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INTERMARRIAGE AND ASSIMILATION OF CHINESE AMERICANS

By

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ABSTRACT

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1980 Census data were used to examine the tendency for interracial marriage with whites by Chinese Americans in five SMSAs of California. Exogamy was the measure of assimilation in the U.S. A very low rate of intermarriage with whites was found. The odds of intermarriage with white Americans were greater for Chinese women than for Chinese men and greater for Chinese women born in the U.S. than for Chinese women born outside the U.S. The odds of intermarriage with whites were greater for those with some college than for those with lesser amounts of education. The multivariate logit regressions suggested that the effects of education were independent of the effects of gender or country of birth.

Finally, among endogamous Chinese, native-born tended to marry native-born; and foreign-born tended to marry foreign-born. These results suggested that college attendance promotes assimilation of Chinese Americans into U.S. society through outmarriage to whites and that this

Chan Kai-tin

tendency is also encouraged by the second-class status that women occupy in the Chinese culture.

This study concludes with suggestions for future research on exogamy among Chinese Americans. It is suggested that the Chinese community may become internally more differentiated and that exogamy may become less common as the numbers of Chinese immigrants continue to expand in response to the Immigration Law of 1965.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my daughter, my wife, my sisters and my parents.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables	v
List of Figures	vi

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	
The problem -----	1
Assimilation and Exogamy -----	4
Statement of Hypotheses -----	14
Methodology	
Data -----	18
Dependent Variable -----	19
Independent (Test) Variable -----	20
Control Variables -----	20
Findings	
The Relationship of Gender to Exogamy -----	23
The Relationships of Education, Age at first Marriage and Country of Birth to Exogamy -----	25
The Relationships of Country of Birth between Chinese Husband and Chinese Wife -----	29
Discussion -----	30
References -----	41

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Tables</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Interracial marriage rates of Chinese for 1980	35
2. Characteristics of Chinese men and women in study sample	36
3. Logit regression for female Chinese exogamy	37
4. Logit regression for male Chinese exogamy	38
5. Distributions of endogamously wedded Chinese represents by country of birth of husband and of wife	39

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Gordon's process of assimilation	40

INTRODUCTION

The problem

Assimilation of minority groups in America has been a core issue in race and minority studies. Most of these studies (Alba, 1986; Blau, 1984; Burma and others, 1984; Clifford, 1982 and Glick, 1970) merely focus on the Black, Jew, Mexican or American-Indian. Little has been done on the Asian, especially the Chinese. Chinese were the first Asians to come to the United States. Their migration dates from the middle of the 19th century. Theoretically after over a hundred years, they should have mixed or melted to a great extent into the host society as did the German and Irish before them. Therefore, a study of Chinese assimilation should reveal the patterns by which an immigrant group adapts to a new social environment and should suggest policies by which the host society can facilitate that adaptation.

The early Chinese sojourners, mostly young men, maintained a psychological and social separateness from the larger society and braced themselves against the full impact of the dominant society's values, norms, attitudes and behavior patterns. What they desired was to make their living and save up enough money to return home (Kitano 1984; Lyman 1977; Yuan 1963; Lee 1960 and Hsu 1948). They had no intention to settle in the "New World". However their

industrious and hard work subjected them to massive anti-Chinese hostilities and violences.

The general hostile attitude, as suggested by Lyman (1977), Yuan (1963), Sung (1963) and Lee (1960), triggered a strong and in-depth awareness of collective discrimination which drove the Chinese immigrants together into the isolated ghetto - Chinatown, where they preserved their own style of living, cultural values and norms. This exclusive culture and group attachment functioned not only as a defensive mechanism, protecting the Chinese from white hostilities but further reinforced their sojourner attitudes and prevented them from a complete assimilation into American society. Although their incentive to return to China was inhibited by the Communist takeover in 1949, they still hoped to return home one day.

Even though Chinese have settled in America for more than a century, they have not completely assimilated into American society (Lee 1960). The primary reasons suggested are: 1) the extent of anti-Chinese harassment; 2) the vested interests of Chinatown elites in maintaining an exclusive community and culture. Chinatown provides not only a haven of refuge but also Chinese labor markets and clientele which foster a parallel economy (Nee and Wong 1985; Light 1984; Li 1976; and Lee 1960).

Kuo and Lin (1977) studied the assimilation of Chinese Americans in Washington, D.C., by means of their socioeconomic attainment and their orientation to Chinese

cultural values. They used three distinctive indicators to measure the degree of assimilation: namely, Chinese Americans' affection toward China and Chinese culture, racial identification, and sustenance of traditional Chinese values. They found that socioeconomic attainment had a negligible effect on the indicators of centrifugal tendencies, when the level of education was controlled. Their finding implied no relationship between socioeconomic attainment and assimilation; that is, Chinese Americans who had successfully attained high socioeconomic status were still very "Chinese" in the three dimensions. The relatively slow pace of assimilation among Chinese Americans was attributed to their strong Chinese friendship ties and subculture. In other words, the strong group attachment hindered Chinese assimilation. These results, consistent with Lee's (1960) theory, suggested that Chinese Americans had not fully fused into the host society, even though some of them had successfully attained their "American dream".

On the contrary, early studies strongly suggested that both native and foreign born Chinese have been successful in assimilating into American culture and behavior. For example, Loh's (1945: 160-173) Philadelphia study pointed out that Chinese enjoyed the same kind of leisure and hobbies as did Americans, and adopted American first names for their offspring. Cheng (1948:203-323) noted that many Chinese had adopted American baseball, American food, Christianity, as well as religious and secular American

holidays. Abel and Hsu (1948) argued that the acceptance of American customs and social rituals has modified the Chinese personality structure, such that native born Chinese behave more like American born Caucasians. Fong (1965) in his study of 336 Chinese college students concluded that as Chinese become progressively more removed from their ancestral culture and as they have greater contact with the dominant American culture, they would fully assimilate and internalize American perceptual norms. What these earlier writers implied was that adoption of American hobbies, language, diet, religion and holidays transformed the Chinese into Americans both psychologically and behaviorally. These contrasting results might confuse our understanding of Chinese Americans' assimilation. It is fruitful to ask, in this respect, how far did Chinese Americans assimilate into the host society?

Assimilation and Exogamy

The importance of intermarriage in the field of migrant assimilation has often been stressed. Price and Gubrzycki (1962) argued that intermarriage is the strongest test of group cohesion. It is the last stage in the total assimilation of two or more ethnic groups; and even if intermarriage may not be directly relevant to economic, residential or other types of social integration, it is still the most useful index of complete assimilation.

On the other hand, some have argued that a high rate of

intermarriage is not always accompanied by a high rate of assimilation. Marcson (1950) thus noted that some old "assimilated" migrant groups in the U.S. had maintained a lower intermarriage rate than new ones, a fact which suggested that intermarriage might be a function of factors other than assimilation.

Although there is no agreement among scholars on the exact strength of intermarriage as a measurement of assimilation, there is, however, a general recognition that intermarriage is an important aspect which needs special treatment (Choi 1975; Schmitt 1965; Price and Gubrzycki 1962; and Merton 1941). In the case of Chinese migrants in the United States, where they have noticeably distinct features and cultural traits, intermarriage represents a significant stage in the assimilation process.

What does it mean to be fully assimilated into the majority society? For the Anglo-Saxon conformists, the central assumption is the superiority of the behavior and values of the Anglo-Saxon core group, such that immigrants must conform to the core culture. It is the immigrant's primary responsibility to learn the English language and the core group's values and behavioral patterns. Indeed, it is a one way adaptation, for the Anglo-Saxons are not expected to adopt any of the immigrant's ancestral culture and values.

The melting pot model, a more idealistic goal for American society, proposed that foreign-born and native-born

people in the United States would blend together culturally and biologically into a new people and a new civilization. The concept of this model is perhaps a noble one but in practice, as Kitano put it, is "difficult to form much more than a vague notion of how it would work" (1973: 68). This perspective dominated most of the early racial studies.

Pluralists on the other hand disagreed with the goal of inevitable integration or assimilation of different racial and ethnic groups. Rather, they believed culturally diverse racial or ethnic groups could live in harmony so that distinct cultural practices and identities of each ethnic group should and could be retained within a society.

Racial integration, however, is a complex and multi-dimensional issue, and no single model can account for a thorough and complete explanation. Even though each ethnic group has retained its own cultural distinction, a considerable degree of assimilation would likely occur as a result of massive intergroup contact. Similarly, Chinese Americans on the one hand retain a pluralistic style of living which is characterized by a strong group attachment and racial identity, while on the other hand they exhibit a considerable degree of acculturation into the host society. That is why previous studies by Loh, Cheng, Abel and Hsu, and Fong concluded some Chinese Americans had assimilated successfully in the host society.

Despite the weakness of each model, many scholars tried to develop a general theory or generalization on intergroup

relations. R. E. Park's (1950) race relation cycle is the typical attempt. He suggested that immigrants go through an inevitable process of contact, competition, accommodation and eventual assimilation. Park believed it is an ongoing, progressive, inevitable "interpenetration and fusion" process in which "persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments and attitudes of other persons or groups, and by sharing their experiences and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life" (Park 1969 p.665). He also believed, a common language and extensive primary contacts among groups are crucial to facilitate assimilation.

In fact, Park's theory is based on the melting pot ideology. It emphasizes the "adaptive capacity" (Wagley and Harris, 1958) of the immigrant and their ancestral culture. Park equated assimilation with fusion and regarded the continuing existence of identifiable ethnic groups in America as a sign of non-assimilation. However Park revised the theory in 1937 to acknowledge three possible outcomes of ethnic assimilation: a caste system such as in India; a complete assimilation; and a permanent institutionalization of minority status within a larger society. Park's later emphasis on alternate outcomes combines the ideas of melting pot and pluralism.

Banton's (1967) writings are another attempt to explain racial relations. He saw six different stages of assimilation, namely: the peripheral contact, institutionalized contact, acculturation, integration,

assimilation or amalgamation, and pluralism. These orders are merely guidelines or concepts without any concrete measures and are expansions of Park's race relation cycle.

Gordon's (1964: 71) multiple stages of assimilation, on the other hand, provide more concrete and realistic measures of the immigrant's extent of assimilation. Assimilation according to Gordon can be dissected into several different dimensions which operate to some degree independently of each other. The crucial factor in facilitating assimilation is the extent of primary or intimate relations between core group members and immigrants or their descendents. Gordon distinguished assimilation into two main types which are based on the degree of primary relations involved; namely acculturation and structural assimilation, as shown in figure 1.

Acculturation or behavioral assimilation refers to the change of immigrants' cultural patterns to those of the host society. Gordon asserted that it is the far most common type of assimilation to occur and may take place when no other type occurs either simultaneously or later. Moreover, it varies inversely with discrimination and spatial social segregation but may nevertheless occur in spite of these delaying phenomena.

Gordon distinguished between intrinsic and extrinsic acculturation. Intrinsic changes are those affecting the vital ingredients of the ethnic group which are essential to its historical-cultural heritage. They include "religious

belief, religious practice, ethical values, musical tastes, folk recreational patterns and a sense of a common past" (Gordon 1964:79). Extrinsic changes are external to the core of a group's ethnic heritage. These include changes in "dress, manner, patterns of emotional expression and language pronunciation" (Gordon 1964:79). Extrinsic acculturation occurs more readily than does intrinsic acculturation (Yinger, 1981; Gordon, 1964). As such the results of Loh, Cheng, Abel and Hsu, and Fong documented the large degree of extrinsic acculturation of Chinese Americans, as does the study of Chinese Americans by Weiss (1971) in Sacramento. But these works are less able to record intrinsic acculturation for this ethnic group.

Acculturation is a necessary, but insufficient condition for structural assimilation. Structural assimilation, as defined by Gordon, is the "entrance of the minority group into the primary institutions of the core society at the primary level. This process spans the life cycle of the individual, from children's play group through the college fraternity to the grave. It involves the entrance of immigrants and their descendants into social cliques, organizations, institutional activities and civic life of the receiving society" (Gordon 1964:81). Once structural assimilation occurs, either simultaneously with or subsequent to acculturation, all other types of assimilation will naturally follow (Gordon 1964:81).

It is critical, at this point, to distinguish between

two kinds of relationships, primary and secondary. Primary relationships are created by personal friendship patterns, frequent interfamily visits, communal worship, communal recreation and the most important element -- mutual acceptance of each other. Therefore they are warm, intimate and personal. Secondary relationships are found in the general activities of civic life such as earning a living, carrying out political responsibility and engaging in the instrumental affairs of the larger society (Gordon 1967:411). They are relatively impersonal and segmental. Thus only primary relations would facilitate a complete assimilation while secondary relations might retain the minority group in its pluralistic position.

The most appropriate indicator of primary relations is marriage, since it is the most intimate and personal relation between individuals in U.S. society. When marriage occurs between two distinct ethnic or racial group members, it signifies a mutual acceptance between the two members, and symbolizes a weakening of ethnic identity for the minority group. Therefore it is difficult to maintain an ethnically pluralistic society when there is extensive mating across group lines (Kitano and others 1984). Intermarriage then, shall be used in this study as an indicator of structural assimilation.

Studies in intermarriage and assimilation between ethnic groups had been done as early as in the dawn of the century. The study of Down (1911), Drachsler (1920), Park

(1921), Davie (1936), Bossard (1939), Kolivosky (1953), Kitano and others (1984), and Yinger (1984) suggested intermarriage is the most vital and realistic index in measuring the extent of assimilation between ethnic groups. They asserted that there is a positive relation between the intermarriage rate and the degree of assimilation.

Merton (1941) suggested the significance of cultural constraint on intermarriage. He proposed that the frequency of intermarriage depends on the limitation of cultural norms and social conditions of a society. Norms, he implied, could be either prescriptive or proscriptive, that is either encouraging or discouraging ingroup or outgroup marriage. Such norms might control intermarriage directly or indirectly. Since each society or culture has its own taboo or norm governing the choice of mates for its members, the degree of limitation may vary from society to society or culture to culture. Intermarriage in this sense, could be interpreted not only as a break-down of barriers between the two ethnic groups, but also as a change in the structural functioning of institutions in both groups.

Merton's proposal put forward the significance of cultural norms in governing the selection of an out-group mate. The mechanism of favoring an ingroup mate not only denotes the strength of cultural effect but also "increasing group solidarity and supporting the social structure by helping to fix social distances which obtain between groups" (Merton, 1941:363). Merton's proposition on the importance

of cultural constraint on intermarriage was further supported by Hollingshead (1980) and Bean and Bradshaw (1970). Merton also asserted that the strength of cultural norms could be hampered by social conditions, such as the size, sex and age compositions of the groups in question as well as the contact between their members. These propositions presumed that even though the cultural norms are strong enough to control its members' choice, the demographic conditions of that group may counter the norms. For example, smaller groups tend to have a higher outmarriage rate than larger ones because there are insufficient potential mates for ingroup marriage (Blau, et al. 1984 and Labov and Jacobs 1986). Blau and others (1984) also found that the degree of heterogeneity in the community was directly related to the rate of outmarriage. Although Blau and Merton's perspectives did provide a probable account of intermarriage between groups, their purely cultural and structural portrait may not be adequate to explain the variations of outmarriage by the Chinese. Any theory of outmarriage must deal with racial discrimination.

As Lyman (1977), Yuan (1971) and Lee (1960) suggested, the early racial discrimination and anti-Chinese experiences forced the Chinese to form their own ethnic community which in turn consolidated a strong group attachment protecting them from extensive harassment. Yinger (1981: 253) suggested "group solidarity among members of a group may

block identification with an open society", as in the Chinese case. It is not surprising that while most Chinese descendants, both native and foreign born live away from Chinatown, they still maintain a close link with the Chinese community. This may explain why even most Chinese with a relatively high socioeconomic status and educational level do not show high rate of structural assimilation into the host society (Lyman 1977, Kuo and Lin 1977, and Yuan 1971).

Kitano and his colleagues (1984) studied Asian intermarriage in Los Angeles, 1979; they found that Chinese were second only to Japanese in having the highest outmarriage rate. Outmarriage was more likely to be with non-Asians (e.g.: White, Black) than with other Asians (e.g.: Japanese, Korean). Compared with Burma's (1963) result, a significant increase of outgroup marriage has been found since 1959. However the study of Kitano and others merely focused on Los Angeles, leaving the rest of Chinese Americans untouched. As Alba (1986) argued, if a small number of individuals marry across the ethnic boundary, it does not change the boundary or weaken ethnicity; but an extensive intermarriage among one ethnic group with the others signifies a massive weakening of boundary maintenance. Therefore by definition such boundary changes mean changes to ethnicity as well. The high intermarriage rate in their study should be envisioned merely as an individualistic conception.

Statement of Hypotheses

The objective of this study is to assess how far Chinese have assimilated into American society. Are there any differences among Chinese regarding their extent of assimilation? Which Chinese are most likely to assimilate and lessen the group ties? Will there be any difference between native-born and foreign-born Chinese?

To assess the pace of assimilation of Chinese Americans, intermarriage between Chinese Americans and Caucasians is employed as the index of measurement. Since intermarriage with other racial groups is greatly proscribed by Chinese culture, it is hypothesized in this regard that a low rate of intermarriage with Caucasians is expected among both native-born and foreign-born Chinese. Thus the lower the rate of intermarriage between Chinese and Caucasians, the slower the pace of assimilation among the Chinese will be.

Traditionally, sons in Chinese culture are the legal heirs to family property and bear the family name. The concern about continuity and stability of lineage ancestors gave rise to the preference of sons over daughters. This preference carries both advantages and obligations; the responsibilities include supporting the parents in their old age and performing the rites of ancestor worship. So as to protect their economic stake, the elders strongly discourage their sons from marrying outsiders. Daughters on the other hand are raised to be "outsiders" and their status in the

family is inferior to that of sons. They are relatively free from traditional and cultural constraints. Therefore a difference of intermarriage rate is expected between male and female Chinese.

Hypothesis 1: The odds of exogamy is lower among the male Chinese than among female Chinese.

Education is held to be a force for acculturation (Kuo and Lin, 1977; Gordon, 1964). It brings individuals into contact with a more ethnically heterogeneous circle of classmates. Education not only provides knowledge or skills but also facilitates the development of both primary and secondary relationships among students. However, a major distinction should be made between college and the preceding stages of the educational system. A college education is generally thought to impart critical values and ideas which have presumed to be destructive of traditional forces like ethnicity (Feldman and Newcomb 1969). College education is considered to be the most favorable factor which promotes interracial relation than do primary and secondary education. Moreover, the traditional male dominance and anti-feminist ideas of Chinese cultural practice subjects the female Chinese to extensive social inequality. For instance, it is generally believed that, it is a feminine virtue for the female to receive no education and to be submissive to her husband or mother-in-law. Parents are not

willing to invest in the daughter's education as a result. Therefore, it is assumed that those Chinese who have a liberal and critical college education will be more likely to weaken their attachment to the Chinese culture and group and to develop both primary and secondary relationships with those outside Chinese culture.

Hypothesis 2: The higher the level of education,
the the greater the odds of
outmarriage.

It has been generally believed that Chinese married at a youthful age. Previous studies by Buck (1934) and Chen (1946) revealed that the average age at first marriage was 20.5 years for men and 18.2 years for women. Yet C.Y.Choi's (1975) Melbourne study found that Chinese-Australians were married at an older average age. He found that almost half of the Chinese were married before 25 years of age, very few married between the ages 25 to 29, and almost none at ages 30 and over. Schmitt (1966) in his Hawaiian study found that people who intermarry are somewhat older at the time of their marriage than those who marry within their own ethnic group.

The studies suggested Chinese who settled outside or were born outside China tended to marry later than those who married in China. However, as Choi (1975) indicated, the keen competition for marriage partners within the Chinese community does not favor endogamy, and this disfavor grows

stronger with the age of the prospective brides and grooms. These considerations lead us to Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 3: The higher the age at first marriage, the greater the odds of outmarriage.

Nativity is considered as a crucial factor affecting the likelihood for one to marry inside or outside his/her ethnic group. Nativity not only symbolizes a person's place of birth but also his/her cultural heritage and generational status. Lee (1960) and Fong (1965) suggested that, as native-born Chinese or the second and third generation Chinese assimilate into American society, they might be more willing to deviate from their traditional cultural norms and pick up those mainstream cultural values. Kitano and others (1984) in their study of Asian intermarriage in Los Angeles, 1977, found that a high rate of intermarriage was expected among those native-born Chinese than among foreign-born. Since native-born Chinese are more exposed to American culture in their socialization than their foreign-born counterparts, the former are more likely to assimilate into the country. Therefore the native-born Chinese are probably more willing to wed outside the ethnic minority group.

Hypothesis 4: The outmarriage rate is higher among native-born Chinese than foreign-born Chinese.

Stevens and Swicegood (1987), in their study of mother tongue shift and ethnic endogamy, found that nativity is strongly related to the probability of endogamy. That is, foreign born respondents are more inclined to marry within their ethnic group than are native-born respondents. However they did not examine further the nativity and other characteristics of those endogamous couples. Previous studies by Choi (1975), Lee (1960) and Fong (1965) suggested that persons with similar socialization and value orientation would tend to associate with persons of similar cultural traits. Thus a higher endogamous rate is expected among members with similar nativity and personal characteristics.

Hypothesis 5: When inmarriage occurs within the Chinese community, native-born tend to marry native-born and foreign-born tend to marry foreign-born.

METHODOLOGY

Data

The data for this study were the five percent public use sample randomly drawn from the 1980 Census of households in California. Since the Gold Rush of 1849, the State of California has been a site of Chinese-immigrant settlement in the U.S. and a locus of overt and covert acts of discrimination against them (Lyman, 1977; Lee, 1960). The

overt acts included the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 by the U.S. Congress. The anti-Chinese immigration laws were not effectively rolled back until the passage of the Kennedy-Johnson Immigration Act of 1965, which abolished the quota system of limiting immigrants according to their national origin. After 1965, the influx of Asians to the U.S. soared; and during the 1970s decade, the number of Asian Americans increased more rapidly (141%) than did Blacks (17%) or Hispanics (39%) (Gardner, Robey, and Smith, 1985: 3). The largest share of Chinese, in addition to other Asian Americans, lived in California as of the 1980 U.S. Census. Thus, our focus on Chinese living there in interracial marriages to whites in 1980 showed how much the social distance between Chinese and white Americans had lessened after decades of inequality. The long form of the 1980 U.S. Census questionnaire asked respondents for their country of birth, racial/ethnic group membership, gender, level of education, marital status, age at first marriage (if relevant), and relationship to other household members. Therefore, the long form of the 1980 Census questionnaire in California contained all data necessary to test our five hypotheses.

Dependent Variable

Since the emphasis of this study was the structural assimilation of a minority racial group with a majority racial group, the index of assimilation was the marriage of

Chinese to white spouses. As such, the dependent variable was scored: 0) if both spouses were Chinese; or 1) if one spouse was Chinese and the other was white. Exogamous marriages linking Chinese spouses to other nonwhite spouses were excluded, for these unions symbolized primary-group relations between two minority groups rather than between a minority and a majority.

Independent (Test) Variables

The independent variables of this study were named in the five hypotheses: sex; education (1 = high school or less; 2 = some college or more); age at first marriage (1 = under age 30; 2 = age 30 or more); and nativity (0 = foreign-born; 1 = U.S.- born).

Control Variables

It was necessary to control the effects of other factors which were correlated with an independent variable and the dependent variable and which might thus confound the association between them. These controls were made by exclusions. For example, one such factor was the number of times a respondent had ever been married, because the factors determining exogamy in remarriages might differ from those in first marriages. Hence, we excluded all marital unions which were not the first for both spouses.

The causal factors shaping Chinese exogamy to white Americans apply only to Chinese marriages occurring within

U.S. borders. In other words, if Chinese people are married outside the U.S., their selection of a spouse is exempted from the pressures enforcing social distance between the white majority and a racial minority in America. Therefore, it was decided to restrict this study to first marriages involving at least one Chinese spouse and occurring within the U.S. Because the 1980 U.S. Census did not ask the place of first marriage, we assumed that persons born in the U.S. were married there.

For Chinese born abroad, the place of first marriage was calculated by comparing age at first marriage, age at the 1980 Census of California, and year of immigration to the U.S. The age at first marriage was subtracted from the age at the 1980 Census to yield the duration of first marriage. Unfortunately, the year of immigration was given by the Census only in groups of years: 1975-1979; 1970-1974; 1965-1969; 1960-1964; 1950-1959; and before 1950. To compute the minimum duration of U.S. residence, we subtracted the last year in an indicated immigration-year category from 1980. If the minimum duration of U.S. residence exceeded the duration of first marriage, it was assumed that the marriage occurred in the U.S.; and the marital union was retained for further analysis. If the duration of first marriage occurred in a year prior to the grouping in which the year of immigration to the U.S. occurred, it was assumed that the marriage was contracted abroad; and the spouses to that union were excluded from

further study. Furthermore, if the duration of first marriage (e.g., three years) implied a year of first marriage (e.g., 1977) in the same category as the time period of immigration to the U.S. (e.g., 1975-1979), it was indeterminate whether the marriage was solemnized shortly before or after arrival in the U.S.; and thus the partners to that marriage were withheld from the study.

Residential propinquity affects the selection of spouses. Chinese were unlikely to live in nonmetropolitan areas of California in 1980; hence, those who did so were exposed to a greater chance to marry whites. For these reasons, we focused only on Chinese first marriages in the U.S. for whom the couples resided in the five metropolitan areas of California with the largest Chinese population: Anaheim - Santa Ana; Los Angeles; Sacramento; San Jose; and San Francisco.

Another control variable was husband's age. Initial cross-tabulations of the dependent and the independent variables revealed many empty cells, and it was found that these empty cells could best be excluded if we limited this study only to couples for whom the husband was at least thirty-years-old at the time of the 1980 Census of California.

Finally, foreign-born Chinese men and women immigrating to the United States before 1950 were excluded from this study. These "old immigrants" tended to be from elite Chinese families, and their main reason for entering the

U.S. was to study. However, many Chinese people coming into the U.S. after the Communist Revolution of 1949 were political refugees who had different motives for entry.

FINDINGS

The Relationship of Gender to Exogamy

The inmarriage and outmarriage rates for the Chinese Americans are shown in Table 1. Endogamy was the dominant marriage pattern, since 87.47% of the Chinese husbands and 85.34% of the Chinese wives had Chinese spouses. Exogamy was relatively rare; but when it did occur, it was more likely to be to a member of the white majority than to other Asians, Blacks, or Hispanics. Moreover, Chinese women were somewhat more likely than Chinese men to be currently living in a first marital union with a white spouse (8.94% and 6.37% respectively). These results lent tentative support to Hypothesis 1.

The remainder of this analysis pertains to the 914 Chinese men and the 759 Chinese women in Table 1 who were married endogamously or else were married to a white spouse. Table 2 shows that the differences in proportions of such Chinese men and women who married white spouses depended on country of birth. If the country of birth was not the U.S., the percentages of Chinese men and women marrying whites were nearly equal (5.07% and 5.43%, respectively). If the

country of birth was the U.S., the percentage of Chinese men married to white women was lower than the percentage of Chinese women wedded to white men (8.33% and 12.33%, respectively). To examine the possibility that this difference of four percent might be due only to sampling error, we calculated a difference-of-proportions test (see Blalock, 1972: 228-230). The null hypothesis was that the sampling distribution of the difference in proportions was approximately normal with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of 0.02 (for the formula to calculate the standard deviation, see Blalock, 1972: 229). The Z statistic could then be calculated as the ratio of the observed difference in proportions (0.04) to this standard deviation (0.02). Because Hypothesis 1 predicted a direction of difference, we used a one-tailed test; hence, at the 5% level of statistical significance, an observed Z greater than 1.645 would reject the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative, Hypothesis 1. It is evident that in the case of the native-born Chinese, the observed $Z = 2$. The rejection of the null hypothesis for native-born but not for foreign-born Chinese may mean that the foreign-born men and women have a similar level of structural assimilation into primary-group relationships with the white majority but that this kind of structural assimilation proceeds more quickly in future generations of Chinese Americans and more quickly for Chinese women than for Chinese men in future generations. For these reasons, we conducted all tests of

subsequent research hypotheses separately for men and women.

The Relationships of Education, Age at first Marriage
and Country of Birth to Exogamy

Table 2 shows that the percentage of study respondents attending college for one or more years was higher for Chinese men than for Chinese women. This difference was 4.13% (= 72.29% - 68.16%) in favor of men among the native-born and 2.35% (= 79.03% - 76.68%) in favor of men among the foreign-born. To examine whether these differences might have resulted only from sampling error, we computed a Z statistic to compare gender differences in the proportions having some college. Z was 1.372 for the native-born and 0.765 for the foreign-born, and neither statistic was significant at the five percent level (one-tailed test). The lack of noteworthy differences between Chinese men and women in the proportions going to college is somewhat surprising. Among the foreign-born, it may signify that obtaining tertiary education is an important reason why both Chinese men and women immigrate to the U.S. Among the native-born, it may mean that acculturation into American values is erasing the tendency for Chinese women to seek less education than Chinese men.

The educational advantage of foreign-born over native-born Chinese was far more important than that of males over females. Among men, 6.74% more of the foreign-born than of the native-born (= 79.03% - 72.29%) had at least one year of college, and the difference-in-proportions test indicated

that this disparity probably was not due to sampling error ($Z = 2.366$, p less than 5%). Among women, 8.52% more of the foreign-born than of the native-born had been to college, a difference not likely to have arisen by chance ($Z = 2.56$, p less than 5%). The educational superiority of the foreign-born reinforces the interpretation that college attendance may have been a cause or a consequence of their immigration to the U.S.

Greater college attendance was also associated with a later mean age at first marriage among the foreign-born than the U.S.-born Chinese. It is possible that the foreign-born Chinese came from more economically privileged family origins in comparison to their native-born counterparts and thus encountered less familial pressure to wed "on time". Yet even among the foreign-born, the women had a much younger age at first marriage than did the men (25.47 years and 29.41 years, respectively).

The data in Table 2 show: that educational attainment is related to country of birth; that country of birth is related to mean age at first marriage; and that mean age at first marriage is related to gender. These interrelationships suggested that all these variables should be controlled in tests of Hypotheses 2, 3, and 4. Such controls were afforded by multivariate logit regressions of marital exogamy (0 = no, endogamously married; 1 = yes, exogamously married) upon education, age at first marriage, and country of birth. These regressions were computed

separately for Chinese men and Chinese women. Logit regressions were preferred over ordinary-least-squares (OLS) regressions because the dependent variable was a dichotomy in which more than 90% of all cases fell into a single category. Such extreme splits in the distribution of cases across the categories of the dependent variable made it unlikely that the assumption of homoscedasticity could be met (Johnson and Nelson, 1984: 534-535). Since the assumption of homoscedasticity is necessary to render unbiased, efficient estimates of parameters in OLS regression but not in logit regression, we chose the latter regression technique.

Table 3 shows the logit regression for Chinese women; and Table 4, for Chinese men. Each of these logit regressions contained five predictor terms: the effect of the regression intercept (constant); an effect each for education, age at first marriage, and country of birth; and finally, an effect for the interaction between education and country of birth. When all five terms were in the equation, the likelihood-ratio chi-square and degrees of freedom were 2.817 and 3.0 respectively, for Chinese women (Table 3) and 3.684 and 3.0 respectively, for Chinese men (Table 4). The near equality of a likelihood-ratio chi-square with its associated degrees of freedom signified that the logit regression models in Tables 3 and 4 predicted expected cell counts that matched observed frequencies very well indeed.

Hypothesis 2 argued that Chinese women and men who had

attended college had higher odds of marrying a white spouse than did Chinese women and men who had lesser amounts of education. The regression statistics can be interpreted in two ways. The five regression coefficients (B) can be summed to show the whole effect of the intercept and of being college educated, being wedded for the first time at ages 30 or older, being born in the U.S., and being in both of the latter two categories simultaneously, upon the odds of marrying a white spouse. A regression effect (B) which is not statistically significant from zero means that this effect on the odds of marital exogamy with a white is nil. Alternatively, we can take the antilogarithm (e^B) of a given regression effect; and if it is significantly different from unity, we can assume that being in the second category of this effect greatly affects the odds of marrying a white spouse. Table 3 shows that if a Chinese woman had at least one year of college, her odds of marrying a white man were 1.92 to 1.00 (p less than 5%). If a Chinese man had at least one year of college, his odds of marrying a white woman were 1.68 to 1.00 (p less than 5%). These results could not reject Hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 3 held that the odds of outmarriage increased with the age at first marriage. Yet the odds of outmarriage were about even for Chinese women, whether or not they married for the first time at ages thirty or older (1.24 to 1.00, p greater than 5%; Table 3). Likewise, the odds of outmarriage to a white were about even (0.98 to

1.00, p greater than 5%; Table 4) whether or not Chinese men wedded for the first time at ages of thirty or older. These results rejected Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4 posited that the odds of outmarriage to a white would be greater among U.S.-born Chinese than among foreign-born Chinese. Indeed, if a Chinese woman were native-born, her odds of marrying a white man were nearly 2 to 1 than if she were foreign-born ($Z = 2.29$, p less than 5%; Table 3). However, if a Chinese man were native-born, his odds of wedding a white wife were about even with those of a Chinese man who was foreign-born ($Z = 1.25$, p more than 5%; Table 4). As such, these results rejected Hypothesis 4 for Chinese men but not for Chinese women. This outcome supports the interpretation that the speed of assimilation into primary-group relations with whites proceeds least rapidly for Chinese men and most rapidly for U.S.-born Chinese women. Since marital exogamy may threaten the key role that Chinese sons play in the support and the continuity of their families of origin, stronger familial pressures may be brought to bear against the outmarriage of sons than of daughters.

The Relationships of Country of Birth between Chinese Husband and Chinese Wife

This study has argued that the country of birth is a valid index of acculturation and assimilation into the country of residence. Because marriages tend to unite persons who share intrinsic values, we reasoned that

endogamy in the Chinese community would tend to pair men and women with the same country of birth. Table 5 shows that of the 316 endogamously married, U.S.-born Chinese women, 279 (= 88.29%) were married to native-born Chinese husbands. Of the 323 endogamously married U.S.-born Chinese men, 279 (= 86.38%) were married to U.S.-born Chinese wives. When the nativity status of Chinese spouses did not match, it was not much more likely that the wife was foreign-born (7.89% of all cases) than the husband (6.63%). These results could not reject Hypothesis 5.

DISCUSSION

Intermarriage between the Chinese and the U.S. white majority implies a mutual acceptance between members of the two racial groups and represents a significant stage in the process of assimilating Chinese and white Americans into a common culture. The rate of Chinese exogamy with white spouses in our Californian sample was relatively low in 1980, a fact which suggested that these metropolitan Chinese were still strongly attached to their ethnic enclave. However, 40% of all persons of Chinese ancestry in the U.S. resided in California in 1980 (Gardner et al., 1985: 11). Therefore, higher rates of exogamy would likely have been found if our sample had included northern, eastern, and southern states, where Chinese settlement has been relatively sparse.

Compared to Chinese men or foreign-born Chinese women,

native-born Chinese women living in metropolitan California in 1980 had the largest odds of intermarriage with whites. Chinese men are subjected to stronger pressures to carry on their family name through pure-blooded offspring and to bear the responsibility for supporting the aged ancestors. Because Chinese females do not have such awesome responsibilities and because they are viewed as no more than temporary members of their families of origin, they do not experience such strong pressures against racial exogamy; and what pressures that do exist for them probably fade rapidly with residence in the U.S. As such, the pressures against racial exogamy are probably weaker on Chinese daughters born in the U.S. than on Chinese daughters born in East Asia.

Steven and Swicegood's (1987) findings were the opposite of ours. They reported that males were somewhat more likely to marry outside their ethnic groups in comparison to females. However, their regressions pooled respondents from 20 different ethnic groups, at least 12 of which were predominantly white. This pooling left them unable to discriminate different patterns of ethnic exogamy among different ethnic groups. This inability probably accounts for the discrepancy in findings between their study and ours.

Even after gender and country of birth had been controlled, a major factor favoring the marriage of Chinese respondents to white spouses was attending college. This tendency supported Gordon's (1964) notion that people of the

same educational level are likely to interact and to share common values despite possible differences in ethnic background. However, the effect of college attendance was not strong enough to overcome the effect of foreign birth, since foreign-born Chinese women had much lower odds of marrying a white than did U.S.-born Chinese women, although a much greater percentage of foreign-born than of native-born Chinese women had some college attendance.

Other important findings were that foreign-born Chinese respondents tended to marry other foreign-born Chinese and that native-born Chinese respondents tended to marry other native-born Chinese. This assortative mating could not be explained by place of marriage, because all respondents in this study had been married for periods of time that were shorter than their durations of residence in the U.S. and so presumably they had been subjected to opportunities for courtship within the U.S. Our results, thus, cannot reject Sun's (1966) conclusion that foreign-born Chinese people have a generally unfavorable attitude toward American-born Chinese people. The number of Chinese people living in the U.S. almost doubled between the 1970 and the 1980 Census, due to the liberalization of the Immigration Act of 1965. This liberalization suggests that there has recently been, and will continue to be, a decline in outmarriage of Chinese to whites, as the number of U.S. Chinese continues to explode. Simultaneously, one might expect a burgeoning cultural differentiation within the Chinese community

according to country of birth. Such trends, if they should continue into the future, will make the U.S. a more pluralistic society than ever.

These trends imply a need for future studies of ethnic assimilation through intermarriage. Such new studies should address factors which we could not control. One was religion, a question about which has never been posed in the U.S. Census, which was the basis of our present investigation. We reason that Chinese adherents of Eastern religions may be less inclined than Chinese devotees of Western religions to marry white Americans. But an analysis of this possibility must await future research.

Another question is how much does one's first language govern the choice of one's mate. Studies by Stevens and Swicegood (1987), Stevens (1985), and Fisherman (1977) suggested that a shift in one's mother tongue from Chinese to English is a necessary and a fundamental condition for acculturation and assimilation of Chinese minorities. In other words, if a person of Chinese descent is strongly attached to speaking Mandarin or some other Chinese dialect, he or she may be less likely to marry those who cannot speak it and thus may be predisposed to wed inside the Chinese community. Because our 1980 Census data did not contain information on first-spoken language, we could not analyze the relationship between language shift and the choice of a marital partner. If mother tongue does govern this choice, then the recent inundation of Chinese immigrants into the

U.S. portends a reduced demand for white spouses by members of the Chinese community.

Finally, our Census data contained information only on the present spouse, not on previous mates. If first marriages involving Chinese with white spouses are more prone to disruption than are endogamous marriages within either group, then Chinese-white unions would have been relatively underrepresented in our study's data. Future studies of nuptiality in the U.S. Chinese community should contain questions on both present and former marital unions (if applicable). It would be instructive to see whether a broken exogamous union leads to endogamy within the Chinese community or to new exogamy with the white community.

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Interracial marriage rates of Chinese for 1980

Spouse's race -----	Chinese men		Chinese women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
White	62	6.37	72	8.94	134	7.53
Black	3	0.31	6	0.75	9	0.05
American Indian	0	0.00	1	0.12	1	0.06
Japanese	38	3.90	25	3.11	63	3.54
Chinese	852	87.47	687	85.34	1539	86.51
Filipino	7	0.72	6	0.75	13	0.73
Korean	5	0.51	3	0.37	8	0.45
Vietnamese	1	0.10	0	0.00	1	0.06
Other Asians and Pacific Islanders	3	0.31	3	0.37	6	0.34
Spanish write-in entry	2	0.21	2	0.25	4	0.22
Others	1	0.10	0	0.00	1	0.06
<hr/>						
Total	974	100.00 %	805	100.00 %	1779	100.00 %

Note: The data in this and following tables are from the 1980 Census public use sample tape of California; see text for a description of the study sample.

Table 2. Characteristics of Chinese men and women
in study sample

Variable	Chinese men		Chinese women	
	native born	foreign born	native born	foreign born
Percent out-married to Whites	8.33 %	5.07 %	12.33 %	5.43 %
Percent in-married	91.67 %	94.93 %	87.67 %	94.57 %
Mean age at first marriage	27.27 yrs.	29.41 yrs.	24.18 yrs.	25.47 yrs.
Mean age at Census	47.24 yrs.	37.79 yrs.	43.37 yrs.	33.74 yrs.
Percent with 1 or more years of college	72.29 %	79.03 %	68.16 %	76.68 %
Total	480.00	434.00	446.00	313.00

Table 3. Logit regression for female Chinese exogamy
 (0 = No; 1 = Yes)

Independent variables (her characteristics)	B	B e	Z
-----	-----	-----	-----
Constant	2.6791 (0.3003)	14.5220	8.92 *
Education (some high school or less = 1; some college or more = 2)	0.6524 (0.2768)	1.9201	2.36 *
Age at first marriage (under age 30 = 1; 30 or over = 2)	0.2152 (0.1733)	1.2401	1.24
Nativity (foreign born = 0; native born = 1)	0.6356 (0.2770)	1.8882	2.29 *
Nativity by education	0.1854 (0.2773)	1.2037	0.67
Total	4.3677	78.8617	
Likelihood ratio χ^2	2.817		
Degrees of freedom	3.0		
Probability	0.421		

Note : Standard errors are in parentheses

*P < 0.05

N= 759 cases

Table 4. Logit regression for male Chinese exogamy
(0 = No; 1 = Yes)

Independent variables (his characteristics)	B	B e	Z
-----	-----	-----	-----
Constant	3.0066 (0.2279)	20.2185	13.19 *
Education (some high school or less = 1; some college or more = 2)	0.5159 (0.2244)	1.6751	2.30 *
Age at first marriage (under age 30 = 1; 30 or over = 2)	-0.0168 (0.1455)	0.9833	-0.16
Nativity (foreign born = 0; native born = 1)	0.2835 (0.2259)	1.3278	1.25
Nativity by education	-0.0110 (0.2242)	0.9891	-0.49
Total	3.7782	43.7370	
Likelihood ratio X ²	3.684		
Degrees of freedom	3.0		
Probability	0.298		

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses

*P < 0.05

N = 914 cases

Table 5. Distributions of endogamously wedded Chinese respondents by country of birth of husband and of wife

		Chinese women			
		Native born		foreign born	
		N	Percent	N	Percent
Chinese men	Native born	279	88.29 %	44	18.18 %
	Foreign born	37	11.71 %	198	81.82 %
Total		316	100.00 %	242	100.00 %

$$\chi^2 = 276.31$$

Degree of freedom = 1

*P < 0.05

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Gordon's process of assimilation

Subprocess or condition	Type or stage of assimilation	Special term
Change of cultural pattern to those of host society	Cultural or behavioral assimilation	Acculturation
Large scale entrance into cliques, clubs and institutions of host society on primary level	Structural assimilation	None
Large scale intermarriage	Marital assimilation	Amalgamation
Development of sense of peoplehood exclusively in host society	Identificational assimilation	None
Absence of prejudice	Attitude receptional assimilation	None
Absence of discrimination	Behavioral receptional assimilation	None
Absence of value and power conflict	Civic assimilation	None

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