



Libraries and Learning Services

# University of Auckland Research Repository, ResearchSpace

## Copyright Statement

The digital copy of this thesis is protected by the Copyright Act 1994 (New Zealand).

This thesis may be consulted by you, provided you comply with the provisions of the Act and the following conditions of use:

- Any use you make of these documents or images must be for research or private study purposes only, and you may not make them available to any other person.
- Authors control the copyright of their thesis. You will recognize the author's right to be identified as the author of this thesis, and due acknowledgement will be made to the author where appropriate.
- You will obtain the author's permission before publishing any material from their thesis.

## General copyright and disclaimer

In addition to the above conditions, authors give their consent for the digital copy of their work to be used subject to the conditions specified on the [Library Thesis Consent Form](#) and [Deposit Licence](#).

***Between Aotearoa and China:  
An autoethnography of  
a Chinese international student***

**By  
Qinyun Li**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of Master of Education in  
Education  
University of Auckland 2018

## *Abstract*

In this thesis, I examine my personal experiences of how a Chinese woman adjusts herself as an international student studying at the University of Auckland. Through autoethnography, I systematically investigate materials that involve my pictures, diary, interior monologue and conversations with my friends. I adopt the International Students Identity (ISI) Model and the theory of acculturation as the frameworks to theorise my stories. The ISI Model consists of six phases: pre-exposure, exposure, enclosure, emergence, integration and internationalization. The phases are helpful to describe the adjustment of my subjectivity and to rationalize the transformation I experienced in each step. Also, the idea of acculturation supports me to explore how I have integrated myself into the new culture. This thesis shows the real life of an international student studying in New Zealand, with struggles and reconciliations interwoven. In describing every phase and acculturation that I encountered, I hope to evoke emotional resonance in my readers, and provide new perspectives for supporting Chinese international students to New Zealand educationalists and universities.

Key words: Autoethnography, Chinese international students, Acculturation, ISI Model

## *Acknowledgment*

The creative process of this article is not easy. Without the help of my supervisor, co-supervisor, course teachers, family and friends, I would not be able to complete this difficult task. Thanks to all for your help; this time of studying in New Zealand has become one of my life's best memories.

First, I would like to thank my wise supervisor, associate professor, Barbara Grant. I know how fortunate it is to be your student; you are such a kind person to help me always. From the first semester of 2017 in my postgraduate course in your class up until now I am a master's student and nearly a graduate. You have been very encouraging to me; you have helped me and supported me many times. Thanks for generously sharing your knowledge with me; thanks too for helping me to learn the new research method of autoethnography; I appreciate that you recommended the possibility of academic research for me. You have guided me to explore my own identity and story. You gave me confidence to face problems; you gave me inspiration when I was lost; and you led me to the field as a master's student to explore knowledge and culture.

Secondly, thanks to my co-supervisor, Dr Linlin Xu. Thank you for attending my meeting with Barbara; you made every discussion beautiful; I have learned so much from you, and I had great gains after our meeting. Thank you for your constructive comments on my thesis, and thanks for your patient interpretation with me. Your thoughtful, rigorous attitude and meticulous logic made me admire you. I have seen in you the appearance of a good research scholar; you are my role model. Without your help, I would not have been able to finish the thesis successfully.

Third, I am very grateful to my parents. I feel very much obliged to them and sorry because I have rarely returned home in the past two years. Although I cannot stay with you during my stay in New Zealand, you have never blamed me. On the contrary, you have supported me financially and understand my situation psychologically. Your unselfish love for your children is my motivation to study hard, and I love you as always.

Fourth, thanks to my teachers and friends. Thanks to my speech-language therapist / teacher, Alaine Tasker, thank you for your kind help to improve my English; thank you for guiding me out of the predicament I was in; I will always remember your encouragement towards me. Thank you, my friend, Soyon Park; I have loved every discussion of subjects between us; you always give me new ideas. Thanks to my friends Bridget, Tisi, Ngano; thank you for always encouraging me to accompany you.

Thanks to all the other people; thank you for creating a beautiful memory for me. I sincerely hope that all of you will go well. I love you all.

# *Table of Contents*

<i>Between Aotearoa and China: An autoethnography of a Chinese international student</i> .....	1
<i>Abstract</i> .....	2
<i>Acknowledgment</i> .....	3
<i>Table of Figures</i> .....	8
<i>Chapter One: Introduction</i> .....	9
<b>Introduction</b> .....	9
<b>Research question</b> .....	9
<b>Research background</b> .....	10
<b>Literature review</b> .....	12
International students' identity .....	13
Acculturation .....	14
Autoethnography.....	15
<b>Thesis precis</b> .....	16
<i>Chapter Two: Theorising International Student Experience</i> .....	18
<b>Introduction</b> .....	18
<b>ISI Model</b> .....	18
<b>Acculturation</b> .....	21
<b>Summary</b> .....	22
<i>Chapter Three: Research Methodology</i> .....	24
<b>Introduction</b> .....	24
<b>What is autoethnography?</b> .....	24

<b>What is required of an autoethnographer?</b> .....	<b>28</b>
Put aside some old research methods.....	30
Accept autoethnography as a young methodology .....	31
Utilize excellent writing skills, create resonances with readers' emotions, and produce valuable research to society.....	32
<b>Data collection and ethics .....</b>	<b>33</b>
Data .....	34
Ethics.....	35
<b>Summary .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b><i>Chapter Four: New Zealand's attitude towards Chinese .....</i></b>	<b><i>36</i></b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Unwelcomed in history.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Improved relations between Chinese and New Zealanders.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Experience of unfriendly treatment .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Looking forward to the future.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Summary .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b><i>Chapter Five: My Life in Aotearoa.....</i></b>	<b><i>53</i></b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>The early phase .....</b>	<b>54</b>
Phase One: Getting ready to leave China.....	54
Phase Two: Travelling to and arriving in New Zealand .....	57
<b>The middle phase .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>The later phase: where I am now .....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Summary .....</b>	<b>77</b>

<i>Chapter Six: Experiencing home Estrangement</i> .....	79
<b>Introduction</b> .....	79
<b>Marriage values</b> .....	80
<b>Arguments with my parents</b> .....	85
<b>Summary</b> .....	93
<i>Chapter Seven: Conclusion</i> .....	95
<b>Introduction</b> .....	95
<b>Return to the research question</b> .....	95
<b>Primary findings</b> .....	95
<b>Concise road map</b> .....	96
<b>Implications</b> .....	98
For educators.....	98
For International Students .....	100
<b>Limitation</b> .....	101
<i>References</i> .....	102

## *Table of Figures*

Figure 2. 1: ISI model .....	20
Figure 4. 1: Chinese gold rush workers in Otago .....	38
Figure 4. 2: Heavy rain on my first day of teaching .....	50
Figure 6. 1: Cookery training.....	55
Figure 6. 2: Family photograph .....	57
Figure 6. 3: Leaving home.....	58
Figure 6. 4: A typical international student's room .....	60
Figure 6. 5: Sister shoes .....	71
Figure 6. 6 Feijoas.....	72
Figure 6. 7 Hot pot.....	77

# *Chapter One: Introduction*

## **Introduction**

This thesis discusses a story from my own experience: a Chinese woman being an international student in New Zealand. To survive in this unfamiliar country, I make the effort to adjust myself to adapt to the New Zealand culture, attempt to learn new educational patterns, and change some of my behaviour to integrate to the local lifestyle. In this case, I use the autoethnography research methodology to anatomise my journey, and I also utilise the ISI model and acculturation theory to explain my struggles, conflicts and other issues that I encountered. This chapter discusses economic globalisation and the export of the education industry. As a participant in this programme, I came to New Zealand from China to begin my international study. Then, through the literature review, I found my research direction towards studying as a female Chinese international student in Aotearoa. Furthermore, during my time at the University of Auckland, I learned a new methodology for autoethnography which motivated and inspired me to look at my study abroad experiences introspectively; I also will utilise this to examine and resolve the issues surrounding identity and acculturation that I face in my life. In the end, I will briefly describe the structure for this study.

## **Research question**

The question in this study is: How has a Chinese woman adapted as an international postgraduate student to a university in New Zealand?

The intention of this essay is to draw on my real experiences as a Chinese international student in terms of the efforts, conflicts, and many issues I have encountered in New Zealand. Also, the purpose of this study is to evoke readers' understanding and support for Chinese international students in New Zealand.

## **Research background**

As a country with an export education industry, New Zealand, with its attractive scenery and excellent education programmes, welcomes many international students. More than half of the international students admit that New Zealand is their first choice because they were fascinated by the beautiful natural scenery, multicultural environment, and “Kiwi experience” (Ward & Masgoret, 2004). In the last few years, there has been a growing interest in international students, particularly in the Chinese as they are the largest ethnic international students' group in New Zealand. As an export education industry country, to a certain degree, international students have contributed to the development of the New Zealand economy. Between 1997 and 2007, there was a significant increase in the number of Chinese students studying in New Zealand (Skyrme, 2007). In 2003, international students contributed approximately \$1.7 billion to the local economy and generated more than 2,000 jobs (Ward & Masgoret, 2004). Furthermore, in recent times, the number of international students is continuing to rise. In 2016, the New Zealand Immigration Service granted visas to approximately 30,000 Chinese students (Gerritsen, 2016). By 2017, circa 130,000 international students were living in New Zealand, and they became New Zealand's fourth largest export earner, with their custom providing New Zealand with US\$4 billion (Gerritsen, 2017). Thus, international students are an important part of New Zealand's education field.

As can be expected, the number of international students living in New Zealand attracts media and social attention. In some cases, the media attribute the actions or behaviour of one individual to the entire ethnic group, and international students, particularly Chinese, are victims of stereotypical bias. Collins (2006) claims that some elements of the media construct a negative depiction of the typical Asian student (Chinese, Japanese, or Korean). Nevertheless, across the 176 years since the first Chinese man, Wong Ah Poo Hoc Ting, came to New Zealand in 1842 (Stade, 2010), the degrees of prejudice against the Chinese has fluctuated throughout history. As a Chinese international student, I aspire to show the real Chinese student life in New Zealand, and I hope that will encourage people to get to know Chinese international students more, and also be more tolerant and understanding of the differences between the Chinese and New Zealand cultures.

Equally important, international students' psychological health and integration issues have been gaining attention in recent years. Ward and Masgoret (2004) argue that many Chinese international students leave their far away country to come to New Zealand for study, but they find that the dominant local ideology is very different to China; and they encounter various problems in their life abroad, such as culture shock, acculturative stresses, limited socialisation, and academic anxiety. Fortunately, the New Zealand Qualification Authority recognises that this is a critical issue in education, and they are working to support and protect international students ("The Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016 NZQA", 2016). Additionally, Butcher and McGrath (2004) illustrate that the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students involves "student's integrated experiences, educative, social, spiritual and psychological" (p. 548). Therefore, considering the above information, this study will explore the life of a Chinese international student living in New Zealand.

## **Literature review**

With global economic integration and multicultural communication, there are now many international students choosing to study in foreign countries. As a country with rapid economic growth and a vast population, China has become increasingly more influential in the world. Therefore, in the education field, scholars pay increased attention to devoting research strategies that better support international students, and also Chinese international students. As China has a very different culture, language and social ideology to some Western countries, Chinese students may face some issues when they attempt to integrate into new environments. The literature on Chinese international students shows a variety of approaches to learning and socialising, for example, Holmes (2004) indicates that Chinese international students find it difficult to transform their traditional approaches to Western methods of learning, socialising, and communicating. Meanwhile, Ward and Masgoret (2004) report that approximately one-third of international students have no local friends in New Zealand, and Dalglish and Chan (2005) indicate that international students usually socialise more with people who are from similar cultural backgrounds. Additionally, Gomes (2015) explains that international students are not successfully integrating into domestic life, while Yan (2017) illustrates many of the issues observed in Chinese international students' life concern academic challenges and sociocultural problems.

Increasingly, more issues regarding international students have emerged, and many researchers have conducted research related to international students. Some reports show that the four primary concerns of international students are relationships, anxiety, mood, and adjustment/learning issues. Furthermore, international students do not usually try to find help through professionals and specialists (Hwang, Bennet, & Beauchemin, 2014; Yan, 2017). Although many studies show that international students are struggling and having difficulties with socialising and learning in an

unfamiliar country, international students' identities seem to be frequently overlooked.

### **International students' identity**

International students' identity is a notable problem for educators. Recently, several authors, such as Kim (2012), Brown and Brown (2013), and Karkouti (2014) propose this idea. Through such studies, international students' identity has received a broader development. Kim (2012) defines international students' identity as "combining both sociocultural adjustment and psychological adjustment aspects, where identity is broadly defined as a sense of self that international students (re)construct for themselves in relation to others and within the environments that revolve around them" (p. 100). This definition emphasises international students' identity consists of both social and personal factors. Furthermore, Brown and Brown (2013) observe that identity conflict is a symptom of culture shock, with possible disturbed moods bringing negative emotions, such as sadness, low self-esteem, anger, and defensiveness, which can even lead to depression that is damaging to international students' mental health. Additionally, Karkouti (2014) argues that if international students can solve their identity conflict issues, it will improve their performance and their study experiences. This research reminds me that international students' identity problems are also important issues in education.

Moreover, through my use of autoethnography to research myself, I confirmed his theory while I was applying the international student identity model (ISI model). Kim (2012) refers to international students encountering identity conflict when they adapt to their new culture, and I certainly experienced an identity struggle in the months after arriving in New Zealand. When I was in New Zealand and was attempting to survive at university, I learned new patterns and adopted new behaviours and values. Then, I re-encountered my identity conflict when I returned to China, but this conflict

was different from the previous one. The previous conflict came from my Chinese identity conflict in New Zealand, where I struggled because I thought my New Zealand identity and values were different from my Chinese identity and values. For almost two years I studied in New Zealand, and strongly adapted to Kiwi ways, even shedding some of my Chinese values. Thus, when I returned to my homeland, my existing New Zealand identity had to fight with my Chinese identity. In this case, I not only found Kim's ISI model applicable, but I also added my own findings to complement it.

### **Acculturation**

In this study, acculturation is the concept I will use to describe Chinese international students when adjusting themselves to integrate into a new culture. Berry (1992) indicates that in the acculturation process, there is individual or group experiences and adaptation, behavioural shifts, and acculturative stress. Many scholars later appropriated this theory. For example, Brunton and Jeffrey (2014) indicate that "The process involves variations in the strategies used to manage the process of developing cultural competence in dealing with life in the host society" (p. 322). Furthermore, several researchers use acculturation to measure how international students' acculturation functions in a new culture, and they are devoted to discovering the relationship between acculturation and student achievement in many aspects (Kashima & Loh, 2006; Zhang & Goodson, 2011; Glass, Gómez & Urzua, 2014; Glass & Westmont, 2014). In this study, I used Berry's acculturation theory to explore myself, analysing how I integrate into new cultures, how I adopt new patterns, what kind of acculturative stress I face, and how I alter my behaviour and make adjustments. While many scholars have obtained rich knowledge of international students' identity and acculturation, very few available works in the literature address the issue of using the methodology of autoethnography to study personal experiences as a Chinese international student.

## **Autoethnography**

I noticed my special status as a female Chinese international student studying in New Zealand could be a unique research case – indeed, Ellis (2004) suggests that autoethnography requires researchers to have special insights into the sociocultural phenomena. As a Chinese international student in New Zealand, I found my role was unusual because, in some cases, I could understand the two cultures and even merge the cultures, and thus in some ways, I became a blend of the two environments. Moreover, with many international students in the world, whether they are Chinese or not, they may experience similar situations when living abroad. For example, Ngunjiri, Hernandez and Chang (2010) demonstrate that autoethnographers appropriate their personal experiences to arouse and connect emotionally with readers. I could use this methodology to represent our international students' group. Furthermore, autoethnography allowed me to utilise various methods to collect data and discourses regarding myself. Zimmerman (2011) explains that autoethnography enables researchers to adapt their own views for research purposes, while Wall (2006) illustrates that “Autoethnography is an emerging qualitative research method that allows the author to write in a highly personalised style, drawing on his or her experience to extend understanding about a societal phenomenon” (p. 1). That idea supported me in examining myself within the approach to sociocultural phenomena and answering the research question.

Through the literature review, it is important to realise that using autoethnography to introspect has supported me in analysing the arrangement of the phases and acculturation experiences that I encountered.

## Thesis precis

This thesis is composed of seven chapters.

**Chapter One:** This chapter provides the scope of the thesis. I will describe the study background, research question and briefly introduce each chapter.

**Chapter Two:** I draw two theories from the research into international student experiences. First, I will use the International Student Identity model (ISI model) that Kim (2012) proposed, consisting of six phases: pre-exposure, exposure, enclosure, emergence, integration and internationalisation. Second, I will use Berry's (1992) acculturation theory which consists of adaptation, behavioural shifts and acculturative stress. These two theories are essentially part of this study; I will connect them to support my research.

**Chapter Three:** I appropriate a relatively new research methodology, autoethnography, to contribute to my study to write this chapter. I designed and answered two questions: What is autoethnography, and what is expected of an autoethnographer? Furthermore, I will explain the data collection and ethical issues at the end of the chapter.

**Chapter Four:** I have provided evidence of New Zealand's attitude towards Chinese people. I mainly explore ethnic Chinese as being unwelcome in New Zealand's history, improved relations between Chinese and New Zealanders, and show my experience of unfriendly treatment, as well as my optimistic perspective for the future.

**Chapter Five:** I start the journey of my life in Aotearoa. I will describe my experience of five phases in New Zealand with Kim's ISI model theory; also, I will draw on each phase with Berry's concept of acculturation throughout the whole text. I will point out the early phase of pre-exposure and exposure that was getting ready to leave my country and my arrival in New Zealand; the middle phase of enclosure and emergence, that is, I fell into a small social cycle and attempted to get out, in order to figure out my new identity; and integration, the last phase, in which I overcame some conflict and attempted to rebuild my identity. However, the internationalisation phase probably will not be part of this study.

**Chapter Six:** I use two stories to show that I overlapped the enclosure phase and emergence phase while experiencing some estrangement after I went back to my homeland, as well as an extension of Kim's ISI theory. The two stories revolve around conflicts between my Chinese identity and New Zealand identity. The first story vividly portrays that I struggle with my two identities when I face two different values of marriage; the second story will reveal that I was very irresolute about choosing a Chinese or New Zealand identity when I was facing filial piety issues. However, I finally overcame both conflicts, and I also admit that they offered me opportunities to develop my individual character.

**Chapter Seven:** Finally, I summarise this study. I will review the main findings and return to the research question. I will also outline the limitations of this study and finish with a vision for future research.

# *Chapter Two: Theorising International Student Experience*

## **Introduction**

The theories I draw on are the International Student Identity Model (Kim, 2012) and Acculturation (Berry, 1992). Although there is no obvious connection between them, these two theories can both help me to analyse my academic journey. The ISI model can help me analyse what phase I was in at different times, and the Acculturation theory enables me to analyse each phase more deeply. Thus, I try to combine them to lay the foundation for my research and development that supports my academic journey.

## **ISI Model**

The International Student Identity Model (Kim, 2012) is a new conceptual framework for theorising international student identity (ISI). The ISI model comprises six phases: 1) pre-exposure, 2) exposure, 3) enclosure, 4) emergence, 5) integration, and 6) internationalisation, and this displays international students' identity development processes (Kim, 2012). Mohamad (2014) claimed the ISI model (Kim, 2012) was an accurate interpretation of the international student identity development stages. In this paper, I would like to utilise the ISI's six steps to analyse and interpret the formation of my personal experiences. As Kim (2012) suggested, "As international students challenge and (re) examine their sense of self and their status as international students, their identity can be validated, redefined and reinforced" (p. 111). I am attempting to deconstruct my educational journeys in New Zealand, and to analyse my stories in each phase.

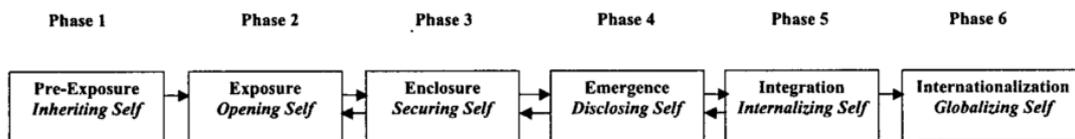
Kim (2012) defines Phase 1, pre-exposure, as inherited self. In this phase, international student identity is still influenced by their home culture, family values and the viewpoints of peers. The second phase is exposure – opening one’s self. It occurs when international students arrive in their new country and realise there are differences between their background culture and the new environment, and they begin to leave their parents’ direction and try to be independent (Kim, 2012). I will combine these phases and my stories about my changes since I came to New Zealand: how I was expectant about a new start in life in New Zealand, and to explain the reason why I separated myself from family guidance.

In phase 3, enclosure, or securing one’s self, international students spend time to adjust to their academic achievement; their social activities are limited, some of them associate with people who are familiar and have the same cultural background instead of socialising with people who are from unfamiliar cultural backgrounds. Phase 4 is the emergence disclosing one’s self, where international students begin to engage in new social groups and search for a new identity. However, this new identity might conflict with their background values (Kim, 2012). According to these phases, I explore my behaviours in my small social circle in the first year in New Zealand, and draw on my struggle to discover a new identity.

Phases 5 and 6 are integration, or internalising the self, and internationalisation, or globalising one’s self. In Phase 5, international students successfully defeat their struggle of identity conflict and establish a new identity with multicultural values (Kim, 2012). However, Kim (2012) argues that international students may have an overlap between each phase. Following that, I will demonstrate that I had an overlap of Phase 4 and Phase 5, since I went back to my hometown. Furthermore, in Phase 6, international students ideally are accepted in all diversity groups and have sufficiently mature values of multiculturalism. I will discuss my partially successful new identity

formation experience with Phase 5; however, I cannot explore Phase 6 because I have not reached it yet.

*Figure 2. 1: ISI model*



*International student identity (ISI) 6-phase model (Kim, 2012)*

In this study, I would like to extend Kim’s ISI model; I refer to international students not only having identity conflicts when they are learning values from the new society, but they also may have identity conflict when they go back to their own country. Kim (2012) mentioned that in Phase 4, international students encounter identity struggle when they attempt new cultures. I used my experiences to examine his theory. However, I found I also had identity conflict when I went back to my motherland. For this extension, I will explain it and add more detail in Chapter Six.

The ISI model could be utilised to address the issues of international students’ personal growth (Kim, 2012). Furthermore, “The ISI model not only explained international students’ identity formation, but it also addressed the social, academic, and cultural adjustment processes that they experienced as they adjusted to life as postsecondary students in the United States” (Abo Rabia, 2015, p.9). In addition, Bista and Foster (2016) explain that “the ISI model taps into what many international students have in common... and it can help international students to understand their own internal struggles in their efforts to adjust to a new culture” (p. 264).

In what follows, I adopt the ISI model to explore my personal identity and experiences in New Zealand: I will draw on more detail of my life in Aotearoa in Chapter Five and then some gaps since I went back to my homeland in Chapter Six. The analysis of the six phases of ISI has proved to be very helpful for describing the changes in my subjectivity and the transformation processes of each step.

## **Acculturation**

The second theory I will take up is Berry's theory of acculturation (1992).

“Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups”

(Redfield, Linton & Herskovits, 1936, p.149). Yeh et al. (2008) defined acculturation as a process of an individual attempting to appreciate two cultures. Acculturation may encourage people to establish a new identity and find a suitable way of living in a new environment (Yuen, 2010). More specifically, Berry (1992) argues that acculturation might result in psychological changes to an individual which consists of adaptation, acculturative stress and behavioural shifts. Therefore, I would like to reflect on my personal experiences to show how I was acculturated when I came to New Zealand, and how I have come to fit into two cultures.

Berry (1992) argues that adaptation is a strategy and outcome of acculturation.

Individuals can change their old cultures to minimise the pressure from the new culture; however, people who come from a cultural background which has a long-term influence on them cannot easily and successfully adapt to the whole new culture (Berry, 1992). In addition, “psychological acculturation is influenced by numerous group-level factors in the society of origin and in the society of settlement” (Berry, 1997, p. 26). In this case, I would like to use Berry's methods of adaptation in

Chapters Five and Six to show how I dropped some of my old habits to adjust to New Zealand, and also to explore the conflict with my strong Chinese cultural identity because I had not yet fully assimilated into New Zealand culture.

Some acculturative stress may have negative effects on the individual (Berry, 1992). For example, many studies have shown that international students suffer from anxiety, stress and homesickness (Hannigan, 2005; Liang, 1990; Gomes, 2015). However, Berry (1992) argues that acculturative stress could also sometimes improve one's life development. Thus, I will utilise Berry's theory to underpin my stories about my life changes, psychological stress and how I dealt with these problems and developed my independence in Chapters Five and Six.

In addition, Berry (1992) explains behavioural shifts as a form of acculturation that manifests as learning new patterns in the new society and shedding the old culture. In Chapters Five and Six, I will explain this theory in depth using my experience of learning a new educational system and interpersonal communication. However, some of the new patterns I learned in New Zealand's Western culture conflict with my original Chinese culture. According to Berry (1992), conflict will occur during the change processes. I will explore these changes in detail in Chapters Five and Six to explain that I had estrangements when I returned to China, because some of the new behaviours that I learned from New Zealand are very different from those in my home culture.

## **Summary**

Kim's ISI model and Berry's theory of acculturation are the theoretical foundations of my thesis. First, the ISI model will be the witness and milestone in my New Zealand life steps. Second, the acculturation theory helps me to explore previous experiences clearly and deeply. Thirdly, combining the ISI model with the acculturation theory

will help me explore each step more fully than either theory alone. These two theories are the vital bases to my research. The ISI Model has a theory which enables me to locate some phases of my journey, while the acculturation theory has led me to explore how I strive to integrate into New Zealand culture. These two theories support me to critically review my previous experiences and allow me to dialogue with myself. Thus, this combination of these two theories drives the progress of my entire study.

# *Chapter Three: Research Methodology*

## **Introduction**

Although autoethnography is a relatively new methodology, it is becoming increasingly popular (Manning & Adams, 2015). While autoethnography is similar to autobiography, autoethnography utilizes the autoethnographer's own experiences and stories to research and reveal some social and cultural phenomena. This may require the autoethnographer to break with their previous methods of research methodology, developing actively literate writing skills to recount their personal experiences with the aim of evoking resonance in readers while delivering meaningful, creative research about a society. In this research, I will present my experiences of studying abroad, exploring and analyzing my stories through data that I collected from my memory and inner dialogue, including a diary, photos, transcripts and an essay written previously. In addition, it should be noted that ethical issues were considered with reference to agreements and understanding when I collected data from my friends and family.

## **What is autoethnography?**

Autoethnography can be defined as a research method in which researchers use their own personal experiences to do research and relate to social contexts and cultural backgrounds; it is the term of choice when describing studies of a personal nature (Ellis, 2004; Ellis & Bochner, 2000). "Autoethnography is an autobiographical genre of writing and research that display multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural" (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 39). In academic research, authors will utilize their own individual methods to make reflections, explore and review personal life experiences. In addition, researchers combine their personal experiences

with their research objectives in order to find the research results. As Maréchal (2010) argues, “autoethnography is a form or method of research that involves self-observation and reflexive investigation in the context of ethnographic field work and writing” (p. 44). In my opinion it builds on the bridge between researchers and their academic research, it brings life and makes me self-connect to the research. Ngunjiri, Hernandez, and Chang (2010) indicate that as a qualitative research method, the data come from the autoethnographers themselves and they utilize experiences to connect with readers within similar situations. In this case, I bring my experiences of studying in New Zealand in this study to explore the real Chinese international student life in a new environment.

To clarify, autoethnography is not autobiography, autoethnography needs to reveal some social phenomena and evoke thoughts and feelings in its readers. People sometimes associate autoethnography with autobiography, and sometimes they are similar. For example, autobiographers and autoethnographers usually write in the first person (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). Researchers may want to collect diaries, monologues, pictures, letters, impressive events, poetry, daily-life stories and daily dialogues, local cultural conventions, or conversations with family and friends (Ellis & Bochner, 2000); these are personal and to a storyteller are indispensable material: “[it] orchestrates fragments of awareness – apprehended/projected and recalled/reconstructed – into narratives and alternative text forms which (re)present events and other social actors as they are evoked from a changeable and contestable self” (Crawford, 1996, as cited in Berry & Patti, 2015, p. 167).

However, autoethnography has the mission of revealing social and cultural phenomena. “Autoethnography is a transformative tool for perceiving oneself and the world by anatomizing one’s own life” (Ellis, 2004, as cited in Balée, 2006, P. 241). Likewise, it is extremely crucial to note that autoethnography is not only the study of

self, it must contain elements of reflection and thinking about society, it should be combined with some form of social and humanistic representations such as social sciences, social cultures, ethnic cultures and policies. Spry (2001) defines “autoethnography ... as a self-narrative that critiques the situatedness of self with others in social contexts” (p. 710). It is not simply a story; autoethnography should have some profound rethinking about particular social phenomena, and the stories are written to have some impact on readers. Berry and Patti (2015) mention that good autoethnographic stories should be “applied research” (p. 265). Researchers should therefore possess a degree of social responsibility in relation to their research, in other words, autoethnography researchers should not only consider sharing their self-stories with their readers but should also consider the social influences and cultural causes behind these stories.

Autoethnography also has the mission to evoke readers’ feelings. Ellis (2000) points out that autoethnography should be able to capture readers’ minds and hearts. When a researcher narrates his/her life, emotions and worries in a narrative form, and deeply digs and probes these phenomena, it can lead to a heartfelt response from groups and people who have similar experiences. Autoethnography is ethnographical and autobiographical at the same time (Chang, 2007); Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) indicate that “autoethnography combines characteristics of autobiography and ethnography” (p. 275). Sometimes, researchers use the “natural resources” of their ethnic groups to point out their struggles and experiences to awaken and resonate with the same ethnic group. I am a Chinese international student, one of many Chinese international students throughout the world. Some of the issues that I have encountered in my life overseas may also have been experienced by other international students, both from China and from other countries. Although we may be of different races and ethnicities, many of our experiences are similar and I hope my stories will resonate with them.

In this study, I am not only writing a personal account, but I am also using myself as a case study to let readers comprehend how much difference there is between society in China and New Zealand, and how difficult it is for a Chinese international student to attempt to integrate into a new culture. What is equally important is that I will explore the reasons why acculturation has not been easy for me, and how I dealt with homesickness, acculturative stresses and my struggle with identity.

Autoethnography allows researchers to make a voice for themselves, and explore problems from a personal view that centers their emotional and subjective perspective (Ellis, 2001). In contrast, in traditional scientific approaches and investigations, researchers have to minimize themselves in their projects, and try their best to dispel the interference of their own subjective awareness in the research results (Wall, 2006). However, in autoethnography, researchers express their inner dialogue and voice their own experiences to extend understanding about a societal phenomenon. Researchers are not only not required to worry about their own subjective consciousness and emotions, but also personal experiences and responses are welcomed (Wall, 2006). Furthermore, researchers who adopt this approach can also re-recognize themselves from their self-examination: “autoethnography is an excellent vehicle through which researchers come to understand themselves and others” (Chang, 2007, p. 214). When I was collecting data (diary, pictures and transcriptions) for my autoethnography, I had the opportunity to review my life and I came to know myself more. In short, the researcher plays a central role in the autoethnographic research; when I don't need to minimize subjective consciousness in my research, I know that autoethnography is waiting for my voice.

Personally, I think doing autoethnography is a very bold idea. It usually features concrete action, emotion, embodiment, self-consciousness, and introspection (Ellis

2004, as cited in Hesse-Biber, 2017, P. 419). And “autoethnographic storytelling also often comes from and instigates moments of personal change and insight” (Berry & Patti, 2015, p. 266). For the majority of researchers have accepted traditional models of scientific research, autoethnography is far from an easy approach to adopt as it is very hard to do both science and art. On the other hand, some innovative researchers have taken bold steps in autoethnography. For example, some feminist writers advocate for research that starts with one’s own experience (Ellis, 2004). But, it is not only in feminist writing, autoethnography is also moving into a wide variety of disciplines, as in research about maths education (Luitel & Taylor, 2006), PE education (Rose, 2008), mental health care (Liggins, Kearns & Adams, 2013), and social science (Burnier, 2006), etc. Autoethnography is not only different from previous research methods, but it can also open another window for the field of research methods.

Overall, autoethnography is a young and challenging methodology, it is adventurous and a contrast to traditional, more authoritative research methods. Autoethnography is not just writing a personal account, but it also advocates that researchers link their own experiences with social phenomena to further understand aspects of society, as well as resonating with readers.

## **What is required of an autoethnographer?**

When I first came into contact with autoethnography, I was immediately interested in it. I thought the splendid storytelling attracted me, so decided to use autoethnography for my master’s thesis. Beginning this autoethnography was disconcerting because I found that being an autoethnographer is not easy; I found that in order to proceed with this method, I would need to put aside some of my old research methods and accept this new and young methodology. In addition, as a second-language learner, using a

method that requires excellent writing skills to resonate with readers' emotions, and at the same time produces research that is valuable to society, is very challenging.

My first exposure to autoethnography was during my postgraduate studies, when I read a paper called "Accommodations: Staff Identity and University Space" (Cox, Herrick, & Keating, 2012). I remember thinking that it was pretty weird whilst reading it, it did not appear to be like a serious research paper which was published, it was more like a travel experience to a few campus buildings. At that moment, I felt very confused as to why a travel experience would be published. After all, it was the first time I came into contact with this type of research method, and it was completely different from my previous readings on quantitative or qualitative research methods. I did not know how to analyze and refine the key features of the article, furthermore I didn't know how to understand it. But then again, I was attracted to this campus travelogue, even if I did not know why the authors wrote in this way. In addition, then, as I learned more intensely about autoethnography with my postgraduate teacher Barbara, my current supervisor, I had additional opportunities to hear the word *autoethnography*. She said she was interested in it and that she was a learner too. She encouraged us to try to know what is autoethnography, and she gave us some articles regarding autoethnography. She allowed us to try to understand autoethnography from those readings.

To be honest, I was still very confused in that time, since the word autoethnography actually has no Chinese translation. It is not easy to obtain some brief summary from several articles. Nevertheless, from continuous reading and learning, I progressively seemed to vaguely experience it as being gentle, vivid, and different from any previous research methods I had ever encountered before. Then, I began to be attracted to the interesting storytelling nature of autoethnography. When I read articles, I was not feeling bored, but rather as though I was reading a novel and being

very interested in the content of what I was reading as well as the style in which it was written. Through the authors' pens, I could feel their experience, their thinking, their pulse, their struggle, as well as their concerns. I came to think that I too could be an autoethnographer. Therefore, I decided to further explore such writing.

### **Put aside some old research methods**

I had been hesitant to study autoethnography. It was not easy, as it is challenging for me to withdraw from traditional research methods; correspondingly it is very hard to combine personal feelings and the social value of a study together, in order to pay attention to the authenticity of all the materials involved. Wall (2006) states how difficult is it to separate from long-held beliefs regarding the legitimacy of what is known. Likewise, so it is for me, for the reason that we are used to following traditional research and writing conventions, I find it very hard to break free from the original model.

Autoethnography demands certain high requirements from autoethnographers; Le Roux (2017) illustrate that autoethnographers are required to demonstrate excellence in autoethnographic studies. As I stated earlier, autoethnography is more than just authors writing their own stories, the mission of autoethnographers is not to be a storyteller, but they ought to possess particular thinking regarding the social environments of living people, and further possess specific awakening to positive cultural phenomena. Schwandt (2007) state that it is "a particular form of writing that seeks to unite ethnographic (looking outward at a world beyond one's own) and autobiographical (gazing inward for a story of one's self) intentions" (p. 17). I am not sure my writing and research are socially meaningful in addition to contributing to changes in the community or special circumstances, maybe they are just valuable for myself. If my stories are unattractive to readers, then it wouldn't be possible to resonate with them. So, I have questioned myself, can I perform this mission? How

can I discover social and cultural issues in my life? It took a lot of thought, and a long time, to find a good topic to relate my experiences to social phenomena. Fortunately, my supervisors helped lead me to sort out my disorderly train of thought; under their leadership, I realized my own experience as a Chinese woman who is an international student studying in New Zealand is a good and unique story, so I chose this clue for my thesis.

### **Accept autoethnography as a young methodology**

Through this research, there was a problem that bothered me, so that I did not conduct the autoethnography confidently. Maybe because autoethnography is young, it has been questioned. For example, some people do not approve of autoethnography as a valuable research method (Tolich, 2010); due to the fact that autoethnography involves the description of many of the author's own experiences that resonate with readers, it has led to critics that consider the main goal of autoethnography as therapeutic rather than analytic (Atkinson, 1997).

I worried that not many people have heard of it. When people ask me, "What kind of research are you doing?", I say: "Autoethnography." and then they usually ask: "What is that?" For practical reasons, I considered if I later went to China to job hunt with my graduation autoethnography thesis, how would people perceive my thesis as scholarly work? Because even I had worried about doing autoethnography because it is a young research method (Dauphinee, 2010; Denshire, 2014), I worried that Chinese researchers may not fully understand this relatively new research method yet; what would I do if the thesis I've worked hard to write is unappreciated and misunderstood? Berry and Patti (2015) argue that autoethnographers utilize themselves as "objects of inquiry"; however, I likewise question myself: Who are you, you are only a young and inexperienced student, you are not a famous person, why would you write your own story? Who cares about your story? You are really

narcissistic! Autobiographies are often written by prestigious people. I was of the opinion that I did not “qualify” to write such things. Even though it seemed like I was naïve at that time, it was truly an apprehension that certain of my friends and I had been concerned with autoethnography, and I was afraid to become a narcissistic person as Manning and Adams (2015) describe.

Nonetheless providentially, with the growth of learning and impacts of New Zealand education on me, I progressively found that there are several ways of obtaining knowledge and numerous ways of creating knowledge. Knowledge can not only be conveyed from the top down in an authoritative manner; knowledge can also be created through personal experiences. Even I found that it is a good way of questioning the traditional way of conducting research and acquiring knowledge. I used to sit in a chair listening in class, passively accepting knowledge, could I change my way of being to accept that I can even produce knowledge? Everyone has their own self-identity, everyone could have their own perspective of viewing the world, and everyone has the right to tell their own story, so why don't I do it? Now I have such a rare opportunity to come into contact with autoethnography, and all kinds of conditions permit me to do this. Why do I worry so much?

**Utilize excellent writing skills, create resonances with readers’ emotions, and produce valuable research to society**

Autoethnography requires very good writing skills which is an enormous challenge to a non-native speaker. I’m concerned that my writing is insufficient to clearly express my ideas, and I am afraid that my writing is so dull and powerless that it cannot evoke resonance in my readers. Le Roux (2017) refers to Ellis (2000), who specifies that:

a good autoethnographic narrative should engage one’s feeling and thinking capacities while at the same time generate in the reader questions regarding the

author's experience and position in relation to the event, how the reader may have experienced the event described and what the reader might have learned from reading the narrative. (p. 200)

So, autoethnographers must possess good writing skills for writing stories, so that the stories they write are sincere, profound and capable of impressing and moving readers. When I started writing autoethnography, I was apprehensive about "hollowing out" myself. My concern was that I have too little knowledge and too few life experiences; however, I also need to keep writing stories of my own. One of my fears entailed the fact that I was afraid that what I learned cannot support my writing. On the other hand, as I studied my own questions, I found the writing processes more exciting.

To sum up, autoethnography is seeing the world through the autoethnographer's eyes. Autoethnography requires traditional methodology to be put aside as the researcher utilizes their thoughts and experiences to connect and explain a range of social issues. Simultaneously, the autoethnographer's stories should evoke readers' feelings and produce valuable insights into society.

## **Data collection and ethics**

"As a research method, autoethnography takes a systematic approach to data collection, analysis, and interpretation about self and social phenomena involving self" (Ngunjiri, Hernandez & Chang, 2010, p.2). In this study, I will explore my life in New Zealand through personal data from my memory and inner dialogue and from materials including my diary, photographs, conversations and one essay I had written previously. Equally important, ethical issues had already been considered when I was ready to begin writing.

## **Data**

**Memory and inner dialogue:** most of the data comes from my memories and experiences of studying abroad, but there are also some family and friends' stories that come from the 2017 two- month term holidays when I returned to my home town. I analyze these experiences through ISI model and acculturation theory.

**My diary:** Chapters Four, Five and Six mainly concern my diary content, presented in the form of diary photos and the written word.

**Photographs:** the photos are an important source of data in this study and are displayed in Chapters Four, Five and Six. Essentially, these are a record of the daily life that I once photographed myself, together with photos that my friends took as well as one picture downloaded from an online source. When this involves other people's photos, I have obtained their consent.

**Conversations:** memories of the content of several conversations between myself and my friends, and my parents and I, are recounted in parts of this study. The involved parties have approved all conversations.

**An essay I had previously written:** the story of the first time I arrived in New Zealand mentioned in Chapter Five is an extract from the first essay I wrote "Studying in New Zealand: We Must "Kia Kaha", and was completed as a final assignment for my master's course (Semester 2, 2017, EDUC 712: Race, Ethnicity and Education).

## **Ethics**

In autoethnographic research, ethics are a very significant concern because stories about the self often include other people (Tolich, 2010; Wall, 2008); autoethnographers need to fully respect the autonomy of others, in addition to the voluntary nature of their inclusion (Tolich, 2010). Accordingly, in this case, I took time to seriously explain to my friends and my family how they were included in my thesis, showing each of them what I had written and advising them that my readers would know who they were. Every person has confirmed that they are happy with what I have written. So, in my study, I spent additional time explaining the writing process, sending the written material to them once it had been modified, and consulting on any question with my family and friends.

## **Summary**

Autoethnography is a young and vital research methodology that has key differences to autobiography. It challenges traditional research methodology because the researcher's personal voice is allowed to feature in autoethnography. Being an autoethnographer requires an acute perspective on the social, cultural phenomena that surround the subject, who is also required to analyze their own stories to contribute to society; furthermore, the researchers needs to evoke readers' feelings through their excellent writing skills. In this study, I use myself as my "object of inquiry" to try to understand and explore my experiences as a Chinese international student in New Zealand through the collection of data from my daily life in the form of photographs and diary entries. Where that data involved friends and family, I sought their agreement before including it in the final thesis.

## ***Chapter Four: New Zealand's attitude towards Chinese***

*In 2017, a Victoria's Secret Show was held in Shanghai. Supermodel Gigi Hadid had been invited to participate in the catwalk, but she was denied a visa to enter China. It was a hot topic at the time as there were several incidents leading up to this point. There was a video on social media showing Gigi taking a buddha cookie and making a "squinting" expression that ridiculed the appearance of Asians. Some netizens have also expressed how Gigi's mother also let her daughter modify her makeup in a reality show, saying "her (Gigi's) eyes will become more Chinese." Some netizens were very angry after watching, and there were a lot of responses in America. At that time, a popular hashtag on Twitter was "Gigiisoverparty." Later, Gigi posted on Weibo (Chinese microblogging service similar to Twitter) explaining that she was not being malicious. However, the number of people using Weibo is less than those using Twitter and Facebook, and not so many people know about Weibo. So, some people said: "Gigi, if you really want to apologise, please post this on Instagram or other popular social media platforms." However, even after several weeks, Gigi did not post this on Instagram or Facebook. This made people think that maybe she did not really want to give an explanation to people but just wanted to save her job in Shanghai. She had previously used Facebook to share her handwritten letter of apology when she was criticised for her 'racist' Melania Trump impression, so this time when she did not post any apologies on Facebook, many Chinese fans were very disappointed in her.*

*(Remembered story from November 2017)*

These unfortunate incidents involving Gigi Hadid show that anyone can be a racist; you can be discriminated against and ridiculed regardless of your social status, educational background, or ethnicity. Although the contemporary world is the world of multi-culture, in 2017 there have been various incidents of discrimination in different parts of the world. The Oxford Dictionary defines racism as "prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior" ("Racism", 2018). Also, Ip (1996) points out that racism may be a universal phenomenon.

## **Introduction**

This chapter discusses New Zealand's attitude toward Chinese across time. In the earliest days, Chinese people were at the bottom of the society and they worked hard but experienced discrimination and unfriendly policies. Even now, almost 180 years later, as a Chinese international student in New Zealand, I have experienced some stories with local people both happy and unhappy. In what follows, I will share my friends' and my own stories to explore New Zealand's attitude towards us. Later, I will state my positive hopes for future Chinese and New Zealander relationships.

## **Unwelcomed in history**

A discussion about New Zealand's attitude towards Chinese may have started when the first Chinese person arrived in New Zealand. Appo Hocton (Huang He Ting) was the first New Zealander Chinese, and he arrived in Nelson, New Zealand (Stade, 2010). In 1842, he was hired by a surgeon, Thomas Renwick. Later, Hocton set up a carting business (Li & Turner, 2017) and he joined this Western country through hard work and discipline. Appo Hocton came to New Zealand before the rise of the New Zealand Gold Rush, and thus anti-Chinese sentiment had not yet begun.

More than 20 years after Mr Appo Hocton arrived, hundreds of Chinese men came to New Zealand. They worked as gold miners to earn money to provide a better life for their family back in China. Andrews (2017) states that,

Most lived a simple life, with the aim of saving between 100 and 200 (pounds).

This would enable them to return home and buy a small farmstead – or even build a mansion like those in Kaiping. It was possible to achieve this within five years during the early years of the gold rush. (para. 12)

The Chinese men came to the Otago goldfields, where they lived in tents, shacks, caves (Li & Turner, 2017) and worked diligently so they might earn a good reputation in that time. They were mostly men because gold-rushing is hard-manual labour and also because the New Zealand government controlled Chinese men coming with their wives and children (Beatson & Dianne, 1990). In the four decades of the goldmining period from 1861, the most popular job for Chinese men was miners (Beatson & Dianne, 1990) – they were lonely and working hard.

Later, at the end of 1864, as the gold rush ebbed and Otago’s economy began to fail (Ng,1993; Zhang, 2017), the position of the Chinese deteriorated further: Chinese gold miners’ lives and economic conditions worsened. The Chinese gold miners lived in basic accommodation and didn’t have money to purchase tickets to return to their motherland. However, there were also people who exemplified the concept of “survival of the fittest”, and some of them became gardeners, laundrymen, and greengrocers (Willmott, 2009).

*Figure 4. 1: Chinese gold rush workers in Otago*



*This picture shows the tinpot living environment with Chinese gold rush workers. “Presbyterian minister Alexander Don, who was missionary to the Chinese in Otago*

*and Southland, took this photograph of fellow minister George McNeur with two such men outside their stone hut near Arrow Falls (Ip, 2005, para. 1). ”*

During the first wave of migration, New Zealand Chinese led very hard lives. Willmott (2009) indicates that the first group of Chinese men arrived in Otago in December in 1865. More and more Chinese came to the country and, by 1872, there were about 4,700 Chinese people in New Zealand, all of them males from Guangdong. Subsequently, the status of the Chinese began to gradually decline. At that time, Chinese men were almost at the bottom of society, doing the dirtiest and most tiring jobs and living under constant hardship. Given the situation, it is not hard to imagine that some anti-Chinese voice gradually began to emerge. Unfortunately, the government’s policy had not helped Chinese defend their rights but has tended to restrict Chinese people in New Zealand. Zhang (2017) indicates that, during 1878 to 1881, every year saw politicians proposing laws and policies to restrict immigration of Chinese people. In 1881, New Zealand imposed tonnage restrictions on vessels bringing men from China (ten tons of cargo, one Chinese individual), and Richard Seddon championed 19<sup>th</sup> century laws that limited Chinese immigration, whereby every Chinese person was required to pay a poll tax of 10 pounds (Willmott, 2009). In about 1890, Chinese miners were cheap labour, so merchants were willing to hire more Chinese workers for the mines. In 1896, the restrictions were increased, with a maximum of one Chinese individual being allowed for every 200 tons of cargo, and each Chinese paying a poll tax of 100 pounds (Willmott, 2009).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some discriminatory policies were aimed at Chinese people. In 1907, English tests for Chinese people started. Each Chinese person needed to read one hundred English words randomly selected by customs officers; each Chinese who left or entered New Zealand had to be thumb-printed (Ip, 1996). Moreover, racism even spread to the education. Willmott (2009) quoted a 1914 textbook: “it would take too long to tell you why we keep out people belonging to coloured races, save to say

that it is a question of ways of living and ideas, besides, of course, the desire to keep the blood of our people pure” (p. 14). In the newspaper media, such as the *New Zealand Freelance* and the *New Zealand Mail*, there were cartoons of hostile Chinese people taking away jobs from New Zealanders, trapping Maori girls and polluting the beautiful Godzone (Ip, 1996).

At that time, the Chinese in New Zealand were less welcome. In 1920, the restrictions in the Immigration Amendment Act stipulated that customs officers could refuse Chinese and other unwelcome foreigners without justification (Li & Turner, 2017). In 1936, Mickey Savage (23rd Prime Minister of New Zealand) said that “New Zealand was faced by a rushing horde of Asiatics which it must try to stem” (Willmott, 2009, p. 14). The influence of racial discrimination also spread to the education system.

As shown above, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Chinese were not welcomed. Willmott (2009) notes in that time, “anti-Chinese prejudice was rife, and was reinforced by harassment and legal discrimination” (p. 12). The original reasons for this discrimination was not only racism, but also the fact that some of the local people were afraid that their jobs would be taken by the Chinese. Willmott (2009) quotes Richard Thompson who pointed out “The youthful, mobile, male character of the Chinese labour force, unencumbered by dependents and constantly rejuvenating itself, could tackle the tasks of pioneering with an efficiency the European settlers could not hope to match” (p. 9). Perhaps because of both racial discrimination and work pressure, “British population in these islands was hostile to Chinese settlers and pressured them to assimilate to their British ways far more vigorously than occurred in North American centres like Vancouver, New York or San Francisco” (Willmott, 2009, p. 9). This assimilation even infiltrated into all aspects of life. For example, Willmott (2009) went to a New Zealand Chinese restaurant with his family in 1973, but the tableware at this Chinese restaurant was a knife and fork and the waiter brought them white bread and butter. I

think Willmott may have felt that he was in a Western restaurant because it was completely western-style dining; it is as if one were to enter a Kiwi restaurant and find nothing but chopsticks and hot green tea.

However, the New Zealand Chinese were not only socially excluded in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, but also some prominent officials and celebrities voiced their concerns (Willmott, 2009, p. 13). In that time, both Indians and Chinese people have been treated as a kind of threat with white people concerned that if they were to marry other races their descendants would make the white race inferior (Ip, 2005).

## **Improved relations between Chinese and New Zealanders**

However, NZ's history is not completely cold towards Chinese. In nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, the relations between the Maori and the Chinese were amicable (Ip, 2009). The reason may be that these two ethnic groups are not welcomed by white New Zealanders (Ip, 1996); thus, the two ethnic groups probably had compassion and understanding for each other's situation. Besides, Willmott (2009) also suggests that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Chinese had friendly contacts with some Anglo-New Zealanders and the Maori. For example, through the religion of Christianity, missionaries connected people of different races. This method not only made people who are initially estranged become brothers and sisters, but also promoted the integration of cultures. In 1934, the New Zealand Customs Department enacted regulations to abolish the poll tax on Chinese people (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2017). From this, we can see that New Zealand has slowly moved towards being more accepting to Chinese immigrants.

Moreover, what makes people feel warmer was the generosity of the New Zealand government toward Chinese refugees when Japan invaded China during the war in 1939, with nearly 500 wives and children of Chinese New Zealand residents coming to New Zealand. From 1939 to 1944, a large number of Chinese lost their home and became refugees or were killed by Japanese soldiers (Gruhl, 2017), and fortunately, New Zealand provided them a tolerant place to settle down. At that time, Chinese men, who had worked hard for many years in New Zealand, could finally reunite with their families. This period represents a Chinese watershed in the history of New Zealand, as New Zealand Chinese became settled families instead of temporary migrants (Li & Turner, 2017).

Later, with the development of some historical events in China such as New China – People’s Republic of China in 1949 (Elder & Ayson, 2012) – and some political changes and New Zealand’s tolerance of refugees, more Chinese have come to New Zealand. However, Ip (1996) indicates that the social circle of these Chinese people is tiny, and they only live within their own community, observing discipline and keeping a safe yet cautious life. They were very careful with local people, and at that time mixed marriages were less accepted by social groups and communities. Some New Zealand Chinese children’s parents care very much about their children’s socialization as well as about their children’s interaction with Europeans. Willmott (2009, p. 20) mentions that as a child, he was taught “keep your head down” from an early age, not to make statements in public, not to attract the attention of others, only display good behaviour. They were low-key, tried to avoid disturbing anything, and just wanted to keep safe. Willmott (2009) believes that the Chinese behaviour of “keeping your head down” is related to Confucian ethics in which should be very humble and avoid being different. Until today, Chinese are still impressed by Confucius’s views and are educated to be low-key and modest people. I will describe

this more later; also in Chapter Five and Six, I will refer to how Confucian methods influence Chinese collectivist society.

At the same time, I think the cautious life of New Zealand Chinese of that time period may also reflect the social environment. After all, as an unpopular ethnic minority, New Zealand Chinese were afraid of polluting the reputation of all Chinese people because of inappropriate behaviour, which could cause their compatriots to suffer from discrimination. The reason why they were afraid to stand out in public may be because they were afraid of causing social disapproval (Ip, 1996). They are even more afraid of their own words and deeds causing dissatisfaction among Kiwis.

After all, Chinese New Zealanders were to “know their place” and should not expect anything; although they were New Zealand citizens, they were treated as second-class citizens. New Zealand Chinese were worried every day, and many Chinese experienced discrimination (Ip, 1996). Besides, the mainstream attitude in New Zealand society was “patronizing and condescending” in the 1960s and 1970s, New Zealand Chinese wanted to integrate into New Zealand society, but of that time they may have been very cautious and less confident. Moreover, there were also vicious incidents of verbal abuse which sometimes turned into a physical attack (Ip, 1996). Based on highly cautious attitude towards life of the New Zealand Chinese at that time, I assumed that the relationship between the Chinese and the New Zealanders was not ideal.

Racial discrimination against New Zealand Chinese was not only entrenched, it also infiltrated all aspects of life, even into the doctor’s essential areas of expertise as well. Ip (1996, p. 116) mentions the case of a Chinese man born in New Zealand, but the medical school rejected him because of his surname (Chinese name). This is very unfortunate, for the person who was born and lived in New Zealand for many years,

yet even his outstanding achievements could not be treated equally. This is also confirmed by the sentence, “We are still considered fifth generation Chinese as Chinese, while second generation British were already Kiwis” (Willmott, 2009, p. 22). In that history, the ingrained ideas of some New Zealanders limited the development of some diligent Chinese. No matter how hard you worked, as long as you had colored skin, it was difficult to get social recognition and get integrated into society.

## **Experience of unfriendly treatment**

Fortunately, times are changing and the old ideas are gradually changing too. The 1977 Citizenship Act abolished distinction between “Commonwealth” and “foreign” citizens, recognizing only New Zealand citizens and “others” (“New Zealand nationality law”, 2018; Green, 2005). This signalled the official abandonment of an Anglo-New Zealand identity for a more comprehensive identity embracing all citizens, including Maori and those from countries other than Britain. It marked the beginning of a bi-cultural identity leading to a multi-cultural one. This open attitude and the inclusive political environment have inspired New Zealand’s open economic market. New Zealand began to vigorously welcome overseas investors to develop and construct New Zealand. The requirement of investing immigrants is regarding their individual ability and economic resource, and an individual investor will not be restricted by nationality, colour or religion.

This welcoming attitude has led more foreign investors to come to New Zealand. Some people come to New Zealand to invest in business, some want to find good jobs, some come to study, some to travel, and so on. According to statistics, the Asian population in New Zealand is projected to grow from 540,000 to between 1.2 and 1.4 million in 2038 (Stats NZ: New Zealand’s Asian population could reach 1.4 million by 2038, 2017). Furthermore, 30% of Asians in New Zealand are very young, around

20–34 years old (2013 Census QuickStats about culture and identity, 2017). This also means that in the next ten years, the Asia population will grow rapidly in New Zealand. Willmott (2009) pointed out that some people use the term “Asian Invasion” to describe the recent scene. It is no longer just a matter of racial discrimination, but also a rapidly growing population that is placing some pressure on New Zealanders.

In New Zealand, where sudden Asian population growth is particularly marked, some people have discontent in their hearts. I once encountered an unfriendly incident that was much like one story written by Ip (1996). In the book, Miss Violet’s daughter was rudely treated by salespeople when they bought clothes at Auckland’s Newmarket. This story reminds me of an uncomfortable experience when I was shopping at Auckland city, and I fully understand her feelings of being treated in an unfriendly manner.

It was about a year and a half ago when I experienced unfriendly treatment. The reason why I call it “unfriendly treatment” is that I was not sure whether it is racial discrimination or not and I cannot give an accurate definition of that. It may be because I was too sensitive, or maybe that person just had a different opinion about me, either way, I didn’t consider it as a serious level of racial discrimination. That story is this:

*I went into a clothing store in Auckland, and I selected nice pants, I wanted to try them on in the fitting room, so I lined up in front of the dressing room. There was a young, white salesperson and she was in charge of suitable rooms for customers. There was a white girl in front of me and the salesperson smiled at her and she greeted her “hello, how are you.”; but when I turned, the salesperson suddenly became like a “poker face”, she did not say any words to me, she just gave me a number plate and directly pointed at the dressing room. Then I went into the fitting room to try the pants. However, at that particular time, I was not very concerned about the attitude changes that she had made to customers, I was befuddled by the joy of buying new pants. Later, when I came out of the dressing room, I saw that the salesperson was having fun talking to the white girl who was in front of me earlier.*

*But suddenly, the “poker face” came again when I arrived, she just took my pants and the number plate without saying anything; even more surprising, she politely greeted the white girl who was behind me. Later on, I continued to shop, but when I was shopping, I kept whispering in my mind, I still felt strange and uncomfortable with the past experience. I had no idea why her attitude was as enigmatic as changing weather. But she did not say anything lousy to me nor did she do anything excessive. If I had asked her: “What do you mean, why are you discriminating against me?” I think she would say no, because nobody wants to admit that they are racists. Furthermore, there is no evidence that could be shown that she was discriminating, and I cannot be very sure that she had any racial discriminations against me.*

*(Remembered story from December 2016)*

Once I started writing autoethnography and began to seriously review this matter, I gradually realized that this experience was most likely one of racial discrimination. I had not done anything wrong, but yet she was being inexplicably “unfriendly.” Later, when I recalled this experience, I felt sad and angry, I know New Zealand is a multicultural country and most New Zealanders are very kind, but I couldn’t keep calm because that was the first time I was discriminated against with no reason. However, my frustrated emotion cannot help to change what had happened.

From this incident, I have found that we are very vague about the boundaries of racial discrimination. Sometimes I cannot determine whether it is discrimination or just personal problems. Only their attitude allows us to discover that “there might have been some problem, but where did it go wrong?”. We can’t necessarily say it is racism because there is no obvious evidence such as the “unfriendly treatment” that I encountered. The salesperson did not have any apparent words to me, and we did not have any physical conflict, therefore, I did not know whether I was being discriminated against or not. But the only thing I knew was the inexplicable and uncomfortable treatment. For instance, my friend had also encountered the same kind of treatment. She said:

*I paid the bus fare but when I got in, but the driver gave me the wrong amount of change. I kindly reminded the driver that I needed to be given more money; but the driver seemed very unhappy and impatient. I also had the uncertainty of whether the driver was discriminating against me or not, I cannot tell the reasons but I just felt uncomfortable with that situation. Perhaps the driver thought I was too slow when I got on the bus? Or maybe the driver is just a sullen and impatient person.*

*(Remembered conversation from September 2017)*

Sometimes, we can guess whether we have been discriminated against through the attitude which people give us, but we may never know what they really think.

Sometimes, discrimination may also be “invisible” which can seem superficially friendly, but there is still discrimination in the deep heart. This creates a real challenge for Asian people to leave their compatriots and move overseas, especially for international students who are alone and helpless. Collins (2006) claims that “the media representations of these students have fixed a diverse group of individuals within a singular racial identity that is known by stereotypical economic, cultural and social characteristics” (p. 217). Due to that, sometimes Asian international students may face more than just personal racial discrimination, some unfair media opinions may also play a role in pushing international student communities into marginalization.

Whenever I see news about racial discrimination or hear about it from my friends, I’m scared and worried about myself, I cannot imagine what would happen if I was being discriminated against. After all, I love it here, and if I happen to experience any sort of racial discrimination, I will indeed be sad. Fortunately, I am really blessed that in a multicultural country like New Zealand, every Kiwi I meet is kind and friendly. My teachers and my classmates are also helpful and generous. I believe New Zealand is a pure land of the world. Most people here are tolerant, kind and generous, and I truly enjoy my life here. I believe that a person certainly cannot represent the entire ethnic

group, just as I cannot represent all the ethnic Chinese people. Consequently, an “unfriendly” incident must never represent all Kiwis.

## **Looking forward to the future**

Although some people are averse to the “aggression of Asians”, fortunately I was born during a more liberal time, now the world is more lenient. I have been to eight countries and I have never encountered the issue of racial discrimination more strongly than my experience in the clothing shop. Also, I think that educated New Zealanders are very tolerant of foreigners, and I personally think that the New Zealand social environment is still very welcoming and accepting of foreigners. I always believe that I am in a gorgeous country and I have encountered many warm things in Auckland, as exemplified in this story:

*On a rainy winter night, I was waiting for the green light to cross road. I hadn't brought my umbrella, and I was standing there alone. At this moment, a kindly white lady holding an umbrella came toward me and gave me the umbrella to keep me from the rain. She said with a smile: “Oh... it is so freezing!” I was happy and surprised by her gesture, and after we crossed the road, we said goodnight to each other. Although it was really freezing weather, it was very warm in my heart. So, I went home and shared the moment with my friends, then some Chinese students in New Zealand shared similar experiences with me. They had also encountered many gracious events in New Zealand, where the Kiwis are friendly and kind.*

*(Remembered conversation from April 2017)*

One more thing happened to my roommate Rina, when she experienced a serious car crash in 2017 in the North Auckland area:

*In that accident, her car was ruined and deformed; the airbag inflated and she felt terrified. However, at her most helpless time, there were several well-intentioned witnesses who spontaneously organized the scene. These people were giving her care, and a passer-by Kiwi nurse came to the car and said: “Are you ok? Please stay calm,*

*you will be fine.” Then the nurse put a blanket over Rina, “Please keep your place and don’t move ok? Do you feel at all injured at your head, neck?” At the same time, there were kind people who helped Rina call the ambulance and police; some passers-by continued to comfort her, had her remain calm ... It is terrible to have an accident in a strange country, but she was touched to have received so much help from kindly Kiwis.*

*(Remembered story November 2017)*

Later on, Rina recalled:

*“That was so horrible, I cannot remember everything, I don’t know what happened. I was completely scared and overwhelmed; I didn’t know what I should do, what I should say, I had never encountered this problem, I almost lost my life and I almost died... but I am so lucky that I received these Kiwis’ enthusiastic help, I really appreciate them so much, I feel so warm when I recall those moments.”*

*(Remembered story from November 2017)*

However, some people disagree that New Zealanders have friendly attitudes to Chinese. Ward and Masgoret (2004) indicate that “less than half of the students believed that New Zealanders had positive attitudes toward international students, and one in three believed that international students often experience discrimination in New Zealand” (p. 10). Nevertheless, I don’t want to overlook those people who are friendly to me because I have experienced a few unhappy events.

*Now I work as a part-time teacher at a primary school in Western District of Auckland and that is an enjoyable experience, I will never forget the scene before my first time to work. That day, I took an Uber, and I was chatting with the driver, he heard about today is my first day to go to work, and he observed that I looked quite discomposed and nervous. Then he tried to comfort me through all the trip; he had been chatting with me, so I forgot to be nervous anymore, he encouraged me, praised me, gave me confidence, even told me jokes. I was really touched. Maybe I was just a strange passenger for him on that day, but I can feel that he was very sincere in giving help to a stranger. Despite the heavy rain and cold weather in that day, the encouragement he gave me was so warm and undoubtedly made me felt confident;*

*even though the weather was bad, I was in a good mood, I felt warmly toward New Zealanders.*

*(Remembered moment from April 2018)*

*Figure 4. 2: Heavy rain on my first day of teaching*



*I took this photograph on April 2018 on the day that was my first time for doing this part-time job. The picture shows strong winds and very heavy rain. In these Chinese characters I said: “Super heavy rain ~ Today I met two kind-hearted people. The first one helped me cheer up, and he told me jokes when we were going to school, he let me feel not stressed and reduced my nervous during my first teaching. After teaching classes, I met heavy rain again and the Uber driver dropped me off at the bus station, which was a few blocks away from where we had previously arranged, as he didn’t want me to get wet, and he didn’t even charge me for the extra distance. God bless~”*

*(Remembered moment from April 2018)*

Many things support me to believe the present attitude of the Kiwis to the Chinese is good. And some reasons for the improvement of the mainstream attitude in New Zealand society may be due to the growing number of diplomatic relations between

New Zealand and China. In fact, I am very optimistic regarding future relationships between the two countries.

First, because economic globalization has already become an irreversible trend (Shangquan, 2000), parochial conservatism can no longer conform to the tide of the present era. We should adopt an inclusive and open attitude to accommodate different ethnic groups. I believe New Zealand and China are making efforts to this end. When I was in high school in China, I learned that New Zealand is a beautiful sheep country with simple folk customs. Although some New Zealanders have historically been not very friendly towards the Chinese, I think this trend has changed. Education in New Zealand is constantly emphasizing zero discrimination and firmly opposes discrimination.

Second, New Zealand's economy is complementary to that of China and the two countries aspects of development and prosperity are closely linked to each other (Beal & Kang, 2016). Furthermore, compared with other Western countries that are vigilant and prejudiced about the rise of China, New Zealand's attitude is more peaceful and natural. This good partner relationship not only represents better economic cooperation between the two countries, but also promotes non-governmental exchanges. Duncan (2017) refers that on 2017, New Zealand signed a cooperation agreement with China on the One Belt and One Road (OBOR) initiative, and New Zealand became the first Western country to sign an agreement with China. As of May 2017, Immigration New Zealand can move forward Chinese citizens who travel into Zealand and conduct business activities, issuing them with multiple-entry visas for more than five years, while the visa fees remain unchanged. At the same time, the SmartGate facility has been extended to Chinese passport holders (New Zealand customs service, 2017).

These good policies remind us to keep the welcoming attitude, and I also hope that relations between New Zealand and China can grow increasingly closer, less hostile and more tolerant. I also believe that economic associations and non-governmental exchanges between the two countries will inevitably move in a proper direction.

## **Summary**

While historically, Chinese had unwelcoming treatment in New Zealand's history, and both I and some friends have unfriendly treatment experiences, however, I don't think that this represent all modern New Zealanders' attitudes. Following the continuous exchanges and integration of the peoples of the two countries and cultural communications, we have become more understanding of each other. Recently, I hope to experience more positive attitude and look forward to our relationship in the future ahead.

## *Chapter Five: My Life in Aotearoa*

### **Introduction**

This chapter shows my integration in five phases of adjustment to New Zealand culture, and it also shows that I experienced adaptation processes. In Phase 1 pre-exposure, I had some illusions about my new life and made some preparations in terms of language and cooking skills for the new environment. In Phase 2 exposure, I constantly adjusted myself to New Zealand's individualistic life, and to new patterns of learning; also, I hid my life and academic pressure, and bore the burden by myself, rather than telling my parents. In Phase 3 enclosure, I stood in my small socialising circle and suffered from stress, but in Phase 4 emergence the situation became better. I made some good friends who helped me to integrate faster into the local culture. I also tried to explore my new identity but met with conflict with my Chinese cultural values. Fortunately, in Phase 5 integration, I overcame those issues and found a suitable way to be myself. However, I may only have achieved half-way and not completed all the requirements of Phase 5; and so far I have not started Phase 6, internationalization of Kim's model. Meanwhile, the acculturation theory runs through Phases 2, 3, 4, and 5, in which I constantly adjust myself throughout the behavioural shifts, adaptation to the new culture, even meeting acculturative stress in each phase.

## The early phase

### Phase One: Getting ready to leave China

Pre-exposure is the first phase I encountered as a prospective international student. As Kim (2012) outlines, this step comprises international students looking forward to experiencing a new environment in the future.

Prior to arriving in New Zealand, I received a conditional offer from the university, during the first half of the year. As a result, the place I frequented most during that time period was the library in my hometown. According to Kim (2012), throughout Phase 1, students seek to learn about the new culture and educational system, as well as to gain proficiency in the language. Together with my friends, Bridget and Sofia, who were planning to travel to Australia and Canada, respectively, we visited the library almost every day to prepare for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Although learning English was undoubtedly challenging for us, we firmly believe that our new future lives would be both remarkable and meaningful. I imagined a very active student social life, filled with parties in my apartment in New Zealand, as typically portrayed in all United States-based television dramas. I envisaged Bridget in a relationship with a golden-haired boyfriend, and we both believe that Sofia's life would be very "cool", mirroring the cold climate in Canada. By studying English together, we enjoyed sharing some interesting news and information about the countries that we were planning to travel to, although we were also worried about what the future might hold.

*Qinyun: "What if I can't graduate? I see some international students on the Internet are saying that it is very difficult to pass the exams in University of Auckland!"*

*Sofia: "Don't worry; I think there is a high percentage failure rate in tests among the many Chinese students who study in Canada. I'm concerned that I have not had enough opportunities to improve my English."*

*Bridget: “It is the same in Australia! But as long as you are planning go abroad, forget your mother tongue, and just try to keep in contact with the local community.”  
(Remembered conversation from February 2016).*

Throughout that time, we encouraged one another to learn English, carry out research on our future universities, and even to master a number of specific skills to help prepare for life abroad, such as learning how to cook and drive.

*Figure 6. 1: Cookery training*



*This photo was taken at my home in China in August 2016. In the picture, I was learning to cook under the guidance of my mother. Prior to this, I had almost never cooked and could only prepare simple meals, as when I was at school (including universities), they were all equipped with canteens and there were also multiple restaurants located on the nearby streets. In addition, in my family, my parents usually did the cooking, while I took responsibility for doing the washing. In order to be able to better adapt to life abroad, my parents strongly urged me to take up cookery “training”.*

As I had never left my country of origin before, my values were still predominantly influenced by traditional Chinese values; for instance, filial piety. I thought that

travelling abroad to study would be a journey of a lifetime, but I would return to China once I successfully completed my education. I believe that “while a man’s parents were alive, he should not travel far afield” (The Analects of Confucius, 2018, para. 4), which means younger Chinese had better not go far away from their parents, because Chinese people have the responsibility to take care and accompany their parents. Furthermore, my values were still deeply influenced by a Chinese collectivist culture and I agree that family harmony and cohesion is very important. Also, I should not live too far from my parents. Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai and Lucca (1988) defines collectivist cultures as one whereby “individuals may be induced to subordinate their personal goals to the goals of some collective, which is usually a stable ingroup (e.g., family, band, tribe), and much of the behavior of individuals may concern goals that are consistent with the goals of this ingroup” (p.324).

Kim (2012) states that students’ identities are influenced by their cultural background, as well as their family and social values. Therefore, at that time, I envisioned that I would return to my hometown and remain with my parents forever. I also planned to establish a perfect family life, as many Chinese people invariably do.

*Figure 6. 2: Family photograph*



*This is a family photograph taken by Sofia in March 2016. From the left is my mother, myself and my father. It was my father's birthday. I had gone to the library with Sofia to study IELTS in the morning. At noon I invited Sofia to attend my father's birthday party. After lunch, I returned with her to the library to continue my studies. The photo clearly depicts a happy and loving family life, which is probably aided by the fact that I was also yearning to experience my future new life.*

Overall, in this first phase of pre-exposure to the new culture, I was worried about the new future life but enjoyed preparing for a new life while, at the same time, I maintained some of the thoughts and beliefs that were strongly instilled in me, and which influenced my cultural values.

## **Phase Two: Travelling to and arriving in New Zealand**

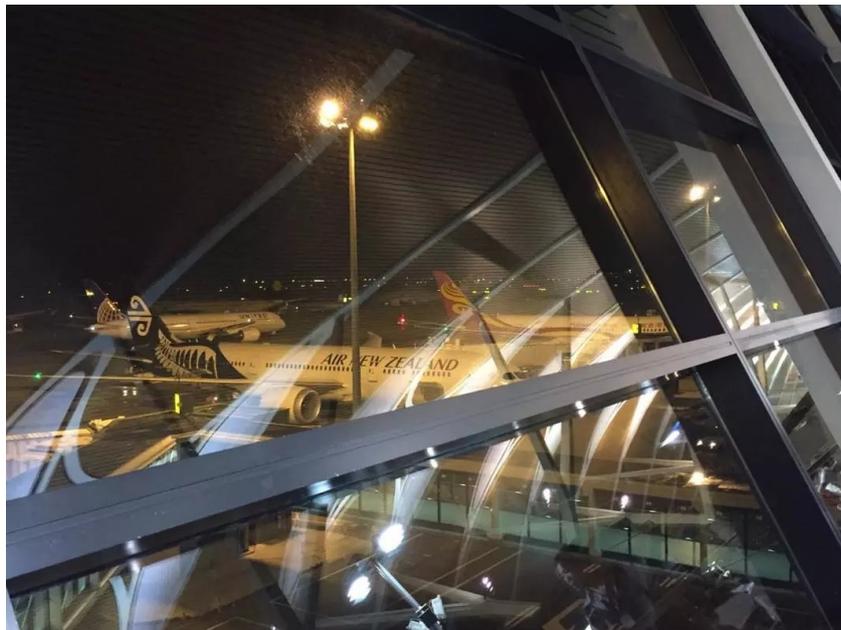
Exposure is the second phase that I met as an international student arriving in New Zealand. As Kim (2012) notes at the beginning of a new life, students encounter many problems in their new life, although they decide to face challenges without their parents' help. I encountered some unforeseen issues; however, I opted to face them by

myself. Meanwhile, to survive challenges, sometimes I had to shift my behaviour, old values (e.g. collectivism) and adjust myself to New Zealand where individualism is emphasised (Tranter & Pawson, 2001). I will explain and discuss collectivism and individualism later in this chapter and in the sixth chapter. Berry (1992) mentions that people who move to a new cultural place could change their behaviour from the old cultural background and try to adopt a new culture. However, I felt stress from integrating into a new culture and from behaviour shifts, which Berry (1992) described as acculturative stress.

*Later in 2016, I said goodbye to my hometown Urumqi. I brought two 23kg suitcases and flew 6 hours from Urumqi to Shanghai, and flew another 13 hours to Auckland, New Zealand. Yes, I moved to a Western country from an Eastern country. It is not only far geographically, but also the cultures of the two countries seem to be very different. Therefore, I consequently have experienced some problems I had never thought of before.*

*(Previous essay, November 2017)*

*Figure 6. 3: Leaving home*



*I took this picture in Shanghai Airport on 17 September 2016, when I was about to fly to New Zealand.*

I have been looking forward and have imagined going abroad would be like the U.S. dramas, will we have crazy parties in apartments? Or, at least what will the normal Chinese university students' group life be like? However, when I arrived in New Zealand, I entered Phase 2 and found my "heritage diverges from the unfamiliar educational and cultural environment" (Kim, 2012, p.108). My new apartment was not only different from what I had imagined but also different from the Chinese apartment life which I had experienced.

I lived in an apartment in the city when I first came to NZ. I was firstly surprised and thought: "New Zealand apartments have mixed genders living together; it is definitely not allowed in China." In my undergraduate university, students should sign their name and students ID if they want to go to opposite-sex dormitories. I watched the boys in the elevator and thought: "*Ok, I couldn't wear pyjamas out of my room.*" Then, I arrived in my room which was not big. The apartment had three bedrooms, one per girl for our private space. One kitchen, one bathroom and one living room were for public areas which we shared. It was very clean here and I was relieved that I had good roommates. However, I was frustrated to find that my own room was extremely small, and some basic furniture, one table, one bed, one chair and one wardrobe, were crowded together; I started to miss my hometown's house when I put down my luggage. Later, my lovely roommates were coming to say hello to me, in conversations we knew we were different in race, age, studied at different universities for different majors which meant we were less able to study or eat together, we had to do everything individually.

*"Oh, how could we be going to class and have lunch together?" I was worried.  
(Previous essay, November 2017)*

At that time, I still maintained my mindset as a traditional Chinese student and watched everything around me, as Kim (2012) illustrates that students use their own cultural heritage to respond to new challenges in the exposure phase.

*Figure 6. 4: A typical international student's room*



*This image is one of an apartment room and downloaded from a Website (EasyRoomate, 2018). I lived in a room that had a similar layout. The image shows a very simple room with three basic pieces of furniture: Bed, desk and cabinet like my first room in New Zealand.*

Sullivan (2009) mentions that in a collectivist culture, people may emphasise that the group is more important than individuals, and they consider serving the group. The majority of Chinese society is “collectivism” (Hofstede, 1993). Under the influence of my background culture, I was a typically collectivist person, and I used to enjoy the group life. However, Tranter and Pawson (2001) refer that in New Zealand, individualism is dominant, which means not bothering about others. Hofstede (1994) also mentions that “individualism” is the degree to which people in a country prefer to act as individuals rather than as members of groups. The opposite of individualism is

“collectivism”. I lived in a collectivist culture for over twenty years. What should I do in this individualist life?

The only way for me was to accept the new life pattern, which meant I needed to change my old behaviour and values to the New Zealand students’ form. Berry (1992) illustrates that “changes in behaviour away from previously learned patterns are towards those more frequently found in the new society” (p.73). For that time, being an independent individual was more suitable for my situation and for life in New Zealand. Thus, despite how much I missed my collectivist group life, I needed to forget the old way but fit into the individualistic society. I decided to reduce expectations from the outside world and help myself. In addition, Kim (2012) mentions that in the exposure phase, due to international students having thoughtful decisions of studying abroad, they may prepare to encounter difficulties. Although sometimes change is hard and painful to me, but I had already chosen to experience changes, so I have to be responsible for the decisions.

In the beginning, I felt excited because I was trying to learn a new way of life. I cooked some Chinese food to share with my roommates, and I used my poor English to chat with them. However, I gradually felt the fresh passion was depleting, and tiredness, frustration and stress took over. The feeling of stress and tiredness came to an extent from shifting to a new life, learning a new pattern of education and struggling with homesickness.

New Zealand education had many challenges for me. The first to me was the inability to understand English. I could grasp a few keywords, and it was very difficult to comprehend the whole meaning of what teachers said. Others, like some of my New Zealand teachers did not like writing notes on the whiteboard, although my Chinese teachers did. I found it hard to clearly understand lessons without notes. Holmes

(2004) indicates that some students “become confused when a teacher rejects overhead projected notes and began to enrich lectures by using humor and examples” (p. 299). However, I had to accommodate this new way of study, otherwise I would not pass tests. I attempted to recall the teachings through the class PowerPoints and my class notes after returning home, which often required extra work and effort.

Secondly, it was not easy for me to apply creative critical thinking. Liang (1990) presents that readers usually respect authoritative ideas. I have a tendency to respect authoritative opinion rather than to make critical judgments. However, in New Zealand, students potentially need to question the knowledge. Also, the majority of my homework required me to apply critical thinking and the expression of my personal opinion through writing. Butcher and McGrath (2004) suggest that students found it difficult to change to a new learning pattern when they had been educated in a rote-learning style and to be respectful to knowledge from their teachers. However, I withdrew some of my usual cultural behaviours and methods which were essential before, so that I can adopt new behaviours and actions to fit into New Zealand’s lifestyle and learning style. Moreover, as Berry (2012) expounds, “in the case of withdrawal, change is in a direction which reduces pressures from the environment” (p.71). Thus, I consciously made an effort to adjust ways of thinking and to accept methods of critical thinking and writing.

Possibly because of fitting into the new pattern of life and learning, I was always tired, stressed and homesick after I finished school. Verthelyi (2018) defines homesickness as actively thinking about home and people with sadness, and lacking the sense of belonging to the new place. I usually felt hopeless, lonely, depressed and missed my family at night. I cried on many nights, and I missed my Chinese group life and everything else. However, after several sorrowful nights, I still had to encourage myself to face the difficulties of the next day.

However, my parents did not know that I faced these problems; I did not want to tell them the truth because I was afraid that they would worry about me, or I am afraid that they would speak to me, and say, “*come back my daughter*”, and that I would subsequently agree to return. Thus, I only wanted to say particularly good things or funny stories to them, and to avoid saying certain bad things purposely. Besides, I did not tell them because they could not really help me. They do not know the English language nor Western society; those who are not living in New Zealand will never understand the situation of people living here; they cannot imagine what issues are being confronted here. Kim (2012) also indicates that in the exposure phase, international students begin to segregate themselves from familial direction and increase their own independent characters. Therefore, I am trying to bear the burden of all things by myself.

Nevertheless, whenever I felt life in a new environment was stressful, I would remember that studying abroad was my choice, and I knew I had to encounter this new pattern of life. Thus, I needed to open myself up to meet challenges, and change some of my heritage behaviour to New Zealand ways. I likewise told myself that it was only the first challenge I had encountered and then I will face more and more difficulties; thus, I must overcome it, I cannot be weak, I must “Kia Kaha” (stay strong).

In the exposure phase, I had been greatly influenced by my Chinese cultural values and actively prepared for my new life. When I arrived in New Zealand, I encountered many issues in my life and studies; however, study aboard is my choice so I cannot give up, I made a great effort to learn new patterns of Western society and adjusted myself to fit into the society. In the following section, I will picture my next stages of dull routine life and conflict with self.

## **The middle phase**

I would like to clarify that I think the boundaries of securing self in Phase 3 and disclosing self in Phase 4 are blurry because I do not think I have completely closed and secured myself in Phase 3, but tried to disclose myself in the meantime. Although my social circle was small in Phase 3, I did not give up trying to escape from the boring life. I had also sought ways to attend more activities, and met with friends. So, personally, my Phase 3 and Phase 4 have no clear boundaries.

Enclosure – securing self – is the third phase I experienced as an international student in New Zealand. In this phase, I had a small circle of friends, but I was not sure whether this is because I chose to join the familiar Chinese group or because I did not have much chance to socialise with the dominant group. Also, in this phase, I was still trying to shift my behaviours to fit into the culture of New Zealand, but I suffered from acculturative stress and I felt lonely, helpless and anxious.

My circle of friends had become extremely small after I came to New Zealand. Most of my friends were Chinese, and I knew them through my English language class or through other Chinese friends. I knew very few friends from other countries through my postgraduate classes or my previous roommates. Kim (2012) indicates that during the phase of enclosure, international students could be protecting themselves in their own identity groups instead of socialising with people from different cultures. Also, Dalglish and Chan (2005) show that most international students spend time with friends who have a similar cultural background. I was not satisfied with my social circle in New Zealand, because I am an outgoing person and have many friends in China. However, in New Zealand, I just felt like I was isolated from the outside world. I asked myself: “*What’s happened? Why?*” and spoke of my dejection to my friend Nana, who is very amiable.

*Qinyun: "What do you think of our circle of friends? It's so small!"*

*Nana: "Maybe... I think probably it's the language. Because we can use English in daily lives or homework, that's not too much of a problem, but it's hard to use a second language to do deep communication with locals."*

*Qinyun: "Yes, I agree, deep communications require more words, even some knowledge about religions, culture... that is difficult."*

*Nana: "Yes, and I also think it is because they (local students) have their own circle of friends."*

*Qinyun: "I get you. Some of my classmates are of different ages, some of them are getting married, some have grandkids, some will take care of their families after classes. But I am... yeah, I just feel it is hard to integrate in their group because I am alone here, I don't know what we should say, don't know many topics. Oh, you know, I actually don't have too many classmates. I just have two classes each week and each class has maybe six to ten students. We may not be very familiar with each other."*

*Nana: "Right. Although my classmates are mostly the same age as me, some of them are friends from high school. They enjoy their own group, but I am not in the group. And I am very busy with my classes, as I have classes every day, and even some of these classes have over fifty or hundred students, but most of my friends are Chinese too."*

*(Remembered conversation from April 2017)*

However, I want to integrate into the new environment. "Results indicate that the number of cross-national interactions is typically low, that international students expect and desire greater contact" (Ward, 2006, p. 2). I have chosen to study in New Zealand because I love it here, and I want to know the local culture and customs more, but in reality this did not work out too well. I reflected upon my experiences and thought:

*"Is it because of my large amount of studies that I haven't had time to broaden my social circle? Or is it because I love to stay in the familiar small Chinese social circle, so I have much time to study?"*

*(Remembered internal monologue from April 2017)*

I do not know the answer, but I have spent most of my time studying. As I noted before, due to language barriers, I usually review lessons after classes, and I also need to make more effort than other students. Thus, I was living a dull series of lifeline points: university, home, and supermarkets, it was a very routine-driven daily life, as Kim (2012) suggested. Moreover, most of the shops in New Zealand close after 6 pm, so I feel that there is no place to hang out with friends when I finish my studies. That is something of a torment for me, because in China, most of the big malls as well as some shops and restaurants will open until at least 9 pm.

I know I should follow New Zealand's way and shift my behaviour to acculturate myself into the culture; however, at the time, I failed to do so, and the process of acculturation had beaten me to the bottom. Berry (1997) mentions that acculturative stress would occur if the individual has not been able to fit into the new environment. During that time, for reasons including academic anxiety, life stress, and humdrum life, I often felt bored and depressed, and I sometimes even had insomnia. Some nights, I just played with my phone until midnight, but I do not know what I was though; sometimes I worried too much about anything, like what would happen if I could not pass the exam; what about if I could not find a job; what if I wasted money; how were my parents getting on; what if they knew about my bad situation... This all makes me very tired. Due to the acculturative stress, I was in a low mental health status as Berry (1992) pointed out.

Overall, the enclosure phase of securing self was a tough process that placed me under much stress. The small social circle has limited me in contacting fresh and interesting things, and the busy studies have made my life tedious. It is a bad cycle, but I could not get out of it at the time.

The emergence, disclosing self, is the fourth stage that I encountered as an international student in New Zealand. In this phase, I sought to cultivate a new mindset during my time in New Zealand. I tried to understand the dominant culture, attend more activities with friends, and search for a new identity. However, some of my new identity conflicts with the old.

I have continuously been stressed in the enclosure phase, which was not healthy, and so I wanted to find somebody who could help me to escape from my poor condition. Kim (2012) indicates that international students try to search for a new identity and break the psychosocial closure in the phase of emergence, disclosing self. I tried to search for new activities and asked for academic help. From the university website, I found the Student and Academic Services and booked to see a Speech Language Therapist, Alaine. Before we met, I thought she might be just a regular English oral therapist, but I never realised she would push the process to enable me to grow up and further integrate my identities. We talked about my life in NZ and discussed some issues that I had encountered, but at the end of the meeting, she said,

*“Dear, I know it’s a big challenge in your life, but remember, you are just 24 years old. Who knows what is going to happen tomorrow? Don’t worry too much, just enjoy life now.”*

*(Remembered comments from September 2017)*

During the discussion, I did not think too much about her words; but once I left, her voice played on my mind. I took the bus and sat near the window thinking:

*“You are just 24 years-old. Who knows what is going to happen tomorrow?”  
“Yes, but what do other 24 year-old girls do?”*

*(Diary entry, September 2017)*

I saw that the summer was coming, and people were enjoying the sunshine and walking on the busy streets wearing light, refreshing clothes, laughing loudly. I did not know their ages, but I was in admiration of their pleasure and liveliness. My internal voice said,

*“Yes, 24 year-old girls could be like this, full of happiness and confidence, healthy and full of life.”*

*(Diary entry, September 2017)*

I realised that I did not want to be depressed and bored with life. I was beginning to drop my psychosocial closure, and started to look differently, as I watched daily life unfolding around me. I was thinking:

*“Look at these surroundings, you are now in a beautiful, peaceful place. You have been given a great opportunity to experience life abroad, but what are you doing? Just staying at home or going to university every day? Wasting your precious youth on depression and anxiety? No! You can’t live like this! You must change, go, find your own way of living here; find your own place in this society; go, find your own suitable identity. No more time wasting.”*

*(Remembered internal monologues from September 2017)*

Thus, I decided to learn from being in New Zealand. My previous changes were just for survival, but this time they were about enjoying life in New Zealand. I resolved to voluntarily change my old behaviour towards a new identity. Berry (1992) illustrates that behavioural shifts include learning behaviours from the new culture and shedding characteristics of the old cultural background. I dropped some of my previous behaviour and started to adopt new practices.

One of the interesting changes is that I began to wear jandals and attempted to walk on the street in bare feet. Many Kiwis like jandals so much that they became a topic in the country’s newspapers. Roy (2017) describes Ed Sheeran (U.K. singer) who is

seeking New Zealand citizenship, and was asked by Jacinda Ardern (the Prime Minister of New Zealand),

“Are you willing to wear jandals in semi-inappropriate situations, and do you know what jandals are?”

From my observation, Kiwis love to wear jandals on the street, at the beach, in informal restaurants. Some of my classmates even wear jandals to classes. I find this unbelievable because before I came to New Zealand, people from my hometown would very rarely wear jandals on the street. From being a young child, my parents taught me to wear shoes for decency, so I would never have done that. I thought that wearing jandals on the street is like wearing pyjamas outside. However, Kim (2012) illustrates that people not only use their family values but also pluralistic views to examine multicultural surroundings. Thus, at this stage, I realised that I should not use my previous pattern; I wanted to try the New Zealand pattern of a casual comfortable approach, which started with wearing jandals.

However, as Berry (1997) notes that when individuals adapt to new patterns from their new environment, moderate culture conflict may arise. Once, I was prepared to wear jandals to walk with my roommate after dinner. Before leaving the house, I hesitated, looked at my shoes, and asked my roommate,

*Qinyun: “Do you think... Should I go out with my jandals?”*

*Roommate: “Sure, go for it. It’s comfortable Kiwi style, and it’s normal wear here! You’ll know how comfortable it is once you wear them!”*

*Qinyun: “But, what if the soles get dirty?”*

*Roommate: “Come on, just come back and take a bath. Let’s go!”*

*(Remembered conversation from October 2017)*

Then I experienced an amazing feeling walking on the street in jandals. I felt the wind through my toes, and it was so comfortable! Since then, I love to wear jandals in the

New Zealand summer. Berry (1992) mentions that individuals will decide whether or not to retain their own cultural customs. In this case, I chose to be comfortable and adopt the casual customs of New Zealand. I even wore jandals to some classes. It felt weird but exciting to wear jandals to walk on classroom carpets. Nobody noticed or commented on my change of style; perhaps it is so common that nobody notices or cares.

Apart from picking up some local customs and behaviours, socialising with friends helped me to find my sense of belonging. The enjoyment of New Zealand's natural environment has triggered some of my identity changes. When I first arrived, I had no friends or family and I was very lonely, and thought I did not belong to this new environment. Fortunately, I have become more familiar with the country during the time I have studied here. I have gradually made friends from multi-cultural backgrounds, such as Asia, the Pacific and New Zealand. My friends have helped to open my eyes to the diversity of the world and to gain a sense of belonging. Kim (2012) indicates that students in Phase 4 make the effort to socialise with different cultural groups through academic work and local activities. My friends and I sometimes go to the library together to discuss our homework; and occasionally they take me to taste local food, such as fish and chips, fresh mussels, and to Movenpick. I think my taste buds have adapted to the local cuisine because I have eaten out with my friends so many times. Food preferences may change quickly in acculturation (Feldman & Rosenthal, 1990). When I first ate fish and chips in New Zealand, I had no idea why people say it is yummy. Perhaps because I love spicy, saucy Chinese food, I thought that fish and chips was too insipid, not spicy or salty enough. I wondered: *"Why not put more sauce on it, this taste is so boring."* But after my friends took me to many different fish and chips shops, I suddenly understood the yummy taste of fish and chips. *"That is so yummy! The fish is so succulent; this is the original taste of food, it doesn't need sauce to disturb it!"*

My friends not only helped me love the local food, but also helped speed up my integration. They took me to play games, helped me discovered some interesting shops and told me some easy access roads to Queen street. They helped me to break the ice mountain in my heart. Although I have no family here, they let me feel that I do have friends who are more like sisters in this unfamiliar country. Suddenly, I am not afraid of living here anymore.

*Figure 6. 5: Sister shoes*



*I took this on May 2018 on the day that I met with two local friends. The three feet belong to my two friends and me. We planned to go bowling that day, but when we met each other, we laughed out loud in surprise because coincidentally, we were wearing similar shoes.*

Having friends has helped me to find the belongingness in New Zealand, and enjoy the beauty of nature that has led me to a new view of life, and to start the search for my new identity. In 2017, my roommates and I lived in a big house with a feijoa tree

in the yard. My roommates said it was time to pick feijoas. We took big bowls to pick as many feijoa fruit as possible. This was the first time that I had picked feijoa fruit, and I moved carefully to avoid the insects. I smelled nature's scents, watched the afterglow and breathed the autumn wind, while my senses reminded me that:

*"You are in New Zealand! Just enjoy it."*

*(Remembered internal monologues from April 2018)*

*Figure 6. 6 Feijoas*



*I took this photo on April 2018 on the day that I picked up feijoas in the yard. This tree provides delicious daily feijoas for us probably for two months. I had never eaten feijoas until I came to New Zealand.*

Although I came to New Zealand to study, which has taken all my focus and I have not paid much attention to the environment. For the first time, I began to think

carefully about my life. As my friends and I sat in the yard watching the pink sky, and listening to the cars pass by our house, we enjoyed the peace and harmony from our surroundings. I thought,

*“Maybe life should be like this. Peace may be enough, what else do I need to think about? Although I am near a shopping centre, do I really need to go there every day?”*

*(Remembered internal monologues from April 2018)*

I began to understand the New Zealand way, the relaxed environment, even the shops that close early. I also thought:

*“Maybe it’s good to be a simple person and to pursue a simple life here. Why should I be a busy person and experience stress every day? I want to be a person who has a personality like the New Zealand environment, slow, harmonious and satisfied with the circumstances.”*

*(Remembered internal monologues from April 2018)*

However, I suddenly stopped short in this deep thinking of my new life and realised there were some problems.

*“What about my parents? I am the only child in my family. I am Chinese and I am influenced by Confucian values. If I accept and keep the new identity for a long time, and continually stay in New Zealand for several long years, who will take care of my parents? No, I have the responsibility to take care of them. I should be with them. I will not be a person that displays no filial piety, no! That will conflict with my Chinese identity.”*

*(Remembered internal monologues from April 2018)*

“Filial piety is a Confucian concept that encompasses a broad range of behaviours, including children’s respect, obedience, loyalty, material provision, and physical care to parents” (Zhan & Montgomery, 2003, p. 210). I have had over 20 years’ influence of the Confucian culture, and as a Chinese, I observe filial piety. I cannot ignore my parents’ needs; I cannot leave them in a faraway country without their only child.

Also, family cohesion is required in a collectivistic culture (Salili, Chiu, & Lai, 2001), which contributes to my value of accompanying my parents. Although my parents supported me to pursue my new pattern of life, I still want to uphold the traditional Confucian values. The collectivism, filial piety, and family recognition are required by Chinese values (Kim, Atkinson & Yang, 1999). I do not want to become a bad person who forgets cultural identity and disregards his/her parents.

Nonetheless, I have adapted to the new pattern of life, even beginning the search for a new identity, so how can I suddenly press the stop button? Kim (2012) illustrates that international students encounter identity conflict between their new and old patterns. I was confused about this issue for a long time. Brown and Brown (2013) note that students feel unsettled when they settle into a new culture. While I have my new pattern of life and the new identity where I can stay here and enjoy life; conversely, my culture emphasises the traditional values of taking care of and accompanying my parents. Thus, I have a conflict between my new life and the filial piety I owe to my parents.

The phase of enclosure and disclosure show the different processes of acculturation in New Zealand. In the enclosure phase, my life was boring and routine with a small circle of friends, and I experienced acculturative stress of anxiety, confusion and loneliness. However, in the following disclosing phase, I have made more friends and they have helped me to overcome the problems of Phase 3 and to fit faster into the new culture. I also found that my new life pattern and identity conflicts to some degree with my old self, and I am still struggling with this aspect. In the next section, I will picture how I establish the new identity and values in Phase 5.

## **The later phase: where I am now**

Integration – internalising self – is the fifth phase I have engaged with as an international student in New Zealand. During this phase, I rationalised and strived to converge the conflict between my Chinese and Western cultural values. Seeking to comprehend the differences between the two value sets, I decided to appraise the two cultures and identities in my mind. However, I do not believe I have successfully accomplished Phase 5, given that I have not yet comprehensively established multicultural values, nor do I adhere to a single major culture, which as Kim (2012) suggests is the characteristics of Phase 5.

Therefore, I overcame some identity struggle and tried to re-establish my new identity and values. To make myself a better person, first I needed to understand what kind of person I was, why there were conflicts, and the reasons behind my identity struggle. By analysing some relevant literature, I understood that my experience of Chinese culture and New Zealand culture has established varying expectations in terms of behavioural autonomy. Feldman and Rosenthal (1990) suggest that “Chinese and Anglo-Western cultures are profoundly and fundamentally different in their valuing of autonomy, independence and family obligations” (p. 260). However, my Chinese culture has emphasised family responsibility and collectivism, which has affected me very deeply. Thus, I felt guilty for desiring excessive individual needs. As Chen and Yang (1986) observes, such feelings may be perceived as selfish for a Chinese person if he/she expresses individual desires as opposed to concern with one’s family.

Nevertheless, I accepted to pursue higher education in a Western country, subsequently learning certain Western patterns and values. As a result, I adjust myself to being a more independent person. Western culture deems individual achievement, individualism (Erikson, 1994) and autonomy as fundamental principles in society. Moreover, Lyengar and Lepper (1999) illustrate that an individual’s autonomous

decision may conflict with group or family expectations. On this basis, the reason I felt conflict is that my individual needs and my family's expectations potentially are at-odds.

Having analysed my own consciousness, I was relieved of my struggle and ambivalence between my two identities: Chinese identity and New Zealand identity. Ultimately, I grew up within the Chinese culture, which shaped my family values of traditional collectivism. I am proud of my background and family, and seek to adhere to filial piety, taking care of my family as they grow older. Nevertheless, I love New Zealand's peace, where I can stand aloof from worldly success, and this is my personal desire. I want to be a person with such a rational personality who can bravely pursue their dreams. Both China and New Zealand's cultures can uphold moral character, and I want to keep the positive elements I have learned from both. I aim to retain knowledge from the two cultures, rather than withdrawing from one of them. Students are able to formulate new identities in their own manner having gained awareness of their cultural background, as well as who they desire to become (Kim, 2012). Moreover, Berry (1992) notes that an individual can be selective from the behaviours characterising two societies. In my own life, I have achieved such two-culture convergence. I can enjoy and wear jandals, while also cooking Chinese food at home. Berry suggested that "perhaps heritage behaviours dominat[e] in one's private life (e.g. in the family and ethnocultural community) with behaviours being adopted from the larger society in more public domains (e.g. schooling, work, and political involvement)" (p. 74). Therefore, I will be able to fulfil my filial piety to my parents in the coming years as I become increasingly independent, while also realising this personal, economic independence in New Zealand; for example, by living autonomously and working part-time.

*Figure 6. 7 Hot pot*



*My friend took this photo in April 2018. It is one of the traditional Western holiday's —Easter. My friends and I celebrated this Western holiday by not only eating Easter eggs but also by having a hot pot in a Chinese restaurant.*

During the integration phase, Kim (2012) suggests that students must cope with various personal issues and rebuild their identities, constructing multicultural values rather than adhering to a major culture. Although I believe I have been able to reconstruct my personality to some context, I have not been so successful with shifting toward a perfect independent identity that does not obey or adhere to one cultural value; also, I had not reconstructed a multicultural value. I am ultimately only having half-accessed Phase 5 at present.

## **Summary**

In this chapter, I see myself coming from my country with the fantasies I had and preparations before I arrived in New Zealand; over time I have tried to adjust to a new individualistic society to study and live. Although this has been stressful, I decided to be independent because it is my chosen path in life. Also, I suffered from stress and anxiety in the routine of life and had few opportunities to socialise. Fortunately, I made friends from a diversity of backgrounds which has helped me to break through

this difficulty. Meanwhile, the conflicts that come with the adoption of a new identity have left me confused about my future life. Lastly, after I know the cultural differences between China and New Zealand, I decided to contain two cultural values for my own way. Throughout this whole chapter, the ISI model and acculturation theory have helped me to construct and analyse the mixture of experience that I have encountered.

# *Chapter Six: Experiencing home*

## *Estrangement*

### **Introduction**

This chapter describes two stories in which I experienced again the fourth phase of emergence and the fifth phase of internalising the self when I was visiting my family in China. As the stories suggest, I was experiencing some estrangement from my friends and my family. My Chinese and New Zealand identities were conflicted and overlapping, corresponding to Phase 4. This chapter also explores how I was internalising myself in order to establish a new identity in Phase 5. Kim (2012) remarks that international students encounter identity conflicts when their traditional values encounter new cultural values. In this chapter, I would like to develop and extend Kim's theory of the emergence phase (Phase 4). In Kim's (2012) theory, international students in the emergence phase could encounter identity conflict when they explore a new identity in the new culture. They might find the new culture and values are different from their old cultures and values, and they might experience conflict between the two.

In addition, by extension, I not only experienced identity conflict in the new culture, as I mention in Chapter Five, but I also experienced identity conflict when I went back to my old culture. So, this chapter provide another possible aspect of international student identity: international students may encounter identity conflict when they go back to their own culture. Although New Zealand's dominant values are not my traditional values, I have nonetheless lived in this individualist society for almost two years, and this is the country where I have been studying for my university

degree. During my life here, New Zealand's culture and values have impacted me a lot. In the past two years I have only lived in China for a very short time (during term holidays). I have often felt as though New Zealand culture has influenced me more than China culture has. To integrate into New Zealand society, I accepted the individualist culture, shifted some of my behaviours to local patterns, and acclimatised myself to New Zealand culture and society.

In the 2017, after almost two years in New Zealand I returned to China for a two-month holiday in the middle of writing my masters dissertation. When I got to my hometown in China, I realised that my New Zealand values and identity were at battle with my Chinese traditional values and identity. I fell into the Phase 4 of emergence and began struggling with my identity again. Through stressful and difficult experiences, I found opportunities to establish my new identity, as it pushed me to grow and encouraged me to know my culture and myself. Though it led me to internalizing self in Phase 5, I may not have achieved its completion.

## **Marriage values**

This section will outline the phases of emergence and integration that I experienced. During the emergence phase, I had two different marriage values that conflicted with my identity. One of these values was influenced by my mother's traditional Chinese background which promotes the idea that people should marry to improve the family status and that they should marry early. In contrast, I was also impacted by the individualistic value that marriage is the choice of two individuals, family associations are unnecessary and marriage should be about compatibility. Finally, by internalising these different values, I accepted that marriage would be a necessity because it is important to my family. However, I would not get married before I was ready, regardless of my age. So, I adopted both identities and combined them to construct my new identity.

Going back to China for holidays is exciting for me because I miss my family and friends. Some of my friends have been working in China for 1–3 years, and some are pursuing master’s study in China. During the Chinese New Year, I met up with my friend Linda. We hadn’t been together for at least half a year, but we were quite happy to see each other again. Physically we had not changed too much, however, in regard to ideas and lifestyles, we had changed a lot. I hoped our meeting would recall the memories of when we were 18, but I can’t believe our best lunch topic moved from study or school gossip to marriage and babies. During the conversation, she talked about some of our girlfriends getting married and some of her colleagues having babies. She also told me I should worry about my own problem (marriage) because I am not a little girl (25 years old).

*Qinyun: “I cannot believe that you guys are getting married soon, that is too fast! I think I cannot really catch your or some of our friend’s speed of life, that is too fast to get married and raise babies.”*

*Linda: “Dear, I think sooner or later, we both will need to marry, so why not do it early? Don’t wait until you become a leftover woman <sup>1</sup>.”*

*Qinyun: “Come on, I don’t feel like my life has a task like... something I should to do, but I know my family and most of my friends agree that is better to get married and set up a family.”*

*Linda: “(laugh) Yeah, I see... you have been influenced by New Zealand Western values of marriage, haven’t you?”*

*Qinyun: “Yes, I think so, because we don’t think marriage is a life task and everybody has to do it.”*

*Linda: “Sure, that is their culture, their values, I respect them. But we are different in situation, sweet. See, you, me, your family, we are all Chinese, can you prevail on all of us to accept Western values as you accepted? We have lived here so many years,*

---

<sup>1</sup> “The All-China Women’s Federation first defined the term “leftover” women (shengnü 剩女) in 2007 as single women older than 27, but in fact the sustained media campaign about “leftover” women has since broadened to include women who are just 25” (Sargeson, 2014, p.16).

*we have different values from New Zealand; I know no one is right, no one is wrong, we are just different.”*

*Qinyun: “Yes, I understand, that it is too hard to choose because the two cultures have both impacted me. And I know, I am in an emergency because of marriage issues. But I don’t think I have fully prepared for marriage.”*

*Linda: “Dear, I am not pushing you, sorry; I love you, you are my good friend since we were in intermediate school. But just because we are friends, I need to suggest: you can be yourself and choose the way you want. But can you ignore your family? How about your parents, do they really not care even a little bit about your big life event [marriage]?”*

*(Remembered conversation from December 2017)*

I know that what she said was correct in some cases. I can be myself and get married when I feel ready, but I also need to consider the fact that my marriage is vital to my entire family. I understand that because of Chinese collectivist values, having a family is a significant part of Chinese life. Marriage is not just an individual choice, it is two families consolidating. Triandis (2018) states that in collectivist cultures, it is obligatory for a marriage to be acceptable to both families as marriage means that two families will be associated. Moreover, Sheela and Audinarayana (2003) note that “in collectivistic cultures, traditional family values are particularly central to group cohesion, with the institution of marriage playing a prominent role in the transfer of these values” (Sheela and Audinarayana, 2003 as cited in Bejanyan, Marshall & Ferenczi, 2015). I was born in a collectivist society and thought that this was the norm before I came to New Zealand. Kim (2012) indicates that, in Phase 1 of the pre-exposure stage, international students still strongly identify with their home culture. However, I have passed the pre-exposure phase. Some of my Chinese identity and values have moved on and changed. I have studied in New Zealand for almost two years, so in some respects, I have adopted a New Zealand identity and have become acculturated to New Zealand’s individualist culture.

In New Zealand, the age of marriage is less crucial. Here, I don't feel the same pressure to be married as the society is more tolerant of "leftover women". In an individualist society, marriage only means that two people make a personal choice to accept each other and establish a family together. The original families are less central to the combination (Triandis, 2018). Furthermore, Statistics New Zealand (2001) indicates that:

The shift away from early marriage has resulted, in fewer men and women marrying in their teens... the trend towards later marriage, which is common in most developed countries, has seen the median age of first-time grooms rise to 28.9 years, and of first-time brides to 27.0 years. (p. 7)

Under this situation, I have become acclimatised to the value of marriage in New Zealand and am less concerned about setting up a family. I think that early marriage is old fashioned. Also, I am still a student at university, which is a more relaxed existence with less pressure.

I can keep my New Zealand individualist identity and cultural values, I can choose to avoid the topic of marriage until I am fully prepared; but all these individualist values will conflict with my Chinese values once I return home. In addition, I can't pretend everything is fine, the conflict exists. On the one hand, my Chinese identity tells me *"I cannot be too selfish towards my family, I cannot make my family feel upset."* In a collectivist culture, parents believe that marriage is the most important thing in a young person's life (Sun, Horn, & Merritt, 2004). On the other hand, my New Zealand identity suggests to me that *"I can hold individualist values, I don't have to get married now as I can get married later."* Triandis (2018) notes that, in individualist cultures, a couple getting married does not represent family cohesion.

The two cultures make me feel confused about my identity and I thought I was going through the emergence in Phase 4 again. As I previously mentioned in Chapter Five, I

was in the integration phase (Phase 5) and had established my new identity. However, in this case, I encountered an identity conflict that took me from integration in Phase 5 back into Phase 4, emergence, again. Kim (2012) mentions that students often experience an overlap between these phases. Notwithstanding, I had half-established my new identity in the integration phase when I was in New Zealand. However, on returning home, when I encountered the home culture and Chinese identity, I faced a struggle again. I even questioned myself:

*“Why is it just me who is not thinking about marriage? Do I have some problem? Should I change myself?”*

*(Remembered internal monologues from December 2017)*

Although I don't want to judge myself, it feels like you cannot avoid the feeling of hurrying when you feel you are different from others, I cannot question myself when others had done their marriage task. I recalled my friend Sofia, who was back to China during her holiday from a Canadian university; she made an interesting comment when she saw many friends had married:

*“I feel I am the only student who has not finished the test paper, while all the other students have already submitted.”*

*(Remembered conversation from December 2017)*

When I was experiencing an identity conflict, I didn't know what was right or what I should choose to be. On the one hand, my traditional values stem from my own culture which I didn't want to abandon. On the other hand, it is not easy to learn a new culture, I didn't want to waste my newly learned values from New Zealand. And also, I had already changed some of my patterns and behaviours, so how could I change them back? I am not a robot who can switch every time without emotion, I am a critical thinking girl; I particularly love both countries. I felt acculturative stress over this issue, and asked myself: *“what kind of person should I be?”*

As I say, I realised that it is impossible to only have a New Zealand identity or only have a Chinese identity. I will never forget my national culture and I love New Zealand too. However, it is also unlikely that I will have one identity as I tend to accept multicultural values. According to Kim (2012), students utilise pluralistic views and multicultural values to examine conflicts. In New Zealand, marriage comes late. I agree that women should not marry before they are ready. However, I appreciate my Chinese cultural values of marriage whereby both families associate, which improves group cohesion; both views are correct and I do not wish to abandon either.

So, I know I will internalise both sets of identities like I used to do in Phase 5 of integration. Kim (2012) indicates that students reshape their identity through the values that they learn. For now, I think I will keep the idea of not marrying too soon. I also agree that marriage sometimes means that two families associate, so I will consider very carefully about what is most important to my family. Berry (1992) states that people may adapt to two cultures simultaneously. So, I will not withdraw. Rather, I will use both sets of values to form part of my new identity, I will try to combine them in my mind and explore a new identity which is suitable for me.

## **Arguments with my parents**

This story illustrates how I experienced the emergence – disclosing self – of Phase 4 because of the conflicts between my Chinese and New Zealand identities. As I mentioned before, China is a collectivist society while New Zealand is an individualist society, and these two cultures both impact me a lot. In this story, I will still use the two concepts of individualism and collectivism to help me explore the reasons behind my identity conflict. In addition, in China's collectivist society, individuals are expected to show concern for the views of those around them; in

contrast, in New Zealand's individualistic society, people prioritise their individual needs. So, I had some estrangement from my mother concerning others' views or just to do with my self-determination. Moreover, in Chinese culture, children are not supposed to argue with their parents because this would mean defying filial piety; however, while visiting my family during term breaks, I sometimes could not ignore my inner thoughts, and I argued with my parents. So, I also experienced conflict between holding onto my ideas or exemplifying filial piety to obey them.

In December 2017, I returned to my home in China for a holiday. I very much looked forward to returning home as I miss my parents. However, during the time I stayed with my parents, we had many arguments and conflicts.

When I was home, my mother always liked to give me advice. I often heard from her:

*“Baby, your hair is too long and dry, you are not good-looking. My dear, this sweater is not suitable for you, did you buy the cheap sweater online? My daughter, I really don't want to say, but you really don't fit in a skirt because your legs are very thick.”*  
(Remembered conversation from January 2018)

If I had not left China to stay in New Zealand for a while, I probably would have listened to my mother's suggestions. Before I left China, my identity and values were still influenced by my family viewpoints and cultural environment, corresponding with Kim's (2012) proposal that international students' identity is constructed by their traditional cultural values before they arrive abroad. I wanted to behave well and be a dutiful filial daughter and avoid arguments with my parents. I would listen to my mother's words and go to get regular haircuts or wear trousers to hide my fat legs. However, something changed since I've been living in New Zealand. I have experienced acculturation and I am attempting to establish a new identity in Phase 5 integration. So, my independent character has awakened and I want to make decisions by myself without my mother's permission. I told her:

*Qinyun: "Mom, I think you don't need to worry me too much, I have been a mature adult for many many years. I think I can take care of myself and I have my own aesthetic judgement."*

*(Remembered conversation from January 2018)*

I do not know if my words were too direct, but my mother was very shocked and angry:

*Mom: "What are you saying? You are my daughter! How can I ignore you!?"*

*Qinyun: "I am an adult, I can control my life; and I don't like people give me needless suggestions."*

*Mom: "I do it for you, how could you go out dressed like this? People will laugh at you!"*

At that time, I really could not understand and was very surprised:

*Qinyun: "What wrong with me? I'm not naked."*

*Mom: "Why must you be stubborn, why not listen to my suggestions? I'm your mother, will I harm you?"*

*Qinyun: "I didn't say you hurt me. I mean let's not put these words in my mind. The kind of dress I'm wearing, the kind of hairstyle I have, it's all my business. Please don't judge me."*

*(Remembered conversation from January 2018)*

In fact, at this time, the atmosphere was terrible, my mother and I would only need one word to have a big fight. I stopped the conversation because I wanted to be a good daughter of filial piety. In Chinese society, filial piety is the most important ethical condition that every Chinese must have (Zhang & Bond, 1998). I have been taught to have good filial piety since I was a child.

Zhang and Bond (1998) found the following:

Filial piety prescribes how children should behave toward their parents, living or dead, as well as toward their ancestors. Behaviors such as the following have

been considered to be closely related to one's filial piety toward parents: providing for the material and mental well-being of one's aged parents, and in general conducting oneself so as to bring honor and avoid disgrace to the family name. (p. 403).

So, to avoid debate, I returned to my room, opened my cell phone and complained to my good friend. After the comforting telephone conversation with my friend, I realized that I might have been too harsh, I should not have spoken to my mother like that. Merrick (2017) notes that strong disagreements and arguments with one's parents are not a sign of filial piety. I very much regretted and felt guilty about my behavior because I had argued strongly with my mother. Moreover, from an Asian cultural perspective, realizing parental expectations is also a good way of showing filial piety (Lim, Yeh, Liang, Lau, & McCabe, 2009). The child should be a good child, a filial child, and a child should comply with the wishes of their parents. So, my Chinese identity told me: *"Don't argue with my parents, I should obey them. I should change myself to be what she wants me to be."* I don't want to be a less filial and dutiful person.

However, my New Zealand identity said in my mind: *"Be independent, respect my inner thoughts and ideas, live for myself, not for others."* Sun (2015) points out that in Western culture, the method of raising children also pays more attention to the development of children's independence and individuality. He mentions "for example, [Western parents] begin to let their children sleep alone early to cultivate children's independence, and the ultimate goal is to separate when their children grow up" (p. 76); to illustrate, my cousin didn't sleep apart from her mother until she went to primary school. By all means, education of children in the Western way is letting children go and supporting them; in contrast, education in China is more towards allowing children to return to their families and take responsibility for their families (Sun, 2015). So, when I returned home, my parents thought I still had my Chinese

identity only. They thought I should listen to them as I used to, but the fact is that I had experienced many changes, and I had already created a new identity that was independent and individual.

That night, I tried to communicate with my mother. I sat on her bed and talked to her.

*Qinyun: "Mom, I think that people should respect each other. I don't think you using various words to judge me every day will help me. I just felt you might never be satisfied with me, and I'm getting upset and even may lose confidence."*

*Mom: "I am not gonna make you upset, sorry. But I gave you suggestions that I believe are good for you. Can you understand a mother though? You are young, and you are my lovely daughter, I suggest you must listen to others to point out the mistakes you make and accept opinions humbly."*

*Qinyun: "Well, I can accept the evaluation of some things, for example, if I didn't do my job well, if my answer is wrong, I will admit it and I am willing to change. But if it is like dry hair, the sweater is not beautiful, even fat legs, I think there's no need for these to be evaluated. Oh right, although I don't have slim legs, they are not very very fat, I think."*

*Mom: "What? No, how could you be so selfish? If you don't listen to other people's opinions, you are like a monster and others will see you as an alien!"*

*Qinyun: "I just want to be myself! What's wrong? What to wear and how to apply makeup are my own business! I don't need anyone to point it out to me!"*

*Mom: "Totally selfish, you are persistent in your way and you don't care about what other people think!"*

*Qinyun: "Why do I need to care, why should I conduct my life from others' opinions?"*

*Mom: "Omg, you are so bold; ok, do what you want to do. But if you don't care about what this society thinks of you, if you still refuse to accept other people's comments, you will never integrate into this society. I tell you, you will regret it!"*

*Qinyun: "Why? I have not committed a murder! How can this society not accept me? I just want to be myself. What's wrong? The aesthetics of your generation are not the same as our young people, and I never expect people to understand me, I don't need validation from anyone. We go our way, and don't evaluate each other, ok?"*

*Mom: "How can I educate a kid like you! I cannot understand you anymore!"*

*Qinyun: "Stop talking, enough!"*

*(Remembered conversation from January 2018)*

I did not want to talk anymore, I felt we were unable to communicate with each other. We hold different ideas and we both believe in ourselves, we are deeply influenced by our education, environment and society.

My mother was born in China and has lived there all her life. China is a highly collectivistic society (Sun, 2015), and my mom has been deeply influenced by this. Also, Sun et al. (2004) indicate that Chinese social groups emphasize collectivism and relate people to co-operate. People care about their groups, their relationships are complicated and closed and they care about other people's opinions (Hofstede, 2007). My mother firmly believes that the individual's life belongs to groups (family, society) and individuals need to consider their groups' views. This is why my mother thinks that I will become an alien if I do not care about other people's views. In her view, the group will marginalize a person who does not consider the group's opinion because they think this person is selfish. As my mother, she worries that if I do not accept others' suggestions, I will be shunned by some groups.

In contrast, New Zealand is an individualist society (Hooker, 2008); Nishimura, Nevgi, and Tella (2008) note that individualists typically value individualism over collectivism and group harmony. In this case, people may devote their attention to developing individuality, they do not care much whether their opinions match the group's or not. Furthermore, I was educated in the individualistic culture of New Zealand for 2 years. This overseas experience has changed me a lot. In order to survive in the new society, I attempted to adjust myself to the individualist culture, as I did in the opening-self phase (Phase 2), securing-self phase (Phase 3), disclosing-self phase (Phase 4), and I am trying to internalize the self in Phase 5. I have experienced many transitions in my life. As Kim (2012) illustrates, international students handle multiple issues when they are living overseas; now I had different

views from the old me. Thus, I do not care too much if other people think my legs are fat, and I don't worry if my clothes are distinctive.

Consequently, I felt I dropped into Phase 4 again, because I experienced great ambivalence between my two identities. On the one hand, I wanted to hold onto my Chinese identity because I am proud of Chinese culture; I was born in this country, whether China is collectivist or individualist. But on the other hand, New Zealand education has influenced me to be a self-determining person, and I don't want to concern myself with others' views.

On the Chinese side, as a Chinese daughter, arguing with my parents is contrary to my Chinese identity. "Related to filial piety is the emphasis on collectivism versus individualism or interdependence rather than independence in many Asian cultures. In collectivistic cultures, group or family rights, needs, and desires take priority over individual rights, needs, and desires" (Chang, & O'Hara, 2013, p. 36). I should be a filial and dutiful daughter and obey my family's suggestions and not argue with them. My parent's generation expect children to listen to their parents.

What is more, I even feel I should do more filial and dutiful things for my parents because I want to make up for my long absence. As I mentioned in Chapter Five, Chinese people believe "while a man's parents are alive, he should not travel far afield" (The Analects of Confucius, 2018, para. 4). However, in recent years, as most of my time has been spent in New Zealand, I have not done my filial duty in taking care of my parents as I should do. I feel sad seeing my parents grow old, and I can relate to the helplessness of a daughter who has grown up and is ideologically different from her parents. In my parents' generation, that conservative, pure time has not yet come to an end; however, in the new era, young people speak English that they do not understand, and have ideas which are different from theirs. My parents

once said to me: “*You are no longer a little girl, you have grown up.*” As part of the new generation of young people, I feel sad for the older generation of parents. China’s economy and developments are too rapid, and many things are changing too quickly. There are some young people like me born at a good time in China. We spend the money of our parents and accept higher education. However, we then go back and deny certain opinions of our parents; it is not filial.

However, on the New Zealand side, now that I have changed, my New Zealand identity is part of who I am. I use the identity that New Zealand’s higher education and social environment have given me, and I want to keep my opinions and be an independent woman; I want to do what I want to do, be who I want to be, rather than obey others’ wishes. Moreover, Pryor, Butler, and Boehringer (2005) demonstrate that in an individualistic society, the individual’s needs and goals are the priority, rather than those of groups. I feel the same about this. My supervisor and teachers pay attention to my personal feelings about learning, and don’t just care about the grades; my local friends respect my opinions and decisions without judgment. So, I don’t need to worry about how I dress, or what I look like because nobody cares, because that is an individualistic society. Even one of my friends, Rina, who has lived in New Zealand over four years, said:

*Rina: “In here, you can do things to follow your heart. Don’t give up wearing a beautiful dress because you think you are not slim; also, don’t feel that you are not attractive and don’t try the new fashion makeup. This is New Zealand, who cares? No worries!”*

*(Remembered story from October 2017)*

I am not judging the two cultures, I want to use my personal story to show how an international student experiences the collision of her two identities. Berry (1992) indicates that acculturative stress is a normal part of acculturation: the individual feels stressed when they are confused about their identity. I felt very stressed because it was

hard to make a choice between Chinese culture and New Zealand culture, and it was hard to choose whether to be a good daughter to my parents, or just be myself. In this situation, I have decided I will take on some aspects from both identities, but also reject some aspects of them, in order to establish my new identity. Berry (1992) demonstrates that in the process of acculturation, individuals select some things to shed and some things to adopt from each of the two opposing cultures in order to support identity development. Thus, I will still keep my Chinese identity of filial duty and try to avoid arguments with my parents; but I will abandon the part of caring a great deal about the opinions of others; I will dress how I like, I will stick by my decisions. Equally, I will keep my New Zealand identity of independence, self-determination, and the ability to decide what I want to do; but, I will not voice my opinions when I have different ideas from my parents; I will avoid causing disputes with them in order to fulfil my filial duty.

As can be seen, my experiences of conflict and stress have helped me find my new identity. Berry (1992) illustrates that acculturation not only produces stress but also provides opportunities for people. For me, in the acculturation process, although I have struggled, have been tested, and have experienced anxiety, acculturation has also given me the opportunity to find out more about myself, and to learn about two different cultures, their values and society, which has given me a precious chance to improve myself personally to become a better person.

## **Summary**

To sum up, when I went back to China with my New Zealand identity and values, I experienced some estrangement from my friends and parents, and I suffered from a conflict between my two identities. I cannot fully reject one, but neither can I hold fully onto both. Furthermore, I chose to keep some characteristics from my Chinese

identity and some from my New Zealand identity. Although I felt stressed and confused, there is no doubt that acculturation provided an opportunity for me to know myself more, helping me to establish a new identity that is suitable to me. But in this study, I have not fully completed the fifth stage set out in Kim's model. Finally, in this chapter, I show that I was overlapping the emergence in Phase 4 and integration in Phase 5. Also, I had tried to extend Kim's ISI model with the argument that I had identity conflict since I went back to my country.

# ***Chapter Seven: Conclusion***

## **Introduction**

This chapter provides a summary of my study, and consists of five sections: a return to the research question, primary findings, a concise road map, the possible significance to educators and students, and the limitations of this study.

## **Return to the research question**

This study aimed to explore how a Chinese woman adjusted to her life as an international student studying in New Zealand. To answer this question, I appropriated autoethnography as my research methodology, and used Kim's international student identity (ISI) model and Berry's acculturation theory to investigate my own experiences.

## **Primary findings**

The major findings of this study are that, as an international student, I adopted new cultures and patterns over time in New Zealand and encountered acculturative stress when I faced several issues in my life. I also tried to adapt myself to resolve my problems and tried to integrate my Chinese and New Zealand identities to establish a new identity.

However, unexpectedly, I also discovered that, as an international student, I struggled with identity conflict and acculturative stress when I returned to my own country.

Kim's ISI model and Berry's acculturation theories both admitted that an individual would encounter identity conflict when learning new patterns from unfamiliar

cultures. However, it is often overlooked that an individual may have identity conflicts and acculturative stress when they return to their motherland. The reason that an individual may struggle with their identity from their national culture is that an individual may have adopted values from their new culture, and established a new identity that is to some extent different from their own native culture. If they still use the new patterns that they learned from the new culture when they go back to their motherland, they might struggle. Moreover, in some cases, an individual may have already let go of some values from their own national culture when they integrate themselves into a new society, and so they may struggle with re-accepting some patterns and thus experience stress and identity conflict with their own traditional culture.

## **Concise road map**

To give a bird's-eye view of my thesis, I will briefly summarize Chapters One to Four; then, I will give a slightly more detailed explanation of Chapters Five and Six which contain the autoethnographic study.

In Chapter One, "Introduction," I presented New Zealand's background in export education, posed the research question, reviewed the literature on autoethnography, international students' identities and acculturations. Then, I presented the thesis outline in this context. In Chapter Two, "Theorizing international student experience," I introduced Kim's ISI model containing six phases and Berry's acculturation theory; I then merged these two theories to develop a foundation for my entire research. In addition, I attempted to extend Kim's ISI model in order to explore that international students may also encounter identity conflict when they back to their own countries. In Chapter Three, "Research methodology," I introduced autoethnography, and I explained what is needed of an excellent autoethnographer. Then, I demonstrated my data collection and considered the relevant ethical issues. In Chapter Four, "New

Zealand's attitude towards Chinese," I re-mapped the Chinese history in New Zealand, and I also looked forward to a good future for China and New Zealand.

In Chapter Five, "My life in Aotearoa," I begin the autoethnographic study itself, I show how I went through the five phases in this study journey; I described my experiences as an international student in New Zealand and integrated Kim's ISI model with Berry's acculturation theories. In the early phase of pre-exposure in Phase 1, before I came to New Zealand, I was preparing for studying abroad and was still influenced by my cultural background. Then, in the early phase of exposure in Phase 2, I arrived in New Zealand; I observed several differences in some aspects of living and studying between New Zealand's individualism and my Chinese collectivism culture. I felt hopeless in my individualistic life, I found it hard to understand English, I thought it was difficult to conduct critical thinking work, and I was homesick and even felt very depressed. Following this, in the middle Phase 3 of enclosure (Phase 3) and emergence (Phase 4), I was upset and not satisfied with my small social circle, so I concentrated on study. Next, I worked to escape my bad mood, as I learned more about New Zealand's social life and tried to establish a new identity. My teachers and friends helped me a lot in the process. And I also found in this phase, a part of my Chinese identity conflicted with my New Zealand identity when I attempted to explore new settings. In the fifth phase, integration, I tried to combine my two identities by accepting two cultures. Unfortunately, I have not completely achieved this phase yet.

In Chapter Six, "Experiencing home estrangement," I experienced an overlap of emergence (Phase 4) and integration (Phase 5). I extended Kim's ISI model to my experience as an international student as I encountered identity conflict when I returned to my own country. In this chapter, I present two stories, "Marriage values" and "Arguments with my parents". In Marriage values, I represented that I had

different marriage values from my Chinese friend, I wanted to keep my New Zealand individualist identity that saw no need to hurry marriage; but my friend suggested that I shouldn't forget my Chinese identity, reminding me that in Chinese collectivist society, marriage is important. I agree with both cultures, so I had a struggle. In the end, I decided to take both identities; I will get married but not too fast. In "Argument with my parents," I was estranged from my mother because I wanted to keep my ideas of dressing, living like I used to in my New Zealand identity, but my mother thought that I was selfish to disregard other people's views, also that is not suitable in my collectivist society. However, I desired to hold my opinions to maintain self-determination, and that incurred arguments with my family which led me away from filial piety. In the end, I figured out the reasons for this identity conflict, and I formed a new identity with some ideas of individualism, but without arguing with my parents, retaining the filial piety of collectivism. Although I experienced identity conflict and stress, it had pushed me to grow up, and I got a new inner concept of myself.

## **Implications**

### **For educators**

This thesis may present a different perspective on Chinese international students' overseas study experiences from those usually found in the research literature. It may help educators have a more comprehensive understanding of international students and provide more accurate help to international students for their studies.

Specifically, this thesis encourages international advisers to pay more attention to and provide international students with not only academic help, but also psychological counselling. Nilsson, Berkel, Flores, and Lukas (2004) suggest that international students infrequently apply to student counselling services to deal with their anxiety,

depression and academic stress, and more than a third of international students do not consult again after their first consultation. Additionally, most students don't know how to deal with their personal problems at counselling services (Yan, 2017). Educators are advised to promote these services so people know about and use them. Some international students are not likely to try to find help from specialists because they are concerned they will be shamed if they have mental problems, so counselling services may need to work on reducing shame (Hwang, Bennet, & Beauchemin, 2014), as well as encouraging international students to have the right attitude towards mental issues. International offices can also establish student-help groups that can assist international students with feelings of homesickness, buffering culture shock, decreasing stress, and even inviting speakers who can converse in the students' mother tongue to help them. Butcher (2002) suggests that multi-social networking with local students helps enrich overseas students' experiences. Further, I suggest that international offices can host more cultural exchange activities for local and international students to become more familiar with each other's cultures and to assist international students expand their social circle and integration into the new society.

This thesis can also help develop pedagogy for teachers who are working with international students. Ward and Masgoret (2008) indicate that international students felt they had fewer chances to introduce their culture to their classmates, so educators could draw attention to that because it can be a great opportunity to accomplish multicultural studies and internationalise curricula. Furthermore, my story presents how some of my Chinese learning styles and thought patterns are different from those of New Zealand, which may offer a platform to teachers to understand Chinese international students' behaviours and inspire new ideas for constructing multicultural classrooms.

This study may also be helpful for the university to construct a diverse campus for all students. International students from Asia are currently an important part of New Zealand's international student population (Butcher & McGrath, 2004); it is time to notice that international students are also important on campus. My personal experiences can help the university to become more aware of the minority group, that is, international students. According to Butcher and McGrath (2004), "we should recognise that cross-cultural experiences necessarily involve at least two parties and an increase in exchange programs would allow domestic students to understand better the transition experiences of international students" (p. 545). So, universities, as inclusive and tolerant higher education institutions, can significantly contribute to developing cultural exchange and communication.

### **For International Students**

This thesis may help Chinese international students to introspect and reflect on their own experiences. If you are an international student now living abroad, you may come across a person whose story is similar to your own. We may have had similar experiences before we left our country and may experience similar acculturation and academic stress. We may both try to survive in the new environment by adopting two different cultures and learning new behaviours. For example, when I was struggling, I tried to find help from my friends. Thus, I suggest that international students find a good method to lower their stress if they are suffering from any problems following their arrival in New Zealand. Furthermore, some of the stories about my Chinese identity and New Zealand identity may help Chinese students come to understand their own culture more and gain a better understanding of themselves.

In addition, one of the purposes of autoethnography is to arouse readers' emotions through the study. I share my story because I hope you realize that our experiences are priceless. We may cry countless nights because of homesickness, depression,

academic stress, struggles with language, loneliness, and may even question why we have gone abroad rather than staying at home living a comfortable life. We never know what will happen tomorrow; life can become what you want it to if you are willing to make the effort. Keep working, “Kia Kaha” (stay strong), face the challenges, and don’t give up. I hope that you will grow and transform into a person who can experience difficulties with bravery, and who can get accustomed to multiple cultures with independence and confidence. Being an international student studying abroad, this adventure is worth the struggle for the lifetime of memories it offers.

## **Limitation**

The limitation of this study is that it is one woman’s story of her experience of international student identity and acculturation applying generally to others. My own stories are derived from my cultural and education backgrounds and family influences and so cannot be replicated. As Liamputtong (2007) argues, autoethnography is based on the autoethnographer’s personal experiences, thus may not be generalisable. However, many elements that I have addressed belong broadly to the wider cultures of China and New Zealand, and so may be relevant in some way to other Chinese international students, even other international students who are from different cultural backgrounds.

# References

- Abo Rabia, H. M. (2015). *Arab international students' experiences in a US university* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Hartford). Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED567642>
- Andrews, M. (2017). How maligned Chinese gold miners helped build New Zealand and how discrimination drove them away. Retrieved from <http://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/article/2102620/how-chinese-gold-miners-helped-build-new-zealand-and-how-discrimination#comments>
- Atkinson, P. (1997). Narrative turn or blind alley? *Qualitative health research*, 7(3), 325-344.
- Balée, W. (2006). Ethnoecology: Situated knowledge/located lives. *American Anthropologist*, 108(1), 252-253.
- Beal, T., & Kang, Y. (2016). *China, New Zealand, and the complexities of globalization: Asymmetry, complementarity, and competition*. doi:10.1057/978-1-137-51690-9
- Beatson, P., & Dianne, D. (1990). *Chinese New Zealanders* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Auckland, New Zealand: Heinemann Education.
- Bejanyan, K., Marshall, T. C., & Ferenczi, N. (2015). Associations of collectivism with relationship commitment, passion, and mate preferences: Opposing roles of parental influence and family allocentrism. *PLoS one*, 10(2), 1-24.
- Berry, J. W. (1992). Acculturation and adaptation in a new society. *International migration*, 30(2), 69-85.
- Berry, J. W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation. *Applied Psychology*, 46(1), 5-34.
- Berry, K., & Patti, C. J. (2015). Lost in narration: Applying autoethnography. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 43(2), 263-268.
- Bista, K., & Foster, C. (2016). Global perspectives and local challenges surrounding international student mobility. *IGI Global*, 12 (3), 61- 64. doi: 10.4018/978-1-4666-9746-1
- Brown, J., & Brown, L. (2013). The international student sojourn, identity conflict and threats to well-being. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 41(4), 395-413.

- Brunton, M., & Jeffrey, L. (2014). Identifying factors that influence the learner empowerment of international students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 43, 321-334.
- Burnier, D. (2006). Encounters with the self in social science research: A political scientist looks at autoethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 35(4), 410-418.
- Butcher, A., & McGrath, T. (2004). International students in New Zealand: Needs and responses. *International Education Journal*, 5(4), 540-551.
- Butcher, A. (2002) *No place like home: The experiences of South-east Asian international tertiary students in New Zealand and their re-entry into their countries of origin* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). Massey University, Albany, New Zealand.
- Chang, C. Y., & O'Hara, C. (2013). The initial interview with Asian American clients. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 43(1), 33-42.
- Chang, H. (2007). Autoethnography: Raising cultural consciousness of self and others. In G. Walford (Ed.), *Methodological developments in ethnography* (pp. 207-221). Amsterdam: Elsevier
- Chen, C. L., & Yang, D. C. (1986). The self image of Chinese-American adolescents: A cross—cultural comparison. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 32(4), 19-26.
- Cheng, P. H., & Merrick, E. (2017). Cultural adaptation of dialectical behavior therapy for a Chinese international student with eating disorder and depression. *Clinical Case Studies*, 16(1), 42-57.
- Collins, F. L. (2006). Making Asian students, making students Asian: The racialisation of export education in Auckland, New Zealand. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 47(2), 217-234.
- Cox, A., Herrick, T., & Keating, P. (2012). Accommodations: Staff identity and university space. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 17(6), 697-709.
- Dalglish, C. L., & Chan, A. O. (2005) *Expectations and reality-International student reflections on studying in Australia*. Paper presented at the meeting of the Australian International Education Conference 2005, October 2005, Gold Coast, Australia. Retrieved from <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/2337/>
- Dauphinee, E. (2010). The ethics of autoethnography. *Review of International Studies*, 36(3), 799-818.
- Denshire, S. (2014). On auto-ethnography. *Current Sociology*, 62(6), 831-850.
- Duncan, F. (2017). China Belt and Road: Why should we even care? Retrieved from <http://nzchinasociety.org.nz/30851/china-belt-and-road-why-should-we-even-care/>

EasyRoommate. (2018). *Empire apartment student accommodation for tertiary students* [Image]. Retrieved from <https://www.easyroommate.co.nz/auckland-flatmates/empire-apartment-student-accommodation-for-tertiary-students/H16061412390391>

Elder, C., & Ayson, R. (2012). *China's rise and New Zealand's interests: A policy primer for 2030*. Centre for Strategic Studies: New Zealand, Victoria University of Wellington.

Ellis, C. (2004). *The ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Ellis, C. & Bochner, A. (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Researcher as Subject. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed, pp. 733-768). Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.

Ellis, C., Adams, T., & Bochner, A. (2011). Autoethnography: An overview. *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung*, 36(4), 273-290.

Erikson, E. H. (1994). *Identity: Youth and crisis* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). New York: W. W. Norton.

Feldman, S. S., & Rosenthal, D. A. (1990). The acculturation of autonomy expectations in Chinese high schoolers residing in two Western nations. *International Journal of Psychology*, 25(2), 259-281.

Gerritsen, J. (2016). Over 33,000 Chinese student visas granted. Retrieved from <https://www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/309485/over-33,000-chinese-student-visas-granted>

Gerritsen, J. (2017). Foreign student numbers jump. Retrieved from <https://www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/329800/foreign-student-numbers-jump>

Glass, C. R., & Westmont, C. M. (2014). Comparative effects of belongingness on the academic success and cross-cultural interactions of domestic and international students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 38(1), 106-119.

Glass, C. R., Gómez, E., & Urzua, A. (2014). Recreation, intercultural friendship, and international students' adaptation to college by region of origin. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 42(1), 104-117.

Gomes, C. (2015). Negotiating everyday life in Australia: Unpacking the parallel society inhabited by Asian international students through their social networks and entertainment media use. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 18(4), 515-536.

Green, D. (2005). Towards New Zealand citizenship. Retrieved from <https://teara.govt.nz/en/citizenship/page-2>

- Gruhl, W. (2017). *Imperial Japan's world war two: 1931-1945*. New York: Routledge.
- Hannigan, T. P. (2005). Homesickness and acculturation stress in the international student. In M. V. Tilburg, & A. Vingerhoets (ED.), *Psychological aspects of geographical moves: Homesickness and acculturation stress* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed, pp. 63-72). Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt46mv9k>
- Hesse-Biber, S. N. (2017). *The practice of qualitative research: Engaging students in the research process* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Hofstede, G. (1993). Cultural constraints in management theories. *The Academy of Management Executive*, 7(1), 81-94.
- Hofstede, G. (1994). Management scientists are human. *Management Science*, 40(1), 4-13.
- Hofstede, G. (2007). Asian management in the 21st century. *Asia pacific journal of management*, 24(4), 411-420.
- Hooker, J. (2012). Cultural differences in business communication. In C. B. Paulston, S. F. Kiesling, & E. S. Rangel (Eds.), *The handbook of intercultural discourse and communication*. (pp. 389-407). Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Holmes, P. (2004). Negotiating differences in learning and intercultural communication: Ethnic Chinese students in a New Zealand university. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 67(3), 294-307.
- Hwang, B. J., Bennett, R., & Beauchemin, J. (2014). International students' utilization of counseling services. *College Student Journal*, 48(3), 347-354.
- Ip, M. (1996). *Dragons on the long white cloud: The making of Chinese New Zealanders*. Birkenhead, New Zealand: Tandem Press.
- Ip, M. (2005). Two Chinese gold miners, Otago, about 1900. Retrieved from <https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/504/two-chinese-gold-miners-otago-about-1900>
- Ip, M. (2009). *The dragon & the taniwha: Māori and Chinese in New Zealand*. Auckland: Auckland University Press.
- Ip, M., & Murphy, N. (2005). *Aliens at my table: Asians as New Zealanders see them*. Auckland: Penguin Books.
- Iyengar, S. S., & Lepper, M. R. (1999). Rethinking the value of choice: A cultural perspective on intrinsic motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 76(3), 349-366.

- Karkouti, I. M. (2014). Examining psychosocial identity development theories: A guideline for professional practice theories of psychosocial identity development. *Education, 135*(2), 257-263.
- Kashima, E. S., & Loh, E. (2006). International students' acculturation: Effects of international, conational, and local ties and need for closure. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 30*(4), 471-485.
- Kim, B. S., Atkinson, D. R., & Yang, P. H. (1999). The Asian Values Scale: Development, factor analysis, validation, and reliability. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 46*(3), 342-352.
- Kim, E. (2012). An alternative theoretical model: Examining psychosocial identity development of international students in the United States. *College Student Journal, 46*(1), 99-113.
- Le Roux, C. S. (2017). Exploring rigour in autoethnographic research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 20*(2), 195-207.
- Li, P. H., & Turner, J. B. (2017). *New Zealand Chinese in historical images* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Beijing: Social sciences adamic press.
- Liamputtong, P. (2007). *Researching the vulnerable: A guide to sensitive research methods*. Lonton, UK: Sage.
- Liang, Z. H. (1990). *A survey on Chinese students in Auckland university* (Unpublished masters thesis). The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand.
- Liggins, J., Kearns, R. A., & Adams, P. J. (2013). Using autoethnography to reclaim the "place of healing" in mental health care. *Social Science and Medicine, 91*, 105-109.
- Lim, S. L., Yeh, M., Liang, J., Lau, A. S., & McCabe, K. (2008). Acculturation gap, intergenerational conflict, parenting style, and youth distress in immigrant Chinese American families. *Marriage & Family Review, 45*(1), 84-106.
- Luitel, B. C., & Taylor, P. (2006). Envisioning transition towards transformative mathematics education: A Nepali educator's autoethnographic perspective. In J. Earnest & D. Treagust (Eds.), *Education reform in societies transition: International perspectives* (pp. 91-109). Rortterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Pubulishers.
- Manning, J., & Adams, T. E. (2015). Popular culture studies and autoethnography: An essay on method. *The Popular Culture Studies Journal, 3*(1), 187-221.

Maréchal, G. (2010). Autoethnography. In A. J. Mills, G. Durepos & E. Wiebe (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of case study research* (pp. 44-45). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. doi: 10.4135/9781412957397.n19

Ministry for Culture and Heritage. (2017). Poll tax imposed on Chinese. Retrieved from <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/poll-tax-imposed-on-chinese>

New Zealand customs service. (2017). eGate open to Chinese travellers. Retrieved from <https://www.customs.govt.nz/about-us/news/media-releases/test/>

New Zealand nationality law. (2018). Retrieved from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_Zealand\\_nationality\\_law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Zealand_nationality_law)

Nishimura Sh., Nevgi A., Tella S. (2008). Communication Style and Cultural Features in High/Low Context Communication Cultures: A Case Study of Finland, Japan and India. Retrieved from <http://www.helsinki.fi/~tella/nishimuranevgitella299.pdf>

Nilsson, J. E., Berkel, L. A., Flores, L. Y., & Lucas, M. S. (2004). Utilization rate and presenting concerns of international students at a university counseling center: Implications for outreach programming. *Journal of College Student Psychotherapy*, 19(2), 49-59.

Ng, J. (1993). *Windows on a Chinese past*. Dunedin: Otago Heritage Books.

Ngunjiri, F. W., Hernandez, K. A. C., & Chang, H. (2010). Living autoethnography: Connecting life and research. *Journal of Research Practice*, 6(1), 2-17.

NZQA. (2016). The Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016: Retrieved from <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/education-code-of-practice/>

*Old Chinese store at Nokomai River*. (1903). [Image]. Retrieved from <https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/1085/old-chinese-store-at-nokomai-river>

Pryor, B., Butler, J., & Boehringer, K. (2005). Communication apprehension and cultural context: A comparison of communication apprehension in Japanese and American Students. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 7(2), 783-796.

Qualifications, N. Z. (2016). Pastoral care of international students, 2016.

Racism. (2018.) In Oxford Dictionaries. Retrieved from <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/racism>

Redfield, R., Linton, R., & Herskovits, M. J. (1936). Memorandum for the study of acculturation. *American Anthropologist*, 38(1), 149-152.

Rose, M. (2008). *Creating a learning community through a PE teacher's exploration of inquiry: A collaborative autoethnographic study* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Victoria). Retrieved from <http://dspace.library.uvic.ca/handle/1828/1034>

Roy, E. A. (2017). 'Know what jandals are?' Jacinda Ardern tests Ed Sheeran's desire for New Zealand citizenship. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/30/know-what-jandals-are-jacinda-ardern-tests-ed-sheerans-desire-for-new-zealand-citizenship>

Salili, F., Chiu, C. Y., & Lai, S. (2001). *The influence of culture and context on students' motivational orientation and performance*. New York: Springer.

Sargeson, S. (2014). Leftover women: The resurgence of gender inequality in China. *Gender & Development*, 22(3), 587-589.

Schwandt, T. A. (2007). *The SAGE dictionary of qualitative inquiry* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). doi: 10.4135/9781412986281

Shangquan, G. (2000). *Economic globalization: Trends, risks and risk prevention*. United Nations: Department of Economics and Social.

Sheela, J., & Audinarayana, N. (2003). Mate selection and female age at marriage: A micro level investigation in Tamil Nadu, India. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 34(4), 497-508.

Sun, L. K. (2015). *The deep structure of Chinese culture*. Beijing: China CITIC press.

Skyrme, G. (2007). Entering the university: The differentiated experience of two Chinese international students in a New Zealand university. *Studies in Higher Education*, 32(3), 357-372.

Spry, T. (2001). Performing autoethnography: An embodied methodological praxis. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7(6), 706-732.

Stade, K. (2010). *Appo Hocton: Woo Ah Poo Hoc Ting*. Nelson, New Zealand: The Nelson Provincial Museum.

Statistics New Zealand. (2001). Marriage and divorce in New Zealand. Retrieved from [http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/people\\_and\\_communities/marriages-civil-unions-and-divorces/marriage-and-divorce-in-nz.aspx](http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/people_and_communities/marriages-civil-unions-and-divorces/marriage-and-divorce-in-nz.aspx)

Statistics New Zealand. (2017). Stats NZ: New Zealand's Asian population could reach 1.4 million by 2038. Retrieved from [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=11929032](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11929032)

Stats NZ. (2017). 2013 Census Quick Stats about culture and identity. Retrieved from <http://archive.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/profile-and-summary-reports/quickstats-culture-identity/asian.aspx?url=/Census/2013-census/profile-and-summary-reports/quickstats-culture-identity/asian.aspx>

Sullivan, L. E. (2009). *The SAGE glossary of the social and behavioral sciences*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Sun, T., Horn, M., & Merritt, D. (2004). Values and lifestyles of individualists and collectivists: A study on Chinese, Japanese, British and US consumers. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 21(5), 318-331.

The Analects of Confucius. (n. d.). In *Wikiquote*. Retrieved May 25, 2018, from <https://zh.wikiquote.org/zh/论语#里仁第四>

Tolich, M. (2010). A critique of current practice: Ten foundational guidelines for autoethnographers. *Qualitative Health Research*, 20(12), 1599-1610.

Tranter, P., & Pawson, E. (2001). Children's access to local environments: a case-study of Christchurch, New Zealand. *Local Environment*, 6(1), 27-48.

Triandis, H. (2018). *Individualism and collectivism*. New York: Routledge.

Triandis, H. C., Bontempo, R., Villareal, M. J., Asai, M., & Lucca, N. (1988). Individualism and collectivism: Cross-cultural perspectives on self-ingroup relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54(2), 323-338.

Wall, S. (2006). An autoethnography on learning about autoethnography. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(2), 146-160.

Wall, S. (2008). Easier said than done: Writing an autoethnography. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 7(1), 38-53.

Ward, C. (2006). *International students: Interpersonal, institutional and community impacts*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education.

Ward, C., & Masgoret, A. M. (2004). *The experiences of international students in New Zealand: Report 2007, on the results of the national survey*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education.

Willmott, B. (2009). *Kiwi dragon*. Wellington, New Zealand: Religious Society of Friends in Aotearoa New Zealand Te Haahi Tuahauwiri.

- Yan, K. (2017). *Chinese international students' stressors and coping strategies in the United States*. Singapore: Springer.
- Yeh, C. J., Okubo, Y., Ma, P.-W. W., Shea, M., Ou, D., & Pituc, S. T. (2008). Chinese immigrant high school students' cultural interactions, family obligations, language use, and social support. *Adolescence*, 43(172), 775-790.
- Yuen, C. Y. (2010). Assimilation, integration and the construction of identity: The experience of Chinese cross-boundary and newly arrived students in Hong Kong schools. *Multicultural Education Review*, 2(2), 1-30.
- Zhan, H. J., & Montgomery, R. J. (2003). Gender and elder care in China: The influence of filial piety and structural constraints. *Gender & society*, 17(2), 209-229.
- Zhang, J., & Bond, M. H. (1998). Personality and filial piety among college students in two Chinese societies: The added value of indigenous constructs. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 29(3), 402-417.
- Zhang, J., & Goodson, P. (2011). Predictors of international students' psychosocial adjustment to life in the United States: A systematic review. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35(2), 139-162.
- Zhang, L. (2017). The rise of Chinese miners' gold rush and the publication of Chinese immigrants act in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. *Journal of Historical Science*, 2017(4), 100-111.
- Zimmerman, A. (2011). *Blurring boundaries: Mapping identity with place through autoethnography, mapping, and arts-based research* (Masters thesis, The University of Arizona). Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10150/203497>