

**Identity Formation of Chinese born
overseas and educated in the UK.**

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Introduction

This dissertation is an analysis of how Chinese students form and change their outlooks and identities after at least 1 year of study in the UK. Exposure to British senior and higher education may have demanded a response to their adopted environment and it is this dynamic that I wish to explore further. To this end I will examine a variety of existing texts on the subject as well as finding out how today's students feel they have changed via a series of personal interviews. In order to do this my paper will analyse the views of a group of Chinese (born abroad) aged between 20-25. Some may be still at university studying and some will be in work. This will give me a varied selection and should bring variety to my project when it comes to results.

I will also discuss my background with handling qualitative data and my approach towards the ethics committee, along with their comments. In addition I will examine a variety of existing texts on the subject as well as finding out if today's students (sometimes termed 'parachute children') feel they have changed, via my interviews.

Academics have attempted to get to the bottom of this dynamic for some years with some notable studies including that of François Jullien and his "On Cultural Identity & Resources" and Areen A. Sulyman's work on "Theories of Identity Formation among Immigrants: Examples from People with an Iraqi Kurdish Background in Sweden". I have decided to compare and contrast my findings with those of François Jullien who broadly said that "Cultural resources are understood to arise from an language as from tradition, within a certain milieu as within landscape."¹ My work also contains sources from current Chinese periodicals that discuss the topic of Chinese students who study in the west. They are noted in my bibliography and referenced later in the paper.

China also has an very real issue when it comes to censorship. Many Chinese academics move to the west to study in a society where their own personal ideology may not be censored or oppressed. For example, Mobo Gao's book "*The Battle for China's Past*"² although pro-party, was written abroad due to the party of 2008 not wanting any book that could promote Maoist ideas

¹ Jullien, On Cultural Identity & Resources, 2018, The UVA East Asia Centre, Date Accessed, 16/4/2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4YTg6EuwiCs&t=181s>

² Gao, The Battle for China's Past, 2008, Pluto Press

and the chairman's saying of "It's right to rebel"³. Sometimes, those scholars that don't move aboard have to find ways around the political system, but more often than not many just have to write what it is alleged they admitted were "Garbage" or "useless" (In their words) papers according to the *Times Higher Education* journal.⁴ For this reason many students may pursue their academic careers away from home and move aboard, where they may be able to express themselves more creatively.

In my subchapter (Motivations to study aboard and core attitudes) my paper will also include how and why Chinese came to the UK, their dreams and ideas of the United Kingdom before and after they arrived, how much they feel that they integrated into British society and what the chances are that they want to return to China. I will analyse the language used, compare and contrast this with the Chinese language given, to see true feelings being harboured. This will give me more than just the base answer. The second half of the work will include the findings from the interviews conducted. These are:

- Themes that are repeatedly raised.
- Motivations to study aboard.
- Key experiences.
- Core attitudes.
- Use of Chinese and English in day to day life.

The second part of the dissertation will be an analysis of key themes that I have identified sourced from my interviews. For instance, a majority of my interviewees used Chinese before English when speaking to other people that they assumed were Chinese. Section two will describe the complex idea of "Cultural Resources" - a phrase that I use for activities that a large group of people do in a nation. At the start of his 2018 seminar Jullien starts his topic saying that he cannot define identity due to it constantly mutating. He states: "Nor do I believe that the debate can involve 'Identity' because cultures mutate and transform by their very nature. The issue at stake is fecundities or

³ Mao, A letter to the Red Guards of Tsinghua University, 1966, HTML 2004, Marxist Internet Archive, https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-9/mswv9_60.htm, Date accessed, 14, 4, 2018

⁴ Grove, Chinese academics promote dissent despite crackdown, 14/1/2017, Times Higher Education, Date accessed, 16/3/2018

what I call resources”⁵ For example, a pub can be a cultural resource as it’s quintessentially British in its nature rather than the more international example of a generic bar.

François Jullien says in his *“On Cultural Identity & Resources”* seminar that “Cultural Resources” have developed *“As they revert to nationalism and react to globalisation, people throughout the world are proclaiming for themselves distinct cultural identities.*

*“Cultural Identity would seem to serve as a rampart - against the uniformisation encroaching from without and the communitarianism undermining from within. But where shall we draw the line between tolerance and assimilation, between the defence of the singularity and the demand for universality?”*⁶

The final section of my dissertation will be my conclusion. I will discuss whether the identities of the people interviewed really did change after deep exposure to British cultural resources. I will note my exceptions, and where my original thinking may have been disproved .

Racism and prejudice I feel should also be touched upon. Today, many Chinese students say they face discrimination for simply being from the PRC and this will be addressed in the “Problems with cultural identity” section of the project.

However, special care and attention needs to be taken when addressing the issue and language of “culture”. We must note that just because someone acts and talks like a certain ethnic group, it does not necessarily make them that ethnic group.

Some people may simply want to integrate for ease around foreigners and some may only conduct Chinese cultural practices here and may never dream of, for instance, performing a tea ceremony or observing certain festivals when back in China. This most likely would be the same for any large grouping of people aboard. That being said, the project will focus on the overall idea of why young Chinese people may have wanted to come to the UK prior to arriving.

⁵ Jullien, *On Cultural Identity & Resources*, 2018, The UVA East Asia Centre, Date Accessed, 16/4/2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4YTg6EuwiCs&t=181s>

⁶ Jullien, *On Cultural Identity & Resources*, 2018, The UVA East Asia Centre, Date Accessed, 16/4/2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4YTg6EuwiCs&t=181s>

For this reason Confucian values and culture will be used as a measure. We can measure Confucian influence without prying too deeply into candidates' personal lives or asking outright questions about Confucian influence. This would be a bad idea since Confucianism is not considered a religion in China and would warp or confuse results when discussing religion or culture. On the other hand there may be issues when using Confucianism as a measure. Some candidates may not be religious and some may have been raised in the UK for a longer period of time and lost that element of their upbringing.

A Century of Chinese study abroad

Chinese students have studied abroad for quite a long time now and have a tradition of doing so. For example Chinese statesman and first premier Zhou Enlai went to France to study (and had applied for the University of Edinburgh although he was unable to enrol due to financial circumstances).⁷ Gao also goes on to mention that while in France, many Chinese students who came over on work-study programs would be radicalised by the May-Fourth movement back home would later join the CCP. With France's post-war economy many Chinese were hired as cheap labour. They worked menial jobs and according to Gao, treated like “Pariahs” most of these students became disillusioned with French life and wanted to go home.⁸ This is notable for two reasons.

1. Chinese intellectuals and students have routinely gone aboard to further their education.
2. Chinese intellectuals and students have faced racism and been looked down upon ever since they started to leave China to be educated.

During the Cultural Revolution fewer Chinese had the option to study aboard, but with the “Reform and opening up period”, many have and experienced the same problems. Zhou Enlai was a product of what may happen in the future, with statesmen returning more radicalised than they left due to mistreatment in the West.

⁷ Gao, Zhou Enlai, The Last Perfect Revolutionary, Public Affairs, Pp 40

⁸ Gao, Zhou Enlai, The Last Perfect Revolutionary, Public Affairs, Pp 40

More recently, there was a high profile case in 2017 involving one Chinese student named Yang Shuping, who, at her graduation from the University of Maryland, gave a speech claiming that “When I took my first breath of American air, I put my mask away.”⁹ This led to a huge online backlash from Chinese netizens, calling her out on her lack of patriotism. The student was from Kunming, not a heartland of industry, and people from said city doubted her honesty when it came to these claims. Chinese today may feel like they have to “take sides” when it comes to studying abroad when it comes to their identity. SCMP claims that *“Young adults like Yang who develop an enthusiastic appreciation for Western societies (particularly in the political realm) are one of the Communist Party’s greatest fears, and some analysts say the Chinese state is going to greater and greater lengths to neutralise them.”*¹⁰ I disagree. From my own research and the interviews of the candidates, many immediately said they were Chinese and nothing would change that identity. However, again using Jullien’s example, we can see that her English was advanced and her views most likely taken from people around her.

Methodology

The main of bulk of data collected for the dissertation will be through my interviews. I will try to get around 5 participants for interview, perhaps two at a time, for 1 hour and record them via phone or dictaphone. If unable to secure a meeting in person (which I would prefer to do) I would call them via a program such as Skype and record from there, although this isn’t as ideal as if the work is conducted face-to-face, where I can modify my line of inquiry if needed.¹¹

Draft questions will be first proposed to my dissertation supervisor. If they are approved then the next stage would be for me to put them forward to the ethics commission.

⁹ Fish, How Chinese overseas students are learning harsh life lessons, South China Morning Post, Date accessed 15/4/2018 <http://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/long-reads/article/2131738/how-chinese-overseas-students-are-learning-harsh>

¹⁰ Fish, How Chinese overseas students are learning harsh life lessons, South China Morning Post, Date accessed 15/4/2018 <http://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/long-reads/article/2131738/how-chinese-overseas-students-are-learning-harsh>

¹¹ Colin Robson, 2002, Real World Research, Blackwell Publishing, pp 272

My main source for the development of my questions is the book *Real World Research*, taken largely from chapter 9, *Interviews*. The book suggests I take the “Qualitative research interview” as the most appropriate. Two points that stood out to me as being useful in my research were; “2. Where individual perceptions processes within a social unit - such as a work group, department or whole organisation - are to be studied, using a series of interviews” and “3. Where individual historical accounts are required of how a particular phenomenon developed - for instance a new shift system.”¹²

The questions themselves will be will number less than 5 and more likely be around 4 questions. The 5th can be used if I feel the other 4 haven’t been answered to the full extent. The questions themselves will be in the *Semi-structured interview* style. *Real World Research* advises that the *Semi-structured* and less structured questions allow “much more flexibility of response”¹³ which will be the most useful for interviews among Chinese students as I want them to open up or ramble slightly and tell about their experiences in the UK. I feel that if I did write a more structurally based set of questions, it would limit the information I would be able to get out of my participants.

Coding should also be taken seriously when it comes to the project. Another reason to employ this technique is that we can use more basic questions to tease out better or more truthful responses. By doing this I can get more truthful answers from interviewees and they may be more confident with what they say. For example, interview number 5 spoke about her views on both western and eastern work ethic and used words that are not normally in academic use, such as “lazy”. Although this isn’t perfect, it shows that the technique of a *semi-structured interview* worked in getting out people true opinions.

Coding as in marking down and observing what different interviewees say should be considered and picked up upon during research.

Interviews were conducted in both English and Chinese, this I felt was an important factor in the work as it let the subjects relax and feel more confident in how they described their own lives.

¹² Colin Robson, 2002, *Real World Research*, Blackwell Publishing, pp 271

¹³ Colin Robson, 2002, *Real World Research*, Blackwell Publishing, pp 270

The problem of Cultural Identity

Cultural identity is a hard and existential concept to pin down. Recent studies into immigrant populations have had to first understand certain ideals about what makes “Cultural Identity”. Typically, identity is an element of personality that somebody can’t shift and is an essential part of their being and individuality.¹⁴ While culture on the other hand is something that changes quite often and is more fluid. “Cultural Identity” in this project may be a troublesome term as one person’s idea of what makes them “them” will be different among any sample. This problem isn’t uniquely Chinese. It’s a problem that would be the same if I were to explore British, Korean, German, or any nationality. The main problem would be that everybody will have a difference of opinion while our mission is to try to pin the term down.

Even the term “Cultural Identity” runs into problems when analysed in a Chinese context. In Peter Wade’s 1999 essay *“Cultural Identity: Solution or Problem?”* Wade notes that “‘Culture’ is a word with a very complex history. *It derives from the Latin word for ‘cultivate’ and in this sense it passed into English in about the fifteenth century as a word to express tending, husbanding and cultivating. Between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, it acquired the connotation of cultivating, educating and improving the mind. Here is the root of the idea of culture as elite, ‘advanced’ artistic forms, the product of extensive ‘cultivation’. From this notion of improvement there gradually derived the idea of culture as an abstract process of human cognition or the products of that process; culture here was a human faculty, it was what made humans human. This is the root of the (modern) late nineteenth-century sociological and anthropological use of the term.*”¹⁵ This means that ultimately the term “Cultural Identity,” when analysing Chinese culture, is flawed since it was an 19th century term used mainly in the comparison of western societies against others. The 19th century ideal of “Cultural improvement” and “Cultivation” are not considered truthful in today’s world. Although, when it does come to deep analysis it is one of the

¹⁴ Editors of the Oxford English Dictionary, Identity definition-The Little Oxford Dictionary, 1967, Oxford University Press, Pp 248

¹⁵ Wade, Cultural Identity: Solution or Problem? 1999, The Institute for Cultural Research Pp 8

few terms that scholars have to go on. Instead of using it in a western context we must be careful and try to adapt it for a more sino-centric point of view.

For example, in the same essay Wade uses the French stereotype of an Englishman, with his bowler hat and umbrella, as visual signifiers of English culture. Wade points out this is named “essentialism” and goes on to say that *“An ‘essentialist’ definition of identity holds that a social group (or indeed a single person) has an interior essence which defines its identity and its nature, its cultural soul, as it were.”*¹⁶ However, since the 1980s scholars have developed the “Anti-essentialism” theory where rather than the outer image people put out as a signifier of culture, it’s in fact something internal that a group has that defines their cultural identity. Wade goes onto say that *“it is also about making something new in the future. If the past is always to be used as a guide to the present, it can be restrictive and excluding.”*¹⁷ With this in mind, my main body of work will be written from an Anti-essentialist viewpoint, where “Chinese culture” is something fluid; with a collective shared history, internal feelings on what it means to be Chinese and something that has the potential to change when it comes in contact with other cultures. China is a country that in the past has taken on other cultures and has done for thousands of years. For example, one of the most popular religions in China is Buddhism, with around 18% of the population following the faith,¹⁸ which originally spread from India via the silk road. Identity could be seen though a similar lens because since it may not be a a fixed trait, but one that develops and is part of a person’s active construction.

For this reason the report will take on more of an emphasis on the cultural resources Chinese students may take not only from China but also in the UK (if any at all) today, or if it possibly leads to confusion about where their identity comes from. Other than a passport what is really stopping a Chinese person from becoming British? Furthermore do they want to be? Will they take on a dual identity via access to cultural resources or just simply avoid any British film, culture, projection and soft power and instead focus on looking more inward and back to home at a time

¹⁶ Wade, Cultural Identity: Solution or Problem? 1999, The Institute for Cultural Research Pp 10

¹⁷ Wade, Cultural Identity: Solution or Problem? 1999, The Institute for Cultural Research Pp 13

¹⁸ CIA, China, 2018, US State Dept, Date Accessed, 16/3/2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>

when China is riding high with not just a growing economy but as a new superpower in the early 21st century?

This is also reflected in Chinese gender roles. In Tu Mengwei's article "*For Chinese Women, Foreign Study Doesn't Bring Gender Equality*" she noted that even in "Westernised" Chinese migrants kept Chinese style gender roles, even in single parent households¹⁹. This is evidence that the Chinese cultural identity may not disintegrate quickly upon entry to the UK and may take generations.

Language also has a vital role to play when it comes to identity. The first subject replied to the question; "*Which parts of British culture do you do find attractive and what parts of Chinese culture would you never abandon?*" Subject: *Erm, some parts of British culture are very attractive to me, for example the quality of life and characteristics of citizens. I think Chinese people must learn things from the UK. Your manners for example. My customs, though, will never leave me.*

Me: Can you go into detail on customs?

Subject: The way we get along with others, even language.

Me: So the language you feel you never want to abandon?

*Subject: yeah, for example you speak Chinese well! This for me is an example of the world learning Chinese so I never want stop speaking my language and sometimes we are in the UK or anywhere when we meet others we can speak Chinese before any other language. **Chinese will be our first choice before English.**"*

¹⁹ Tu Mengwei, For Chinese Women, Foreign Study Doesn't Bring Gender Equality, 2018, Sixth Tone. Date accessed 11/2/2018. <http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1001634/for-chinese-women%2C-foreign-study-doesnt-bring-gender-equality>

From this we can tell that the Chinese language (Mandarin) is very important to Chinese away from home. They use it not just to communicate with each other but also as a way to reinforce their cultural identity. However, language also changes along with cultural identity. Lately use of loan-words has entered the Chinese vocabulary more and more. Words such as “freestyle” are more popular than ever. Some may call this cultural erosion but obviously to Chinese of student age (early 20s) they do not see it this way. So we can see that language is the primary cultural resource that the Chinese tap into.

Primarily though all students saw themselves as Chinese first before anything else. This could be seen as the most noteworthy overall factor of the project.

Another problem that comes up when considering cultural identity is the prevalent issue of racism and ideology. The *South China Morning Post*'s article *“How Chinese overseas students are learning harsh life lessons”*²⁰ provides good comparable examples in America. It tells the story of one Langgou Lian who claims her first idea about America was the Hollywood teen movie “High School Musical” but grew more and more disillusioned. Students abroad may be forced into certain situations which they may find uncomfortable abroad. For example the SCMP article documents last year's visit by the Dali Lama to an American university when Chinese students walked out. One student named Han noted that sometimes Chinese are also targeted for simply being from the mainland. Han is to have been quoted as saying that *“If you're Chinese, when people talk about politics and democracy, you'll always be targeted [...] They try to put us under one very radical label, like, ‘Chinese people are lovers of dictatorships,’ things like that. At times, it's very aggressive.”*²¹ It's common, for example, to find Falun Gong protests outside famous landmarks such as the British museum to which Chinese may take offence.²²

²⁰ Fish, How Chinese overseas students are learning harsh life lessons, South China Morning Post, Date accessed 15/4/2018 <http://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/long-reads/article/2131738/how-chinese-overseas-students-are-learning-harsh>

²¹ Fish, How Chinese overseas students are learning harsh life lessons, South China Morning Post, Date accessed 15/4/2018 <http://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/long-reads/article/2131738/how-chinese-overseas-students-are-learning-harsh>

²² Tang Xiuming, Visitors to the British Museum Connect with Traditional Chinese Spirit, Minghui, Date Accessed 15/4/2018 <http://en.minghui.org/html/articles/2014/11/2/146666.html>

Racism towards Chinese is also a major issue among Chinese immigrants and students. In Fish's article there's a story of one student named Wang. Fish writes "Wang was mortified to learn that, for some of his peers, his identity included things like eating cats and dogs, and that he should answer for sociopolitical issues he hardly knew or cared about."²³ In the report I asked no direct questions related to racism. At the same time, no Chinese came back with any reports of racism, although this may also be an element of cultural identity. Many Chinese studying abroad keep their heads down and avoid large amounts of contact with westerners. This is something that did reflect in the interviews. Subject 2 is quoted to say:

"Me: Was it hard to adjust? Did you use any strategies to fit in?"

Subject: Yeah firstly it was quite hard, The first part I needed to adjust too was about my oral language, it was quite different from what I learnt in my textbooks. It's also about living alone."

This may be due to rising nationalist tensions towards foreigners in the UK and many stereotypes still exist. Cultural racism does still persist in British society towards Chinese. For example there was a recent backlash against the television program "*Chinese Burn*" that broadcast on BBC,²⁴ with characters pulling back their eyes and the depiction of Chinese men as sexually impaired. These are very real issues that young students may have to put up with and some may interpret as a factor in an ever growing chasm between East and West rather than the promotion of a society where people of a different cultural heritage are treated differently.

The problem of cultural identity even affected this very essay, where in one early draft my questions and direction were as follows:

The questions this paper will try to address though is "After X amount of years how British to people born in China feel" and "how much culture survives in the Chinese after a number of years or generations?" In current times certain approaches can be perceived to group all Chinese under one identity. Ultimately this wasn't the intended plan, but it points to the fact that due to the

²³ Fish, How Chinese overseas students are learning harsh life lessons, South China Morning Post, Date accessed 15/4/2018 <http://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/long-reads/article/2131738/how-chinese-overseas-students-are-learning-harsh>

²⁴ Ren, TV comedy like Chinese Burn doesn't smash stereotypes. It reinforces them, 12/12/2017, The Guardian, Date Accessed 15/3/2018

problems surrounding cultural identity I had to look back at my own questions and edit the dissertation. Now having found the right work to compare my data to, in the end I came out with a better piece of research from reading around the subject rather than diving straight into stereotypical questions or assumptions. This is from what Jullien calls “The notion of Uniformity” which is the danger of grouping too many people together. Jullien goes on to say that *“One might think it the accomplishment and realisation of the universal’s perversion. For the uniform derives not from reason like the universal, but from production: It is but standard and stereotype. Uniformity proceeds not from necessity but from convenience.”*²⁵ Which to paraphrase Jullien’s argument is that humans (mainly Europeans) group other identities not for their actual cultural similarities but from their own prejudices.

Racism and stereotypes towards the Chinese community could therefore serve as an unorthodox example of the reinforcement of cultural identity among students studying abroad. For example In Fish’s article the student known as “Han” goes on to say to defend himself *“When challenged on these issues, he often found himself resorting to propaganda phrases he didn’t necessarily believe in: “That’s our internal affair” and “The West always applies double standards.”* This quote not only reveals the Chinese government’s own fears about what their students face when studying abroad but also the reinforcement of his own cultural identity. This then reflects on why the subjects in the interviews on the whole still spoke Chinese as their primary language while living in the U.K. Although they could, and most likely wanted to, speak English, they may have been concerned about what local people’s views on them were.

For these reasons, my conclusion when it comes to the problem of cultural identity can be summed up as ‘Chinese students do and always will feel Chinese but will also develop an “English” (or other host country) identity parallel to their own’. Using the Anti-essentialist viewpoint we can see that their identity is something only they can really control and is down to the individual. This means being “English” or “Chinese” is a completely fluid idea and can change

²⁵ Jullien, On Cultural Identity & Resources, 2018, The UVA East Asia Centre, Date Accessed, 16/4/2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4YTg6EuwiCs&t=181s>

depending on a given situation. For example even though subject 5 was the most critical of British society and culture, she still said that she is considering staying in the U.K.

My future plans are if I don't know if I should stay or leave. So that's something I've been thinking about. I don't know where I want to be. I know if I want to go back I need to make the decision quick before I train to be lazy!

I believe that the full interview transcripts contained in the appendix attached to this dissertation show that all subjects have developed, even in a short period of time, some aspects of a British cultural identity.

Preliminary Report Questions

Questions were drawn up away from university over the first reading week of the year and numbered 6 questions, which followed the same “Qualitative research interview” technique as used by Colin Robson in *Real World Research*. I decided that I would go for 6 questions as I felt that they would cover any and all topics related to identity formation, although these questions were subject to change as time went on in the research. These questions were:

1. How long have you lived in the UK?
2. What did you and your family think about the UK before you decided to come here?
3. Which culture do you feel closer to?
4. Which province/city are you from in China?
5. What language do you speak at home?
6. What language do you speak when outside or with friends?

I then felt that a second draft of 14 questions would bear more fruit for the project. Again these may be subject to change in the future. The 14 questions are:

- Can I first ask you if you are currently studying in the UK? Which college/university are you attending?
- How long have you been here for and was the UK your first choice?
- How old were you when you left China?
- Was it hard to adjust? Did you use any strategies to fit in?
- What did your family hope you would achieve by arranging your further education in the UK?
- Do you socialise with Chinese students, UK citizens or other foreigners more?
- If the answer is other Chinese, then what language do you mostly speak with them?
- Which parts of British culture do you find most attractive and which parts of your Chinese heritage would you never abandon?
- Do you have any religious beliefs and if so have they changed upon living in the UK for a period of time?
- Which culture do you feel closer to?
- In the light of experience, do you think you made the right decision for your future advancement back in China?
- What British cultural resource – including language and history to music, commerce and sport – would you say you have used as a resource in your time in the UK?
- Which of these has done most to change your viewpoint on the world and is most likely to help you achieve your aims?
- And finally, how would you say your deep exposure to British education and culture has expanded your outlook and affected your future plans?

These questions were subject to change and need to pass not only an ethics committee but also need to be reviewed by my dissertation supervisor.

Sample

I was advised to keep my sample small, so I decided that I needed around 7 people to get good feedback. I would have to travel to conduct said interviews as different participants are scattered across the UK. WeChat and Skype calls were considered, but due to recording quality and poor internet connections across rural Wales it may have proved to be a hassle and I also felt that I could gauge responses of my sample better face to face.

The sample was sourced from my own personal network within the Chinese community which ranges quite far across the UK. I eventually made contact with 5 people who were willing to help and most of them could draw on at least 1 more person to help conduct the interviews (In case of a drop out). A bigger sample is only a positive, although I will try to keep it capped at 5 to avoid over-complication.

Interviewing commenced as soon as my questions were approved by the ethics committee at UWTSD and my dissertation supervisor. This was done within a week of the 22nd of November and interviews were to be completed by the new year at the very latest. However, to reach this deadline it was necessary to request time off university and apply for a travel bursary which may have delayed the interviews, although it did not impact time greatly.

The only other issue was the availability of my sample. People might have dropped out which could have hindered the work. I would also need to act moderately quickly due to Chinese breaking up for the Spring Festival holiday (Chinese New Year). This was another reason I for keeping my sample relatively small.

These interviews may also bring out an economic aspect of young Chinese studying abroad. I hope they will give me a grasp and understanding of the new group of wealthy Chinese who come here to study. My subjects are a largely elite group who attended top universities and are a very different type of people who came to the UK a generation ago when the Chinese population was largely more working class. Today Chinese students socialise with everyone - not just their own kin.²⁶

One of my respondents attended UWTSD Carmarthen (who I got to know at a Chinese cultural event hosted by the university) who was willing to help. The sample in the end varied a lot more than I first envisaged, with students (and former students) coming from Cass School of Business and Leeds University. Students did not all come from just one group from a single university and also included Hong Kongers who moved here post 1997 and Chinese who had just finished their studies. This led to an interesting twist in the answers depending how long the subjects lived here for, with for example subject 5 being most critical of British culture even though she had stayed in the U.K the longest (7 years). They were sat down on different occasions (in a hotel lobby) and asked the questions.

Sourcing and evidence

I realised that at some point I would also need to consult secondary sources as I cannot rely on anecdotal evidence from my sample alone. One thing I needed to do is extend my bibliography, although this project will admittedly have a smaller one in comparison to others due to the nature of the research. I spent time in the library at UWTSD Lampeter searching for books on research methods, anthropological history and research inspiration along with books and journals related to the topic of Chinese identity. These should help bolster my evidence and help prove any points that I make out when compiling my research.

I prioritised the primary task of the interviews and then concentrated on sourcing the right books and secondary evidence towards the end of the project. The plan was to complete research in the

²⁶ Tu Mengwei, For Chinese Women, Foreign Study Doesn't Bring Gender Equality, 2018, Sixth Tone. Date accessed 11/2/2018. <http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1001634/for-chinese-women%2C-foreign-study-doesnt-bring-gender-equality>

second half of my academic year post-interview, so most likely around winter to spring 2018. It should be finished by around March 2018.

However, this does not mean that I will not use traditional sources. Ideas on the Chinese mind, both domestic and foreign have been written about for a long way back into history. For example, one source used will be *Everything Under the Heavens* by Howard W. French. This is a book that tries to explain the Chinese concept of “*Tian xia*” to a Western audience. The understanding of “*Tian xia*” may prove useful as a background research book by explaining how the Chinese see their close neighbours and reasons for foreign education. “*The Battle for China’s past*” by Mobo Gao points out the pro-American stance of the Chinese public in the post-Mao era, and can shed light on some of the Westernisation of China along with the impact of its new graduates who have been exposed to Western forms of thinking and “freedom of speech” given awards on “free thinking” in the Western sense, but I question how much so by the Chinese public? I’ll return to this later in the project by discussing the Yang Shipping case, where a young Chinese student in her graduation spoke many falsehoods about her life in China to appease the American crowd. This led to a backlash among young people in China.

Style and inspiration has also come from work related to migrants in other countries such as Areen A. Sulyman’s work on the Iraqi-Kurdish diaspora in Sweden. Wade’s 1999 essay on “*Cultural Identity : Solution or Problem?*” was a good introduction to the ideas of “essentialist” and “Anti-essentialism” which proved useful to understanding how culture can be fluid. Travelogues of Chinese writers may also prove useful. “*China Revisited*” by Mr Chang Ye could also prove a vital source from a man who left China in the 1940s and only returned in the 1970s. His works list the cultural resources he absorbed alongside with his experiences.

However, by far the most important sourcing came from newspaper articles online. English language websites that report on China such as *The South China Morning Post*, *Shanghaiist* and the BBC proved to be extremely useful, especially since ‘returning students’ seems to be an important topic trending currently on their news desks. The rise of e-media has been very useful for its up to date nature and opinionated pieces. However, we must remember that some of these

journals write with bias. *SCMP* for example is known for its critical view of mainland China and the CCP, with many articles taken down for critiquing the Communist Party or the central leadership.²⁷

This is a strong bibliography and I am confident that I can explore my question of identity formation with this combination of both sociological and Chinese sources. With global interest in cultural identity currently growing, this should prove to be a fruitful area for my research. With this, a clear conclusion and a linked argument I should be able to prove my points.

Expected Results

My prediction is that results will vary very widely as I believe that only Chinese who left their country of birth while quite young will identify more with the UK and will differ from another student/graduate who came over in secondary school. In turn, they will differ from a university student.

Different areas of origin in China will also matter. For example if a volunteer is from Hong Kong they may have a very different idea of what being “Chinese” is from a mainlander, and in turn a child brought over to the UK at a young age may not even have the same understanding of Chinese national identity as their classmate, even if culturally at home their lives are similar.

Overall, if the sample contains mostly mainlanders who came to study in the UK for a bachelors degree, I believe that they will identify more with China, and their backgrounds as provincial Chinese means they may have had little contact with British people, let alone foreigners. On the

²⁷ Grundy, South China Morning Post removes article linking Chinese President Xi Jinping to Singaporean investor, 2017, Date Assessed 16/3/2018

other hand, being so far away from home may have led them to adapt to the UK and see it as their new home. So a university student at the end of their degree might have very different things to say - even more so for a masters degree student or a graduate. In short, the longer they have stayed in the UK the more local cultural resources they may have absorbed. By Jullien's theory this would amount to a stronger British cultural identity.

I also expect certain cultural aspects to remain intact. For example, language may be one of the first aspects of Chinese people may lose, while cuisine and observation of festivals may be something that is kept alive through oral tradition. This is something that I may have to research in the library and access other departments to get a better grounding in the reasons why certain traits may be more or less present.

Repeated Themes, Results and Findings

My sample came back with a varied response. As stated in the introduction the interviews will be analysed in the "Themes that were repeatedly brought up; Motivations to study abroad; Key experiences; Core attitudes and students' use of Chinese or English in day to day life."

The main repeated theme I discovered was that most participants said they never wanted to abandon their culture - only to enhance it. This was not a response I anticipated. In fact most people said they wanted their country to be stronger and by learning western values (Interviews 1, 2 and combined 3&4) we can see that was the secondary aim of students coming to study here. This also disproves many western media articles that sensationalise Chinese students coming over to the United Kingdom to spread their agenda. Interview 2 for example notes about keeping their head down but then later goes on to say how they enjoy British pub culture (along with subject 3). Almost all interviews (1 to 5) also talk about some form of work, mainly in a future career context.

Motivations to Study Aboard and Core attitudes

Chinese students came to the U.K for two overarching reasons. These were for study and an urge to take an in-depth look at what another country looks like. A third, but less pressing reason in the short term was the improvement of job prospects back home. With a slowing (but still strong) economy, young Chinese may feel that competition is too great at home with many people coming out of university with identical degrees. So, many Chinese choose to study abroad to mark themselves out in the jobs market.

Through this study I was able to highlight the most popular majors. This means that one key result that came back was the actual major that many students came to the U.K to study. Many Chinese students choose either business orientated degrees (1, 5) or English courses (3, 4) this was most likely due to globalisation and China's ever growing economy which uses the English language more and more for international business. This means that in both of these results there was a single outlier who had a different opinion from the norm. (Subject 2).

This surprising result was from subject 5. This subject avoided the Chinese exam system altogether and arrived in the UK aged 17. Instead of being happy she did not have to sit exams, she noted about how easy the British exams were and how she claimed that it encouraged laziness among the general UK population. For that reason she wanted to go back to Hong Kong to avoid being caught up in a trap of "laziness" and missing out on vital knowledge of how to work in China. This is a surprisingly recurring topic. Subject 3 thought that British people had even lost their place in the world due to so called "Laziness". This could be related to Confucian thought and will be discussed in the next section.

On the other hand, outlier number 2 studied "Cultural industry". It should be noted that this subject says that Chinese students see studying abroad as not only an enriching experience culturally but also that this "new culture" that may be entering China has economic potential, and

that this would be an attractive business for them. If this is true, then any and all foreign educated Chinese students will have a head start on this new industry.

On the other hand, there may be resentment among Chinese returning back home when it comes to job prospects as highlighted in the *South China Morning Post* article *Disillusioned Chinese students learn that overseas study no longer guarantees a good job*²⁸. It claims the average salary of returning students has actually now gone down between 10,000 and 6,000 yuan, which it says seems certain to have serious effects on the number of students going to the west to study. The article also notes that this isn't a good return for many students since that the average cost of a degree in the west averaged out to around 300,000 yuan. With students getting less and less value for money it could be a signal that fewer students would come to the west in the future and these cultural influences may only last for one generation.

The overcharging of Chinese students isn't new. Mr Chiang Yee wrote in "*China Revisited After 42 Years*" that Chinese really started studying abroad after the 1900 Boxer rebellion. Tsinghua university was one of the first in China to create bursaries, projects and funds for young Chinese to be sent away to study in America from ages 14 and up. Yee writes that "*From 1912 onwards hundreds of thousands of Chinese students left for colleges and universities in the United States. Those who had studied in America generally had better opportunities for a better position when returning to China.*"²⁹

Yee also goes on to add,

"To study abroad became a fashion, only the well to do could afford it unless a youngster could afford a government scholarship"

With this in mind we can see that although studying abroad seems to have always been popular in China (at least since 1900) it has always come with a large financial risk attached.



Shane Liu Chinese students see themselves as ATMs for British government after their studies in UK:)

²⁸ Huang, Disillusioned Chinese students learn that overseas study no longer guarantees a good job, *South China Morning Post*, 6/9/2017, Date Accessed, 15/4/2018

²⁹ Yee, 1977, *China Revisited After 42 Years*, Norton, Pp 15

One typical piece of evidence came from facebook, where even the mention of how Chinese feel currently is met with financial comments.

Ultimately this a common reflection on the core attitudes to how Chinese feel after returning from their time abroad.

The Confucian Link

Confucianism is the philosophical and semi-religious system that has influenced Chinese society (and the greater Chinese world) for more than 2000 years. Confucian ideas have recently been on the upsurge in China and, since the “reform and opening up”, period have been pushed by the government after years of denunciations by radical Maoism in the three decades following the liberation in 1949. Confucianism, which once saw its great temples and shrines being torn down by red guards now seems to sit high as one of the guiding ideological voices of today’s China. Although this doesn’t amount to official government policy, Confucianism is now part of how the population at large lives their day to day lives.³⁰

This being said, the ancient text of fundamental principles (The Analects)³¹ stresses that self cultivation is an extremely important endeavour to take on if one wants to improve one's life. Confucius also though teaches that China is the apex of civilisation and only barbarians surround the state.³² This, coupled with the new global and ever more connected world we live in proves an interesting point for young Chinese, who may want to go out and seek new life experiences far

³⁰Worrall, 2015, Why Is Confucius Still Relevant Today? His Sound Bites Really Hold Up, National Geographic, Date Assessed 14/4/2018

³¹ Confucius, Leys, The Analects, Norton, 2014, Pp xxiii

³² Confucius, Leys, The Analects 3.5, Norton, 2014, Pp 7

from home. This isn't a new phenomenon amongst young people. Many university-age students went down into the countryside to work with the peasantry during the cultural revolution and many leading figures of Twentieth Century China also began their careers, and even founded parties, in exile away from the mainland. Examples of this include a young Zhou Enlai who studied in Japan how the Meiji restoration used Western technology to its advantage. Perhaps the most famous was Sun Yat-Sen who travelled the world spreading support for what would later become Guomindang. Early centres included the recently annexed state of Hawaii and in Kobe³³, Japan. Without these experiences many young revolutionaries would have struggled in modern statesmanship (which the Qing lacked) and other leadership roles they were to take on. These early trips would have definitely been seen as enhancing their lives through self cultivation from the Confucian moral standpoint.

Confucianism also promotes the idea of being a “gentleman” in the sense of being kind, knowledgeable and concerned with others and their problems. In an era where the world looks ever more to China and every year more and more foreigners are issued visas and work permits, the Chinese many feel that by studying abroad they can learn the tricks and have an understanding of how to be a gentleman in other cultures. When they come back to China they aim to have the upper hand in business dealings with a British or American company. However, this brings its own problems. There is growing evidence that foreign study may not necessarily bring gender equality (gender issues are one of the most lasting criticisms of Confucianism in general) so the underlying Confucianism of Chinese society could be something that overseas Chinese may find impossible to dispense with.

However, Confucian influence isn't just about the “pure tradition” (by this I mean the very religious high church-esque Confucian ritual) but the Confucian work ethic. The “Four Asian Tigers” was an idea in the late 20th century that noted Korea's (Republic of), Taiwan, Singapore's and Japan's post war economic booms. Confucianism was often credited for their success.³⁴ and of course

³³ [僑委會僑務電子報](#), 2017, Dr. Sun Yat-sen's footprints in Kobe, Youtube, Date Accessed 18/3/2018

³⁴ Kaplan, 2015, Asia's Rise Is Rooted in Confucian Values, Wall Street Journal, Date Assessed 18/3/2018

since this idea was developed, mainland China has taken over as the world's second biggest economy. In interview number 5, the interviewee noted how she felt that in her world she saw the British as “lazy” and that in China and Hong Kong people worked much harder.

“So that in Hong Kong it's so different, people work hard I mean everyone stays late until 7/8 PM and that's normal but here 5 or 5:30, that's late. “Why you still here!?” and yeah the job, that's their mentality they think the job will never get done. Even if you stay then the job won't ever get done. It's a job erm so the Hong Kong people rush things and want to get as much things done in a day as possible and then they stay until 8/9 and want to get the job done. So yeah. The mentality is quite different. So I think if I keep working here it will make me quite lazy. So if keep working in the UK that make me quite lazy as a person. Not wanting to work as hard other Chinese people. So let's say I go back in the next 2 years, then I won't be able to catch up on their speed because they are too fast. Here is relaxed.”

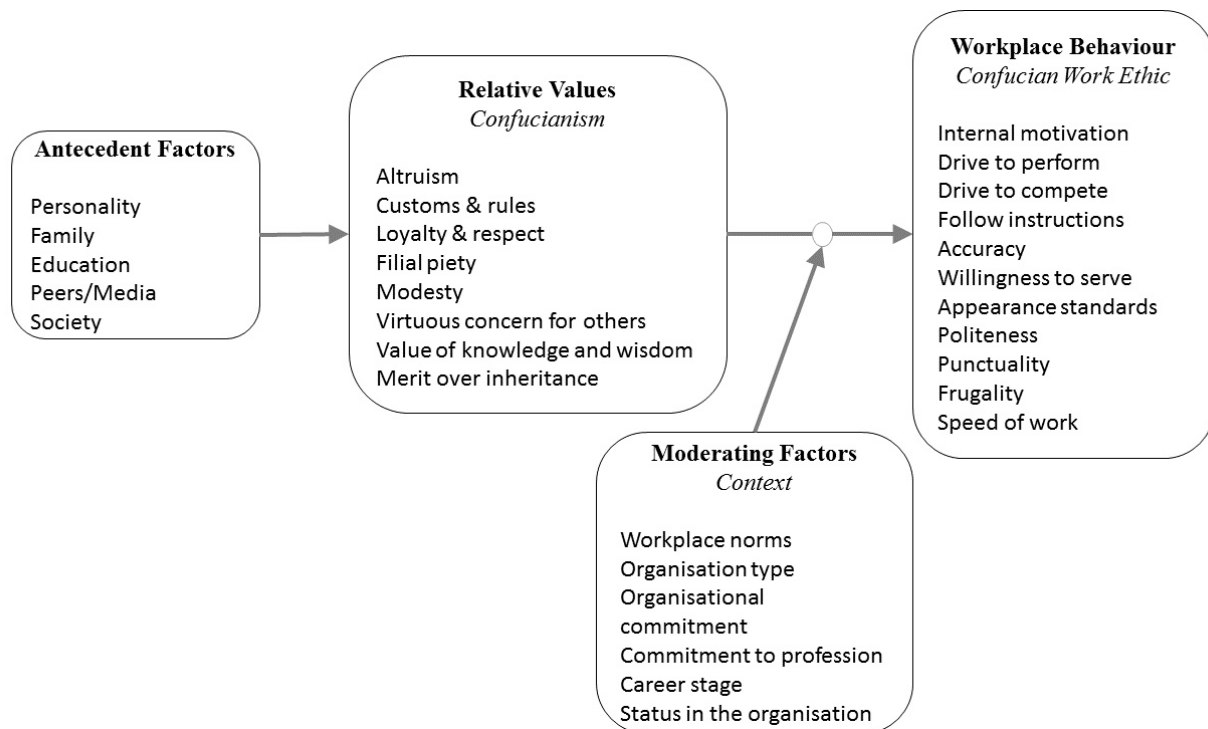
Subject 5 wasn't the only person to comment on what they thought was “Laziness” in British society. Subject 3 also goes onto say:

“Subject 3: To all of the people I know in the UK, I'm proud that I lived in the UK. It makes me feel close to the empire's history but honestly I don't think this is a democracy. I don't think it's fair, I don't think the people know their history or rights. In China thats unheard of. The [British] people are a bit lazier now!”

Subject 3 debated off microphone whether or not Confucianism was a system of organised religion. This means that subject 3 also had a Confucian background that may have influenced this idea that British people are not as in touch with history as much as the Chinese people.

I contend that this is an example of cultural Confucianism in action. Although the subject doesn't necessarily say it's due to the sage's teachings, it slots in with his work ethic directions and is proof that Confucianism is an intangible part of Chinese cultural heritage that exists wether or not the person is removed from China. A table explaining the Confucian work ethic made by Bauman and Winzar of Macquarie University can be found attached³⁵.

³⁵ Baumann, Chris & Winzar, Hume, 2016, Confucian Work Ethic, Date Accessed, 14/4/2018



Using this graph we can see that education is classed as an “Antecedent Factor” that is one of the lynchpins of Confucian thought. The Chinese work ethic could have been passed down as part of Confucianism.

Confucianism promotes education above even filial piety according to this graph. In Qi Sun’s paper “*Confucian Educational Philosophy and its implication for lifelong learning and lifelong education*” he writes that Confucianism is philosophy of lifelong learning so that one can achieve titles in society such as “sage” or “Junzi” that indicate one’s education over anything else.³⁶ This has always played an important role in Chinese society, both in the academic world and the social world in general. For example the imperial exam system’s curriculum was usually based on knowledge of Confucian classics.³⁷ The exam was very hard and dated back to the Qin dynasty (but only regulated under the Tang period). For this reason Chinese intellectual life has always been dominated by the stress of these exams and students worked extra hard. Although the

³⁶ Qi Sun, 2008, Confucian Educational Philosophy and its implication for lifelong learning and lifelong education, International Journal of Lifelong Education, volume 27-issue 5: Theories Policy and Practice of Life in East Asia. Date accessed 11/2/2018

³⁷ Crozier, 2002, A Unique Experiment, China In focus, Issue 12 Summer 2002.

exams were abolished at the end of the Qing dynasty in the early 20th century, the traditional education system still lives on in China, most visibly in the “Gaokao” A level equivalents that students do prior to going to university.

This has led to a culture of hard work among the Chinese population and is reflected both in the grades they achieve and the stress they suffer. It’s been known for students to go to the U.K to study to A level to avoid the stress of the Gaokao, as it’s been known to drive many a student to suicide.³⁸ This may be another reason students come over to study in the UK. This isn’t a problem unique to China. Other countries with Confucian backgrounds also have a similar issue such as Japan or Korea.³⁹

Key experiences

When Chinese students did conform to British society as a whole they felt that the social aspect of their life was what drew them in culturally. For example, the pub as a staple British place to socialise, was considered essential. Subject 2 said in the interview;

“The pop culture in the UK and China is quite different. If a girl goes to a bar alone in China it is seen as a dangerous thing. But here it’s very different, because here a pub is a place where friends share a beer and have a good conversation, so it’s like a teenage life! There’s more freedom in the UK to get access to beer and alcohol and crazy things, but it’s safer than China.”

One outcome of this is that Chinese students became more outgoing once getting accustomed to UK life. One of the reasons that the subject may think it’s safer in the UK is that China has a large

³⁸ Ash, 2016, Is China’s gaokao the world’s toughest school exam?, The Guardian, Date Accessed 23/4/2018

³⁹ Oi, 2015, Tackling the deadliest day for Japanese teenagers, BBC, Date Accessed 23/4/2018

problem with fake alcohol, which is often served in bars alongside the real thing.⁴⁰ This makes it both dangerous and discouraging for young people who want to socialise in their home country. Hence young people may get to enjoy social drinking more if they do so in the UK. Subject 3 notes that the pub is a place to meet new people and seemed to understand how to use British cultural hubs.

"I think the UK people are the most interesting. I go to pubs and at first people don't know each other and the UK people are quiet and polite. After 1 drink they get very exciting! I don't think local people are as quiet as they think, especially after one drink."

This shows again that Jullien's theory about having to learn a language first is key to understanding a culture as subject 3 would have found it much harder without a grounding in English.

Along with this, Chinese may have used British television and film to gain greater understanding of the world around them. Subject 5 spoke how although she watches little TV, she does sometimes watch BBC, which again is staple in most British households. Subjects 3 and 4 talk about British period dramas such as Victoria and The Crown which are both high budget mini-series with their focus on the history of British monarchy. So, these shows are not just popular among the British people but also Chinese who wish to have some kind of historical understanding of the UK.

Although Chinese students did overwhelmingly promote their Chinese identity above anything else, they also all agreed they had no regrets coming to the U.K. The only doubt really came from subject 5, who felt that she would not be able to keep up with the work back home. Apart from that she did acknowledge that she could have a comfortable life if she decided to stay in the U.K. This demonstrates to me beyond doubt that Chinese students did acquire aspects of a British identity to an extent. Although with the current talk about cost of living, quality of education and the fact

⁴⁰ Fullerton, Bathtub booze and knock-off whisky: inside China's fake alcohol industry, The Guardian, 2015, Date Accessed, 16/4/2018

that the U.K has some of the highest university fees in the world⁴¹ may make students doubt if their newly assumed identity was real, or just a social construct they have taken on to make it more acceptable to themselves to be bled dry of funds.

Chinese and English in Day to Day life

Use of Chinese and English in to day to day life is another important topic that needs addressing. As earlier stated, Jullien notes about how important language is to a person's own cultural identity. This was also reflected in the research I undertook. Early on my first interviewee noted that Chinese people often find common ground on language before anything else, and that even while living in the UK his language skills didn't improve much because his group of friends bonded over Chinese speaking.

Me: Yeah so do you speak Mandarin or any other dialect? Do you practice English say?

Subject: For example we have 5 Chinese students in Carmarthen campus. We are always together so we always speak Mandarin with each other. Sometimes when we go shopping or go out we meet some British people. That's the only time we speak English. Then maybe in class we speak English. This is the time for English!

Me: So with your group you just speak Mandarin but pretty much everywhere else you do use English?

"Kind of... for example, last week we tried to find a Chinese restaurant. We went in speaking Mandarin but they spoke Cantonese! So not always, sometimes we use English to talk with

⁴¹ Kentish, University tuition fees in England now the highest in the world, new analysis suggests, 2017, The Independent, Date Accessed 18/3/2018 <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/university-tuition-fees-england-highest-world-compare-students-student-loan-calculator-a7654276.html>

Chinese too. Most of them are from HK or Guangdong province. China's a big place and there's many local languages in some small areas. So it's funny because we can't understand!"

From this quote we can see that Chinese students still use Mandarin as a cultural mark to demonstrate personal identity when abroad and it seems to be used when students wish to associate with certain people. This again links back to Jullien's "*Cultural resources are understood to arise from a language as a form of tradition*" theory. The group this subject was talking about consisted of 5 Chinese students and no foreigners. This group clearly wanted a culturally tight circle of friends. However we can use the same quote to prove subjects 2 and 3's greater understanding via UK pub culture.⁴²

Subject 2 used more English in her daily life, but did admit many students simply used Chinese out of ease rather than any other reason.

Me: With your Chinese friends, what language do you speak with them?

Subject: Yeah, What's interesting is that some Chinese students don't want to speak Mandarin outside, so they are more likely to practice their English so for some of them I like to speak English with my Chinese friends and some of my Chinese friends think using Chinese is more comfortable and easy to understand with each other, so with those people then I speak Chinese.

From this we can see that Jullien's theory about language (language is the prime form of the rise of a cultural resource) is proven correct here from how Chinese students interact, their use of restaurants and other resources such as KTV parlours prove this as a reinforcing effect for the Chinese character. On the other hand, subject 2 talks about how she practices English with her Chinese friends. She clearly mentions going to the pub, again proving Jullien correct on the fact that once the person uses the new foreign language more, they then have far greater access to a new store of cultural resources. These don't make the person "British" or "Chinese" but rather

⁴² Jullien, On Cultural Identity & Resources, 2018, The UVA East Asia Centre, Date Accessed, 16/4/2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4YTg6EuwiCs&t=181s>

give the person a bigger space to practice their new cultural and language skills. This ultimately helps them understand their new environment. Subject 2 also confirms this with the line;

"Me: So you are comfortable here?"

Subject: Yeah, I mean I'm Chinese and I always will be, but I feel like I'm starting to think and reason like a British person. I feel like the UK has helped build my character. Of course I am Chinese but I feel my character has become bigger since I've come here. I feel more compatible living and studying here too, but of course a big problem for me is missing home."

Using Jullien's cultural theory, students can learn other languages to open a window into another culture. A student's grasp of the English language in this case is therefore most important because the key to understanding another culture is first to understand the language.

Conclusion

My predictions turned out to be wrong on many occasions. For example, I assumed that the language may be one of the first things to go among Chinese students but it turns out it wasn't at all, as we can see from sample 1. The students saw Mandarin as a way not just to connect with their own culture but also saw the fact many British people now learn Mandarin as a sign not to give up their language. The only time when this wasn't true was when two groups of Chinese from opposite ends of the country met up. If one spoke Mandarin and the other Cantonese, English became the primary language to use.

As mentioned before, this correlates with Jullien's ideas on language being a cultural core to a group's community. Hence the students' identities gradually became more "British" due to them being able to speak English and interact with locals. (2 and 3) rather than subject one when describing how their own circle seldom speaks English unless they had to.

It was also a surprise to discover the lasting Confucian influence on my subjects and how much they listened to the words of the ancient sage. Sample 1 also noted this fact;

Subject: Confucius? He has a big influence in China and shows us Chinese how to deal with anything and get along with others, he teaches us how to be honest and how to be friendly. All

these things I learnt from Confucian values.

Me: I've read Analects, I also loved it. I feel my understanding of the Chinese character was helped much by reading Confucius also. So Analects help me understand your culture.

Subject: Analects is very important in high school and even in college. Most teenagers learn Kongzi. Sometimes we have serious exams on him.

This means that even abroad the Confucian mindset was hard to dislodge. If Confucianism was not mentioned explicitly, it was reflected in the students' determination to work and study hard. Most samples came back saying they were in the UK to study and bring British manners and knowledge back to China. With sample one at least, their Confucian grounding was also something unshakeable, which was expected in the early planning process of the topic. More evidence of this came from subject 5 and her work ethic, seeing the British as "Lazy" and wanting to maintain a certain speed. This I conclude is an example of Confucian culture at work but not being explicitly named.

The trends in Chinese interaction with the UK mean fewer working class Chinese coming over from the mainland and Hong Kong in favour of far more wealthy immigrants. These people may only stay here for a short time while their child studies in the UK and then may go back to China. If anything, this makes traditions survive more strongly. Working class parents may have not been able to raise their children bilingual due to work or lack of private education, unlike the current wave of people.

Secondly, as many Chinese seem to have come over in their later teenage years to study (3/5 students interviewed) and will mostly have a Chinese background already, so they may take on fewer British customs or find it harder to do so. However, since many people said they came with an idea of the UK prior to arriving it means that British soft power may have influenced their choice. The UK has recently been on a major public relations drive in China, hosting Xi Jinping lavishly when he came over on a recent state visit. For this reason, I believe that these students

won't have the Chinese values they were raised with stamped out of them, but rather many will return to China with a greater understanding of not just British culture but that of the world due to the great melting pot that is modern day British society.

Of course this is a post-Yang Shuping world but with Chinese learning about British culture from relatively harmless things such as football and snooker and period dramas, I doubt that these are a major driving force when it comes to changing somebody's complete identity. Nor can deep seated ideals such as Confucianism be simply wiped away. This means that I feel that Jullien's theory that cultural understanding doesn't just come through observation but actually through engaging with a nation's language, which in turn enables and encourages navigation through ones new surroundings. Only then can a person start to feel at welcome in another culture and his theory proved correct.

Word Count: 10,678

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Appendix

Interview 1

me: Okay there, so thank you very much for participating in this interview. I'll ask you a series of questions which are draft questions for my dissertation. Can you consent to this?

Subject: Okay

Me: Thank you very much, can I first ask you ask you, if you are/have been studying in the UK, which university/school have you attended?

Subject: I'm now at UWTSD

Me: Thank you, how long have you been here for and was the UK your first choice?

Subject: The UK was my first choice and I've been here for 7 months.

Me: 7 months? Very interesting, are you liking the UK?

Subject: Yeah

Me: How old were you when you left China?

Subject: I'm 21 and I left China last year and this is my first semester in the UK.

Me: Was it hard hard to adjust and did you use in strategies to fit in? Did you go to bars? How did you meet friends?

Subject: I had friends who were in the same class and we always ate together and sometimes we played our hobbies or played football and had convocations after. I have 1 or 2 foreigner friends here.

Me: So you play football with them? Did you play football in China?

Subject: Yeah

Me: What did your family hope you would achieve by arranging your further education in the UK?

Subject: My parents wanted me to study in the UK so I can finish my post-graduate degree, and in my view I would like to finish my degree and hope to do another post graduate degree in other places. I'd like to study in England now!

Me: That's good to hear. Furthermore, do you socialise Chinese students, UK citizens or other foreigners more?

Subject: Sometimes in the UK here there are always Chinese students, and the other people are working. I do have friends here but because we are Chinese students in the UK its easy to meet Chinese, sometimes we like to go to Chinese restaurants for food and we have the chance to make friends with other students or working people.

Me: So its like...You get along better with Chinese students or working Chinese than locals? You do have friends from the UK but majority are Chinese?

Subject: Yeah yeah

Me: I thought so, if the answer is Chinese (which it is) what language do you mostly speak with them?

Subject: Mmm, you mean do I still speak Chinese?

Me: Yeah so do you speak Mandarin or any other dialect? Do you practice English say?

Subject: For example we have 5 Chinese students in Carmarthen campus. We are always together so we always speak Mandarin with each other, and we sometimes when we go shopping or go out we meet some British people. That's the only time we speak English. Then maybe in class we speak English. This is the time for English!

Me: So with your group you just speak Mandarin but pretty much everywhere else you do use English?

Subject: Kind of, for example, last week we tried to find a Chinese restaurant. We went in speaking Mandarin but they spoke cantonese! So not always. Sometimes we use English to talk with Chinese too. Most of them are from HK or Guangdong province. China's a big place and there's many local languages in some small areas. So it its funny because we can't understand!

Me: Which parts of British culture do you do find attractive and what parts of Chinese culture would you never abandon?

Subject: Some parts of British culture are very attractive to me, for example the quality of life and characteristics of citizens. I think Chinese people must learn things from the UK. Your manners for example. My customs though will never leave me.

Me: Can you go into detail on customs?

Subject: The way we get along with others, even language.

Me: So the language you feel you never want to abandon?

Subject: Yeah, for example you speak Chinese well! This for me is an example of the world learning Chinese so I never want stop speaking my language and sometimes we are in the UK or

anywhere when we meet others we can speak Chinese before any other language. Chinese will be our first choice before English.

Me: Interesting, I didn't see that coming up! Would you say that Confucianism is something you would never abandon?

Subject: Confucius? He has a big influence in China and shows us Chinese how to deal with anything and get along with others, and he teaches us how to be honest and how to be friendly. All these things I learnt from Confucian values.

Me: I've read Analects, I also loved it. I feel my understanding of the Chinese character was helped much by reading Confucius also. So Analects help me understand your culture.

Subject: Analects is very important in high school and even in college. Most teenagers learn Kongzi. Sometimes we have serious exams on him.

Me: Do you have any religious beliefs and have they changed whilst being in the UK?

Subject: Religious beliefs? I don't believe in religion or ethical systems. Sometimes I have a friend who is religious and sometimes she doesn't eat certain meats. That's fine by me but no, I've never been religious.

Me: That's cool, so overall which culture do you feel closer to?

Subject: Can I say Chinese culture?

Me: Of course you can!

Subject, I've been in the UK for a long time and I feel very influenced by the UK now. Maybe, the character and the behaviour you deal with everyday or issues with friends I feel I've taken on. Sometimes I think British culture is more advanced than Chinese culture.

Me: Okay, in your experience do you think you made the right choice for your advancement and future by coming to the UK?

Subject: I think now attending university in the UK has been a very important time of my life. I also think when I go back to China I'll definitely have a job. This experience will help me a lot and now some jobs would like to employ some workers who have overseas experience.

Me: So by coming to the UK and studying when you go back you will 100% get a job?

Subject: Not completely but almost, 70? 80%? I like my chances more, there will be more choice and my business major is a large force in this. Also my parents, expect me to have a job in advanced Chinese cities, not just my hometown.

Me: So with your life experience you can move out of somewhere like Changchun and can move to Beijing/Shanghai type cities?

Subject: Yeah, I would like to have a job in Beijing/Shanghai. My brother has a successful experience also doing this, and he has graduated from Imperial college. Sometimes I ask him for help. Now he has a job in AVIC companies. (International enterprise), I want to follow him. Even if its not the same experience.

Me: What British cultural resource such as language, history, culture or sport would you say has been useful to help you integrate?

Subject: Football! I like to play it and I often watched it in China. I watched the premier league too. I think they are many crazy fans here in the UK! Its shown me a lot! When I was in China I wanted to watch a British football game. That was my dream. Any team, any stadium! I think sport is one of those cultural resources. It help me a lot.

Interview 2

Me: What did you and your family think of Britain before you came here?

Subject: Britain is a multicultural country where I can find more perspectives and experiences. So my family hoped I could experience more I guess.

Me: Where did you live in China?

Subject: In the middle of China but close to Shanghai, two hours away by train.

Me: How long have you lived in the UK?

Subject: 6 months

Me: What language do you speak at home?

Subject, Mandarin Chinese

Me: What language to you primarily use in the UK?

Subject: I prefer to use English because if I see an Asian face I don't know if they are Chinese or Korean so I use English first.

Me: Which culture do you feel most at home with?

Subject: So difficult! **(at this point she switches to Chinese, so from this moment on I will transcribe into English)** it's hard to even say in Chinese. In Chinese there's an overall culture and local culture. Everyone is Chinese, even these minority people, but all are encompassed as "Chinese" This is like "British culture" it's like Scotland is similar to how Xinjiang culture is related to China, I understand British culture and I find British culture very comfortable.

Me: So you are comfortable here?

Subject: Yeah, I mean I'm Chinese and I always will be but i feel like I'm starting to think and reason like a British person. I feel like the UK has helped build my character. Of course I am Chinese but I feel my character has become bigger since I've come here. I feel more compatible living and studying here too, but of course a big problem for me is missing home.

Me: Can I first ask you if you are currently studying in the UK? Which college/university are you attending?

Subject: I'm currently studying in the UK at Leeds university. My major is performance and culture industry.

Me: How long have you been here for and was the UK your first choice?

Subject: I've been here for 6 months and the UK was my first and only choice.

Me: How old were you when you left China?

Subject. 22!

Me: Was it hard to adjust? Did you use any strategies to fit in?

Subject: Yeah firstly it was quite hard, The first part I needed to adjust too was about my oral language, it was quite different from what I learnt in my textbooks. its also about living alone.

Me: So when it comes to the way you live, say if you found something strange, how did you get over it being strange? For example, we have milk in our tea. How strange was this to you?

Subject: Yeah! Let me think, for example most of the cultural differences happened in my kitchen! I have a British roommate so they always ate sandwiches and bread everyday which i found hard to adjust too. What was the other part?

Me: Strategies to fit in.

Subject: I used my desire to learn So my friends would be happy to help me, I don't want to know everything. [... I *think she means not gossiping here*]

Me: So not getting involved in people's lives?

Subject: Yeah, I kept modest around people.

Me: What did your family hope you would achieve by arranging your further education in the UK?

Subject: I don't know! I'm not sure my Mum and Dad had big plans. So I hope, how to handle difficult tasks and different things.

Me: So your Mum and Dad thought you could get over more difficult tasks at home by sending you to study in the UK?

Subject: Yes, but I don't like most of the Chinese students, I think there's a big plan that most of their parents give them. Some of my friends learning finance tell me that they don't like their major. They didn't know what it was about. so I'm quite free and quite lucky and I can say I have expectations for myself. I can handle very new and different situations and I can also handle them confidently. It culturally stretches me and I can feel like I can involve myself in local culture.

Me: Do you socialise with Chinese students, UK citizens or other foreigners more?

Subject: I mean, nationality is not my criteria to make friends and have interesting dialogue with, so that's not my criteria. I do have some interesting dialogue and conversation with my friends, who are Korean, Chinese and English people.

Me: So it's all the same really?

Subject: Yeah,

Me: With your Chinese friends, what language do you speak with them?

Subject: What's interesting is that some Chinese students don't want to speak to speak Mandarin outside, so they are more likely to practice their English so for some of them I like to speak English with my Chinese friends and some of my Chinese friends they think using Chinese is more comfortable and easy to understand with each other, so with those people then I speak Chinese.

Me: What cultural resources in the UK do you primarily access and why?

Subject: First, must be pop culture. The pop culture in the UK and China is quite different. If a girl goes to a bar alone in China it is seen as a dangerous thing. But here it's very different. Here a pub is a place where friends share a beer and have a good conversation, so its like a teenage life! There's more freedom in the UK to get access to beer and alcohol and crazy things, but it's safer than China. So the first is pop culture, the second thing is music. You have 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s different styles of music! I love it!

Me: Which parts of British culture do you find most attractive and which parts of your Chinese heritage would you never abandon?

Subject: Okay, most attractive...it's the respect inside and peoples' awareness of others, because every conversation begins with please and ends with thank you. I don't know, I just really feel like that's respect and it's normal here with no judgement of other peoples lives. People are more tolerant, that's part of the culture here I like. Peoples' connection, and sometimes I feel British

people are a little indifferent. Just a little and I like the connection between Chinese people that they naturally have (Guanxi).

Me: Everybody is one family (Said in Chinese) 大家是一个家。

Subject: Yes, I like this but this side of culture can also be bad.

Me: Of course it can be. I have Chinese friends, my old boss was Chinese and would often insult foreigners but if I pulled him up on it he would say “not like you”, so I understand how you all stick together as a family, even if you don’t like each other.

Subject: 对

Me: Do you have any religious beliefs and if so have they changed upon living in the UK for a period of time?

Subject: Okay, even though Chinese is an atheist country everywhere has a variety of beliefs.

Me: Buddhism, Confucianism etc

Subject, yes, exactly. So basically I had no religious beliefs there, but In this moment presently I’ve tried to get access to Christianity.

Me: Really!? Christianity?

Subject: Yes, I can’t identify all these different groups of Christians though

Me: CofE, Catholic and many others.

Subject: My friend is Taiwanese and he's a nice guy, and he is also a Christian, and I do like to attend or share in church activities. Some also do voluntary work and I'm interested in that. It's a journey I think if I finally have a religious belief then I feel like I've completed my journey.

Me: So this has helped build your identity?

Subject: Yeah, gradually.

Me: Which culture do you feel closer to?

Subject: See my answer to what feels like home.

Me: In the light of experience, do you think you made the right decision for your future advancement back in China?

Subject: I definitely did.

Me: And finally, how would you say your deep exposure to British education and culture has expanded your outlook and affected your future plans?

Subject: No, I don't see it like that. I have a different layer inside myself. Studying abroad gives me a different layer of experience from other people and maybe a different insight. I don't think I'm higher than others who don't go abroad. I just got more layers inside myself. It feels like I have a 'wider' experience of life rather than a 'higher' experience of life.

Interview 3 & 4

Me: Commencing third interview with two candidates In London. First of all can I have consent to you both being interviewed?

Subject 1: No problem

Subject 2: Me too.

Me: First question, what did you and your family think of the U.K before coming here?

Subject 1: Not really, we lived in Beijing and its a big city I think it's fine but my parents think the U.K has no good food for me here and it's not healthy. Different cultural practices won't be good for me they think. So they are don't think its a very good country. They are quite traditional, they think it's not great.

Subject 2: I don't agree with that. My family think that Britain is a developed country, the people have perfect noses and people are usually good mannered. Most people have a good education with comparison to China. I've also lived in Seoul. In my eyes the British culture and Asian culture are totally different. My Mum thought Britain was a good place with history and art. What surprised me was the many different races when I arrived here. So it's given me greater understanding. Museums too have helped me understand the culture more. It's really a good cultural experience.

Me: Where did you live in China?

Subject 1: Beijing.

Subject 2: Wuhan

Me: How long have you lived in the UK?

Subject 1: 6 months

Subject 2: About 1 year and plan to stay 2 months more.

Me: What language do you speak at home?

Subject 1: Mandarin of course!

Subject 2: Mandarin but Wuhan dialect. Less mandarin, more dialect.

Me: What language do you use outside of the home in the UK?

Subject 1: English

Subject 2: English, this is London.

Me: Which culture do you feel most at home with?

Subject 1: Culturally its both, some Chinese and English culture, it's a mix of both. Local culture has influenced me a lot.

Subject 2: I'm on my way to getting used to the idea the UK. When I first came here I didn't understand it although everything was exciting, but now I am getting used to life here. Maybe sometimes a little bit boring but I enjoy life here. For me it's a chance to meet people from all over the world and to practice English.

Me: Can I first ask you if you are currently studying in the UK? Which college/university are you attending?

Subject 1: No me, no college or University although i've been to language school. No plan for university.

Subject 2: I only study at language school.

Me: How old were you when you first left China?

Subject 1: 9 I first went to North Korea as a dancer. I had a performance for a Kim Il Sung!

Subject 2: I was 25 when I first left China and I went to South Korea, I stayed for 2 and half years.
(Approx age 27).

Me: Was it hard to adjust? Did you use any strategies to fit in?

Subject 1: Its hard to image, I already had local friends who invited me. I don't know what Would do without them. Before I came to the UK I would read UK history books and local people's stories. Movies too helped.

Me: British movies?

Subject 1: I loved watching The Crown. It's very good and that was a big influence.

Subject 2: For me this was my first time. I had no friends here but my teacher recommended an app called "meet up" This helped me find interesting activities, the first event was a language meet up event and I got to meet lots of people from many different countries. Some study and some work. For history and art I like to go the V and A or the British Museum, I also like period dramas like Victoria.

Me: Do you socialise with Chinese students, UK citizens or other foreigners more?

Subject 1: I think all of them, I go out with Chinese but I hang around with locals more.

Subject 2: Usually with my friend's friends. Or my Brazilian classmates.

Me: What cultural resources in the UK do you primarily access and why?

Subject 1: I like to watch the history and admire old buildings, which is a positive in London, Edinburgh too. I've been to lots of places, to the park with friends or the countryside which I find amazing. I think the UK people are the most interesting. I go to pubs and at first people don't know each other and the UK people are quiet and polite. After 1 drink they get very exciting! I don't think local people are as quiet as they think, especially after one drink.

Subject 2: Besides museums I also like to visit churches, I've been to York Minster and Norwich cathedral. Every time I go to a new town I go to a big church or abbey. It fills me with a good feeling.

Me: Which parts of British culture do you find most attractive and which parts of your Chinese heritage would you never abandon?

Subject 1: Chinese festivals I will never abandon, I love the family atmosphere. We have to stick together and I get to see family. I can't leave that and it's better than the UK.

Subject 2: British people have a style and are very polite, that's what I like about the UK. I just think one difference is that the people are more creative than in China. Chinese often follow others and don't have enough courage or know the real way on how they want to live. I question things a lot. It's hard to find out but sometimes I think that I'm traditional.

Me: So do you agree that you like how Chinese are close with each other? Or do you think anything else?

Subject 2: I think over the past 1000 years people have lived together in harmony and families look after their children. Although they are 20/30 they look after them, even if they don't get married. They support them more than in the UK. It's different.

Me: Do you have any religious beliefs and if so have they changed upon living in the UK for a period of time?

Subject 1: Not really, i'm not religious. In my country not either. I went to midnight mass though. Just to look though, not to join.

Subject 2: I'm a Buddhist but my beliefs cannot be changed. I was told with belief the person will be real man if they have soul. Buddhism teaches me how to be a disciplined person and its showed me a lot. My mum is very devout. That has had a big impact on me. Although sometimes I think Christianity and Buddhism can be quite similar.

Me: In the light of experience, do you think you made the right decision for your future advancement back in China?

Subject 2: For me it was right right decision to study English and improve my English. For me also to study aromatherapy, It's a good way to open your mind. So I think that it was a great idea, nothing bad.

Subject 1: It's complicated, because I have a friend here - that's why I came. I love to learn languages and English is very important, the main two reasons. These will help when I go back to China. It's also influenced me. I can make UK food or do interesting things that Chinese never see.

Me: And finally, how would you say your deep exposure to British education and culture has expanded your outlook and affected your future plans?

Subject 1: All of the people know the UK, I'm proud that I lived in the UK. It makes me feel close to the empire history but honestly I don't think this is a democracy. I don't think it's fair, I don't think the people know their history or rights. In China thats unheard of. The people are a bit lazier now!

Subject 2: London is a multicultural city although its hard understand people because sometimes their English is poor. I didn't know original British culture and I'm not sure that I can find it in London. Immigrants have impacted the UK a great deal.

Me: Do you think our culture has changed you?

Subject 2: The people are open minded so I think I'm more accepting of new concepts, in China its hard to adapt to new culture but because everything comes to London everything is equal. I enjoy life here!

Interview 5

Me: Interview 5 with Subject 5. Can I have consent to this interview?

Subject: Yes

Me: What did you and your family think of Britain before you came here?

Subject: I'd say nothing about the UK, I can't remember if I knew the difference between the UK and USA. because for us, there was no difference between English speaking countries.

Me: Where did you live in China?

Subject: Hong Kong

Me: How long have you lived in the UK?

Subject: Since 2011, so now 7 years...

Me: What language do you speak at home?

Subject: Cantonese

Me: What language do you use outside of the home in the UK?

Subject: English

Me: Which culture do you feel most at home with?

Subject: Chinese (Hong Kong)

Me: Can I first ask you if you are currently studying in the UK? Which college/university are you attending?

Subject: Just graduated, I went to Cass Business School.

Me: And, how long have you been here for and was the UK your first choice?

Subject: 7 Years and I did not have any choice.

Me: How about the family?

Subject: It was just that my dad got the opportunity to come here to work.

Me: How old were you when you left China?

Subject: 17

Me: Was it hard to adjust? Did you use any strategies to fit in?

Subject: I think i studied English, purely English so thats how I made friends at that point because the first year I didn't meet any local people, so in a way I felt everyone around me was the same. So that's how I fitted in and yeah...

Me: Thanks, What did your family hope you would achieve by arranging your further education in the UK?

Subject: Well, before I came here they didn't expect I'd be able to finish university. So graduating from uni is an achievement already.

Me: Do you think that coming to the UK your mum and dad thought you may have better chances?

Subject: Yeah, I'd say so because I was one of the worst students in Hong Kong. I had to repeat the year, failed all the subjects, but when i got here I had the chance to go to a not-bad uni. Then ilgraduated and got a job. So, yeah I think I thank them for taking me here. It changed my life.

Me: Do you socialise with Chinese students, UK citizens or other foreigners more?

Subject: In uni?

Me: In general.

Subject: It's different in how I met them, so lets say...

Me: Lets say University,

Subject: So university, the majority of people i'd hang with is people from Hong Kong. From college though, I spoke with more local people. Everybody lives around me so local.

Me: Are you talking about UK citizens or foreigners such as Somali, mainland Chinese or African people?

Subject: At work?

Me: Yeah

Subject: At work it's British or europeans.

Me: If the answer is other Chinese then what language do you mostly speak with them?

Subject: If from China, Mandarin, If Hong Kong then Cantonese.

Me: What cultural resources in the UK do you primarily access and why?

Subject: Boring ones? I don't even follow Hong Kong ones...but I do watch TV, I watch BBC and Channel 4. I watch TV.

Me: Anything else?

Subject: Facebook, Instagram etc.

Me: Which parts of British culture do you find most attractive and which parts of your Chinese heritage would you never abandon?

Subject: So in terms of food, I'll always have asian food apart from going out with local British people. Then we have Italian anyway, but in general Asian food, but talking about celebrating Chinese new year, it's tough to say because in order to celebrate you need to get people around you and if there's 4 people in a family you can't celebrate much. So that's why we stopped celebrating Chinese New Year. I don't know if thats abandonment?

Me: Do you think theres any other parts you may have abandoned and if not, anything you have kept?

Subject: I'll never give up Chinese food. Yeah, I don't know much about British culture, so I don't know if I find it attractive. Getting bank holidays to me is just a bank holiday. I didn't study here when I was young so i don't have much clue about the culture or British history.

Me: Do you have any religious beliefs and if so have they changed upon living in the UK for a period of time?

Subject: Yeah, I'm buddhist and i'm still a part time vegetarian as i used to be so nothing really changed.

Me: So which do you now feel closer to? British, Hong kong or Chinese culture?

Subject: Definitely Hong kong, because I lived there for 17 years and only here for 7. I can't really complain.

Me: In the light of experience, do you think you made the right decision for your future advancement back in China?

Subject: How do you mean?

Me: If you ever went back to China would you feel that your time in the UK helped advance you? For example your education here and work here will help you get a job back in HK or China? Also would it help the way you see the world and expand your personality?

Subject: Yeah so, I think people in HK say it's easier if you work in the UK a few years after you graduated and then go back to HK because you have all the experience and all the stuff needed to help you in many ways. But my personal view is that this isn't true because here people here are quite lazy. Well right now I'm working in an international company right now. So, they sent me back to a HK office for a month in December so I tried to work with Hong Kong people. (Does that make sense?)

Me: Yeah

Subject: So that in Hong Kong it's so different, people work hard I mean everyone stays late until 7/8 PM and that's normal but here 5 or 5:30, that's late. "Why you still here!?" and yeah the job, that's their mentality they think the job will never get done. Even if you stay, then the job won't ever get done. It's a job, so the Hong Kong people rush things and want to get as much things done in a day as possible and then they stay until 8/9 and want to get the job done so yeah. The mentality is quite different. So I think if I keep working here it will make me quite lazy. So if I keep working in the UK that make me quite lazy as a person. Not wanting to work as hard other Chinese people. So let's say I go back in the next 2 years then I won't be able to catch up on their speed because they are too fast. Here is relaxed.

Me: And finally, how would you say your deep exposure to British education and culture has expanded your outlook and affected your future plans?

Subject: My future plans are I don't know if I should stay or leave. So that's something I've been thinking about. I don't know where I want to be. I know if I want to go back I need to make the decision quick before I train to be lazy!

Me: So you think the British education system has made you lazy?

Subject: Yeah, yeah I say so because say we talk about A levels. The syllabus is just too relaxed and you don't need to put in that much effort into your work and then somehow you get a good result if you get what I mean? Also it's the same with university. To me it wasn't as difficult as I thought it would be and just I think the UK makes everything a little bit easier. Then I think if I stayed in Hong Kong i would have failed all my exams. When I was 17 I got like 4 marks for my maths exam out of 100. I mean 4%, but here at GCSE and A levels I got an A! So I don't know what that tells us but to me it just seems easier. In a way we achieve and got a job, so to me I don't understand why people tell me that I'm living in the UK and I'm in a better position to get a good job. I think that's rubbish.

Me: Thanks for your time.