese state in any way whatsoever.

The relationship with the state and with the institutions of the community of origin was also of significance for the interviewed representatives of the Chinese and Italian diaspora communities. For the Chinese interviewed (noting that they do not originate from Taiwan or Hong Kong) the re-emergence of the Chinese state as a powerful economic and political entity makes it one with which many Chinese wish to associate. In the words of one interviewee "there is a ground swell of support for the promotion of China" and the Chinese Government is acting to capitalise on its diaspora, so that "many of us [influential Chinese living in Australia] are invited back … as a study group" (Chinese I, 2010). The reflection of this interviewee was that this policy of re-engaging the diaspora with China is being successful as evidenced in

recent times with the responses of the Chinese diaspora in Australia to natural disasters in China: "they all make donations … [many] large donations".

The importance of the dynamics of personal connections and relationships (guanxi), that are integral to Chinese society, is not however entirely unique to the Chinese. As one of its members noted "it's the whole line – it's not what you know, it's who you know – is a fairly international thing" (Chinese IV, 2010). Nevertheless, the inclination to use giving as "one way of … building businesses [and] establishing connections at high level" (Chinese IV, 2010) is not synonymous with a trust in the state or its institutions. To the contrary, two of the Chinese interviewees expressed the sentiment that the lack of confidence of Chinese people in local authorities in particular means that when money is sent to China when "there is a flood or something like that, money will be channelled through the family and be given to the appropriate organisations, not directly" (Chinese III, 2010).

The specifics were expressed very differently for the Italian diaspora, but the underlying importance of the trust of diaspora members in the public institutions of their country of origin was of no less importance. One of the interviewees was clear in his analysis that the public giving from the Italian diaspora in Australia to public projects in Italy is significantly curtailed by perceptions of weak public institutions in Italy and a "quite chaotic" central government. The implications of this were identified as contributing to the greater emphasis placed on family and personal networks, and as having a direct impact on Italian diaspora giving:

> *[Gifts of money] almost always would be to a family member or to an organisation with strong connections to a family member ... [as] public institutions are seen as being relatively bureaucratic and weak, not something that really is a natural destination for philanthropic funding (Italian IV, 2010).*

What needs to be highlighted is the diversity of perspectives that can and do exist within any diaspora community and that while some diaspora members will be significantly influenced in their philanthropic behaviour by their very ethnicity and their membership of a diaspora, others will and do see such membership as irrelevant in terms of how and where they direct their giving.

Conclusion

This preliminary investigation into diaspora giving based on views from the three diaspora communities consulted reveals important similarities and equally important divergences. The data provided by in-depth interviews with eleven representatives from the Italian, Vietnamese and Chinese communities is but an initial step into the world of diaspora giving within an Australian context. What emerges from all three communities is that the nature of diaspora giving is inspired by the circumstances of the community, the period of its stay in Australia, the homogeneity of the diaspora community itself and the nature of its dispersal from the community of origin and subsequent settlement in Australia. The long settled Italian diaspora has moved away from individual family/kin payments (remittances) as its members have

become more settled in Australia. Members of the Vietnamese diaspora continue to provide support to family members back in Vietnam, but they do so with both suspicion and bitterness about the inevitability of the Vietnamese state appropriating at least some of their intended gifts. The diverse Chinese diaspora similarly support family back in their community of origin and at least some of the community members in Australia are seeking to use giving as one of the ways in which they can establish potentially lucrative connections with people of influence in China.

It is however neither desirable nor possible from this initial study to draw generalisations about diaspora giving per se. This exploratory study does however point to a number of questions that can now be investigated more explicitly. They include: Are family traditions and practices in relation to giving a stronger influence over diaspora philanthropy than the traditions which prevail in the community of origin as a whole? Does the reason why a community relocated make a substantial difference to the giving behaviours of a diaspora community? Are members of a diaspora community born in the country of settlement of their parents/ancestors (Australia-born) significantly more likely to direct their giving to beneficiaries in the country of their own birth, irrespective of their community of origin?

This study suggests that while the nature of diaspora giving is highly variable, the form that giving takes in diaspora communities is broadly evolutionary. As the passage of time and generations weakens the strength of ties to the community of origin diminish. The indications are that this gives rise to a shift in giving away from remittances and towards broader community good. The indications from this sample is also that the passage of time sees a broad shift in diaspora giving from being directed in general terms less explicitly towards the community of origin and more generally to diaspora and other causes in the community of settlement. That said, responses to disasters which give rise to personal need in the community of origin, seem not to lose their valence in triggering generous diaspora giving.

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