University of Alberta

Identity and Belonging:
First and Second Generation Chinese Canadian Youth in Alberta

by

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to the Chinese youth

whose voices have been silenced in their identity struggle;

And to my beloved family,

for your unwavering belief and support

in my pursuit of academic dream in a foreign land!

Abstract

Although Chinese Canadians have been considered as one of the largest "visible minority" group in Canada, research with the children of Chinese immigrants has yet to be fully developed. Recent empirical research reveals that racialized minority children experience a greater rate of racial discrimination than do their parents and thus have a decreased sense of belonging to Canada. In this context, my research examines identification and sense of belonging among first and second generation Chinese Canadian youth in Alberta. Two major research questions raised in this study include *How do Chinese Canadian youth construct identities and negotiate belonging within a Canadian multicultural society? What are the factors that contribute to their identification and sense of belonging?*

Using a grounded theory approach, thirty-six Chinese Canadian youth aged 15-25 in Edmonton and Calgary were interviewed. The findings of this research include two substantive identity models grounded in empirical data. Ten points of reference are identified to reveal the complicated assumptions that Chinese youth drew on in the process of their identity construction and belonging negotiation. The structural, institutional, and interpersonal factors that affect their identification and belonging are explored and discussed.

These factors, I argue, illustrate that racism still subjugates Chinese youth as second-class citizens through their daily interaction with major agents of socialization such as school, family, and media. The identity label of "Chinese" is therefore far from a neutral ethnic term. It is rather a racialized identity imbued with various racist connotations. My investigation illustrates that racism functions

as a discourse and hegemonic ideology which is not only maintained and imposed from non-Chinese immigrants, but also reproduced and internalized within the Chinese community.

The findings from this study have significant implications for race and ethnic studies, the adaptation and integration of Chinese immigrant descendants, identity studies, sociology of education, cultural studies, social justice and equity in education.

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As the proverb says, “There is a will, there is a way.” However, in my academic journey to complete this dissertation, I learned that personal will is not enough. Without help from various amazing people in my life I would not have gotten through.

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Introduction

Context: Identifying the Problem

In Canada, research on second generation racialized and ethnic minority youth is relatively new (Kobayashi 2008). Although Canada's immigration policy was revised in 1967 from selecting immigrants based on their race and country of origin to their educational backgrounds and skills, it is only in the last decades that Canada has received a large number of non-European immigrants from new source areas such as Asia, Caribbean, Latin America and Africa (Jantzen 2008). Despite the fact that Chinese is the largest "visible minority" group in Canada with 1.1 million, or 3.7% of the total Canadian population, it is a recently migrated group (Arthur et al. 2008). It has been noted that 74% of Chinese people in Canada are foreign born with 32% immigrating to Canada during the 1980s and 40% during 1990s (Hiller and Chow 2005). The 2006 survey shows that among the second generation "visible minority" groups, Chinese is still the largest category and is a significantly young age group with 76% being between 15-34 years old (Jantzen 2008). However, research on Chinese youth, particularly the second generation youth in Canada has yet to be fully developed.

Most research on immigrant youth has concentrated primarily on comparing and explaining their educational and occupational achievements in terms of ethnic variations and intergenerational mobility (Boyd, 2002, 2008; Halli, 2007; Zhou & Kim, 2006). Despite the importance of such factors, McDonald & Quell (2008) indicate that in a pluralistic society a focus on identity and developing a sense of connectedness to the larger society are as important as

socioeconomic inclusion – without a sense of civic inclusion and cohesion, people may still regard themselves as outsiders even if they are socio-economically included. Chinese Canadian youth are usually stereotyped as model minorities and rendered invisible in identity debates. How they struggle with identity negotiation particularly in terms of racial and ethnic identity within the Canadian multicultural state are often ignored in academic literature.

Drawing on data from the 2002 Ethnic Diversity Survey (EDS), Reitz and Banerjee (2007) argue that children of racialized minority immigrants experience a greater rate of racial discrimination in Canada than do their parents and thus have a decreased sense of belonging to Canada. Among these children, 33 percent of Chinese reported experiencing racial discrimination and this figure ranks second highest after Blacks. Therefore, it is of crucial importance to explore in depth how racial discrimination intersects with other factors that affect Chinese Canadian youth identity formation and their negotiations of belonging.

Further, current research on children of immigrants tends to be limited to analyses of second generation youth (Reitz & Somerville, 2004; Wilkinson, 2008). Little attention is paid to first generation youth, especially those who immigrated with their parents as teenagers. They are the most vulnerable group as they struggle with adaptation difficulties, such as language, and adolescence at the same time (Halli, 2007). Therefore, as Sethi (2008) indicates, it is important to recognize similarities and differences of experiences between first and second-generation youth in order to ensure effective policy and program development and theory building.

Purpose of the Study

In this context, the purpose of this study is to examine the lived experiences of first and second generation Chinese Canadian youth in Alberta, with a particular focus on their identity construction and belonging negotiation. First, this study will look at how Chinese Canadian youth identify themselves particularly in terms of race and ethnicity. Second, it explores what are the factors that contribute to their similar or divergent identification and sense of belonging. Given the fact that Chinese youth's identity construction and belonging negotiation do not happen in a social vacuum but are contextualized in the Canadian multicultural state as well as in its major social institutions such as school, family and media, this study will focus on examining how the above social institutions affect Chinese youth's identification and attachment to either Canada or their parents' country of origin. This study identifies barriers that affect Chinese Canadian youth to develop a sense of connectedness to larger Canadian society to achieve a real sense of social cohesion and equality in general.

Research Question

Two major research questions raised in this study include a) *How do Chinese Canadian youth construct identities and negotiate a sense of belonging within a Canadian multicultural state?* And, b) *What are the factors that contribute to their identification and sense of belonging?* Particularly, a set of sub-research questions are raised and revised during the interview process in relation to each of three spaces (school, family, and media). For example, questions related to the topics of school context and student population, school

and program choice, school experiences, peer relations, relationships with teachers, school curriculum, and knowledge about China and Chinese immigrants in Canada. As well, the questions pertaining to family centre on the use of Chinese language at home, access to various forms of Chinese entertainment and sources, and how frequently they travel to China and their impressions of it, as well as their relationship with parents. Further, research participants were also asked to talk about their opinions of the media's representation of China and Chinese immigrants and how those representations affect their identification and sense of belonging. These research questions were not fixed but kept being revised throughout the interview and initial data analysis, as is consistent with the methodology of grounded theory.

Methodological Approach

The research methodology used in this study is a grounded theory approach (Charmaz 2006). It has been noted that grounded theory is an appropriate research design when there is insufficient or a dearth of theory available to explain the phenomenon under study (Cresswell, 2007). The existing literature and theories about immigrant descendants either focus on their social mobility or tend to study their ethnic identities in terms of culture maintenance or in relation to assimilation or integration (Isajiw, 1990; Driedger, 1996). Little is known about how unequal power relations between the dominant and the subordinate groups affect Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging. What is also missing from the existing theories is a substantive model that identifies different factors that contribute to youth's identification and sense of

belonging. In this sense, a grounded theory approach is best suited to addressing the research purpose and research questions discussed above.

Research Findings

Using a grounded theory approach, thirty-six Chinese Canadian youth aged 15-25 in Edmonton and Calgary were interviewed. The findings of this research include two substantive identity models developed from empirical data. Identity Model I (as shown in Figure 1) is constructed to address my first research question: that is, *How do Chinese Canadian youth construct identities and negotiate a sense of belonging within a Canadian multicultural state?* This model identifies ten different points of reference that Chinese youth draw on in the process of their identity construction and belonging negotiation. It challenges the simplistic understanding that Chinese youth hold the same assumptions when they self-identify as Canadian or Chinese. It problematizes the existing research (Jedwab, 2008; Wilkinson, 2008) that assumes one's Canadian identification can be interpreted as equivalent to one's sense of belonging to Canada and vice versa. The second model, Identity Model II (as shown in Figure 2 & 3) attempts to answer the research question: *What are the factors that contribute to their identification and sense of belonging?* This model includes a structural picture of the factors identified in this study (Figure 2) and a detailed explanation of the factors within family, school and media (Figure 3). Particularly, I propose five arguments about Chinese youth's identification based on the five factors identified within family. I also theorize four types of identities developed among Chinese youth and identify four factors that affect their identification within

schools. In addition, I discuss five themes of media representation of Chinese and its implication for Chinese youth's identification.

With these factors, I argue that Canada, despite its multicultural claim, continues to be a racial state (from its racist historical past). Racism still subjugates Chinese youth as second-class citizens through their daily interaction with major social institutions. Multiculturalism policy within a bilingual framework reinforces the unequal relationship between the dominant group and racialized minorities in that it pushes Chinese youth towards linguistic and cultural assimilation and forces them to keep a distance from the Chinese identity. Based on the interview data, I argue that, the identity label of "Chinese" is far from a neutral ethnic term but a racialized identity imbued with various racist connotations. My investigation illustrates that racism functions as a discourse and hegemonic ideology which is not only imposed from the dominant group, but also internalized and reproduced within the Chinese youth community itself. Theoretically, my research demonstrates the continuing significance of race and how racism and unequal power relations affect Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging. I also understand race alone cannot account for the multidimensional oppression and subordination that Chinese youth experienced in their daily life. Drawing on the concept of intersectionality from critical race theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001), my study also examine how race, gender, class intersect with each other and affect how Chinese youth perceive themselves.

Significance of the Study

This study makes several significant theoretical, empirical, educational, and policy contributions. First, it provides a better understanding of the lived experiences of children of racialized and ethnic minorities in Canada in general and Chinese Canadian youth in Alberta in particular. Recent research indicates that Chinese youth should not be considered as a homogenous group. Reforms of Canadian immigration policy have brought in different subgroups from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and mainland China all with different histories and reasons for immigration (Guo & DeVoretz, 2006). Although immigrants from mainland China outnumbered Hong Kong and Taiwanese immigrants as early as 1998, little is known about how mainland Chinese immigrant offspring fare, since existing literature primarily focuses on Hong Kong immigrant descendants (Chow, 2007).The current study generates this much needed knowledge.

Second, this research contributes to the existing literature and theoretical debate on (youth) identity and belonging (Kelly, 1998, 2003; Hebert, Wilkinson, & Ali, 2008; Hall, 1990, 1996), race and ethnicity (Li, 1999; Omi & Winant, 1993; Satzwich & Liodakis, 2007), multiculturalism (Li, 1999; Day, 2000; Fraser, 2000), racism in media and school (James, 2010; Henry & Tator, 2006) as well as sociology of education (Wotherspoon, 2009). More importantly, it provides two identity models substantiated by empirical data that explain *how* and *what are the factors* that contribute to Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging.

Third, it enables educators, particularly those who examine issues of identity in their curriculum, to more fully understand the lived experiences of

Chinese Canadian youth. It also enables teachers to develop a more inclusive teaching and learning environment in their classrooms and help Chinese immigrant parents to better understand their children's identity struggle in school, family, and through their contact with media.

Fourth, by identifying the factors that affect Chinese youth in developing a connection with Canada, this study provides policy makers with insights that will facilitate the development of relevant policies that enhances social equity.

Organization of the Thesis

The whole thesis consists of eight chapters in addition to the Introduction and Conclusion. Chapter One, "Social Context: Canada as a Racial and Multicultural State" examines the historical and contemporary Canadian social context where Chinese Canadian youth construct identities and negotiate belonging. It explores the emergence of racist ideology in relation to modernity, Enlightenment, and liberalism, the oppression of Chinese immigrants experienced in Canadian history, and the nature and debates of multiculturalism. Chapter Two, "A Review of Literature: Chinese Immigrant Youth, Identity and Belonging" reviews the major literature pertaining to Chinese Canadian youth and identity such as Hall's cultural identity (1990, 1996), the approach that treats identity as unequal power relations (Li, 1999) and critical race theory (Anderson, 2011). Chapter Three, "Methodology" discusses the selection and employment of grounded theory as the research methodology. It highlights the researcher's philosophical assumptions, the theoretical description of grounded theory, strategies and processes of data collection and data analysis as well as concerns

over validation and reliability. Chapter Four, "The Influence of Family on Youth Identification," Chapter Five, "Socializing in Canadian Schools," and Chapter Six "Media and Identification" analyze the factors contextualized in three major social institutions including family, school and media that affect Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging. Chapter Seven, "Identity Model I: Points of References that Chinese Youth Draw on in Their Identification and Sense of Belonging" and Chapter Eight, "Identity Model II: Factors that Contribute to Chinese Youth's Identification and Sense of Belonging," respectively discuss the two identity models constructed in this study. Finally, the thesis ends with a brief conclusion with recommendations for future research.

Definition of Terms

First and Second Generation

The distinction between first and second generation immigration is based on the assumption that immigrant children's age of arrival in the host society will affect their adaptation experiences. Rumbaut (2004) divides the children of immigrants into five distinct age cohorts: 1) second generation refers exclusively to those who were born in the United States; 2) 1.75 generation, those who arrive between age 0-5. As this age group is too young to have much memory of the language, culture and education in their home country, their life experiences are very close to that of the U.S.-born second generation; 3) 1.5 generation, those who arrive at age of 6-12; 4) 1.25 generation, those who arrive at age of 13-17. Therefore their adaptation experiences are similar to those of the first generation; and 5) first generation who came after the age of 17. Other American researchers

have a different generational definitions. For example, some prefer to use the age of 12 as a distinction between the first and second generation (Louie, 2001, Portes & Zhou, 1993).

By contrast, Statistics Canada defines *first generation* as anyone not born in Canada; *second generation* is anyone born in Canada with at least one parent not born in Canada; and *third-plus generation* is anyone with both parents born in Canada. Such definition of generation has been criticized as being too broad (Jantzen, 2008).

Based on this debate, I think it is important to take the age of arrival into consideration as it is related to the impact of early years' socialization at different social contexts on youth's adaption experiences as well as their identification and sense of belonging. Therefore, my study defines second generation as those who are born in Canada with at least one Chinese parent, and those who immigrated with their Chinese parents to Canada before the age of six. Accordingly, the first generation refers to those with at least one Chinese parent and who come to Canada after the age of six. This distinction is based on the fact that the school entrance age in China is 6; thus, children might not have received formal education in Chinese schools yet. I take this definition of generation in a more flexible way rather than in an absolute sense.

Chinese (Canadian) Youth

I use the term of "Chinese Canadian youth" to refer to the first and second generation youth of Chinese origin from Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

For the sake of convenience, I use this term exchangeably with "Chinese youth" in my thesis. Both terms refer to the same group of participants in my study.

Identity and Identification

It has been argued that the concept of "identification" is more appropriate than that of "identity" in viewing one's identity construction as a process not a fixed entity (Hall, 1990; Kelly, 1998, 2003). In my thesis, I use "identification" and "identity construction" interchangeably, as both refer to the identity formation as a process of "becoming" not just "being."

Belonging

The term "belonging" used in this study refers to a subjective, flexible, and ongoing individual sense of attachment that Chinese youths have to any specific nation/region (i.e. Canada, Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan) or place (i.e. the Chinese community in Edmonton) where they believe they are an in-group member.

Limitations of this Research

The limitations of this study mainly lie in four aspects. First, my original plan was to study Chinese youth in Edmonton, Calgary, as well as other urban and rural areas in Alberta. However, due to lack of contact persons in those areas, and transportation expenses and difficulties, the participants recruited in this study are mainly those in Edmonton. Second, regarding the factors that affect Chinese youth's identification within the family and school, it might have been beneficial to also interview Chinese parents and some school teachers in order to garner a comprehensive picture and an enriched understanding of what happens in families

and school. This would have been a welcome as a supplementation to the youth's own narratives that I explored. Third, most participants chose to speak English during the interview as they regard it as their first language or as their primary language for daily communication. However, English is my second language – something that may have affected the communication between us, especially if the participants were reluctant to speak with a "FOB" person (i.e. those "fresh off the boat" or newcomers – I will discuss this identity label in the chapter five). Fourth, for some participants, discrimination based on race, gender, class, and other social indicators, is a very sensitive and provocative issue, and participants may have at times been reluctant to share their relevant experiences and ideas in these areas. As researcher, I have tried my best to build rapport with my participants. So despite these limitations, I did manage to collect some relevant and good data in this regard.

Chapter 1 Social Context: Canada as a Racial and Multicultural State

Introduction

Chinese youth identity formation cannot be understood in individual terms. Rather, such formation occurs in a social context, and is affected and constructed by the structures of the Canadian state. In this chapter, I examine the historical and contemporary Canadian social contexts where Chinese Canadian youth construct identities and negotiate a sense of belonging. This chapter is divided into four parts. First, I will discuss the concept of race, particularly in relation to the three important concepts of Modernity, Enlightenment, and Liberalism in Western society. This discussion is central to our understanding of the historical emergence of racist ideology in Canadian society and its continued existence. Second, by exploring the historical racial oppression, exploitation and exclusion that Chinese immigrants experienced in Canadian society, and in Alberta, in particular, I argue that Canada is a racial state where "Chinese" was constructed as a racial identity. Third, I challenge the contemporary popular image of Canada as a multicultural state by suggesting that the nature of multiculturalism policy is a result of political struggles, operates as an ideological discourse which maintains the hegemonic domination of English Canada and functions as a strategic tool (used by Canadian state) to assimilate racialized minorities. Two key themes of multicultural debates are also identified and discussed. One debate centres on multiculturalism as a politics of recognition, and the other discusses whether multiculturalism is a divisive or cohesive force for nation building. Both of these debates affect our understanding of how racialized minorities *should* be

viewed and treated in relation to the dominant White (racialized) group in Canada. Finally, I discuss briefly the implications of both the historical and contemporary Canadian social contexts for studying the identification and sense of belonging of Chinese Canadian youth.

Modernity, Enlightenment, Liberalism, and the Concept of Race

David Theo Goldberg (1993) argues that racial thinking and racist articulation emerge only within the institutions of modernity. Although there is discriminatory differentiation of human groups in medieval discourses, it is mainly religious, not racial. In other words, there is little evidence for claims of cultural inferiority in premodern texts that were linked to the concept of race or considered biologically determined. It is through modernity's emphasis on rational capacity and a Eurocentric practice of differentiating human groups that various forms of racist articulation and ideology have been increasingly normalized and naturalized. It has been argued that one of the main characteristics of modernity is its belief in the domination of nature by reason. This is manifested through its thrust to look for various laws to classify and dominate nature, including studying human groups in a "scientific" way, as can be seen in the emergence of the scientific domains of anthropology and biology during the Enlightenment. However, as Goldberg points out, there is a paradox in modernity's perception of subject. On one hand, it emphasizes the idealized principles of liberty, equality and fraternity, applicable to all human beings and puts forward an abstract and universal subject commanded only by reason. On the other hand, it classifies people into hierarchical racial groups with allegedly

different capacities for reason and morality. This leads to the paradox that Goldberg encapsulates in the phrase, "race is irrelevant, but all is race" (p. 6).

First, according to Goldberg, "Enlightenment thinkers were concerned to map the physical and cultural transformations from prehistorical savagery in the state of nature to their present state of civilization of which they took themselves to be the highest representatives" (p. 29). For example, David Hume classified human beings in terms of their national characters: Jews were fraudulent, Arabs "uncouth and disagreeable" whereas "[s]uperior to all others were English" (p. 31, also see Satzewich & Liodakis, 2007). Hume explained the different national characters as a result of social environments – "they benefited from their governmental mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and bourgeois democracy" (ibid.). Further, he distinguished racial difference from national characters as being inherent rather than social and drew the conclusion that "[a]ll 'species of men' other than whites (and especially the 'Negro') were 'naturally inferior to the whites'" (ibid.). As well, Immanuel Kant furthered the racial distinction of "the peoples of the Orient", of which the Arabs were most noble (hospitable and generous), followed by the Persians (good poets and courteous), the Japanese (resolute but stubborn) and then Indians and Chinese, who possessed "the grotesque and monstrous tastes" (p. 32). What is interesting is that in Enlightenment writings, Chinese were usually grouped with Indian as an Oriental "race." In his *History of British Indian* John Stuart Mill, the most powerful chief executive officer with the East Indian Company, described both Indians and

Chinese as "disgusting unclean in their persons and houses," and finding them as "completely lacking in morality" (p. 35).

Despite their divergent philosophical orientations (e.g. empiricism or rationalism), Enlightenment thinkers shared commonalities in their understanding of the self and society. Skin colour and other biological features were viewed as having a causal relationship with mental and moral capacities. Therefore, Kant's claim that "the fellow was quite black from head to foot, *a clear proof* that what he said was stupid" was acceptable in its day for it was not against the contemporary form of the principle of equality during that period of time (p. 35). As Goldberg notes, that "[o]ne way for enlightenment philosophers committed to moral notions of equality and autonomy to avoid inconsistency on the question of racialized subordination was to deny the rational capacity of blacks, to deny the very condition of their humanity" (p. 32). It is through the writings of Enlightenment thinkers that the concept of race based on physical and biological differences were introduced into the public consciousness and assumed social significance in justifying the subordination of non-Whites.

Second, modernity is a crucial historical period during which Enlightenment philosophers began to group Europeans into a collective "we," as distinguished from the non-white. As Hall (1996) argues, "The emergence of an idea of 'the West' was central to the Enlightenment… the Enlightenment was a very European affair, European society, it assumed, was the most advanced type of society on earth, European man (sic) the pinnacle of human achievement" (p. 187). The spirit of modernity lies in its commitment to continuous progress. The

standards used to evaluate the development of civilization, however, were based on the West's own universalized values (Goldberg, 1993). The allegedly superior self-image, in alignment with various racist articulations, reached intellectual and material maturity in the Enlightenment and "solidifie[d] as Western world hegemony" in the following centuries (p. 3). The Eurocentric distinction between the civilized and the uncivilized led European colonizers to believe that "Natives ought to be…directed – administratively, legislatively, pedagogically, and socially" (p. 35). This Western paternalistic attitude has continually manifested itself in "modern theories of development, the policies of World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and recent European and US 'efforts' to democratize Afghanistan, Iraq, and other 'rogue' states"(Satzewich & Liodakis, 2007, p. 7). It has also been reflected in various vilified Western representations of China as an authoritarian, uncivilized, and undemocratic country as measured by Western standards, even if it has achieved amazing progress (in Western modernity's terms) with significant international influence in many fields. It is also worth noting that Eurocentric ideology has been continually influencing Chinese Canadian youth's self-identification through textbook representations of China and the inclusion of readings of Enlightenment thinkers.

Finally, liberalism is modernity's defining doctrine of self and society. Goldberg (1993) suggests that liberalism plays a key role in establishing racialized reasoning and ideologically legitimating racist exclusions. Despite Enlightenment thinkers' different philosophical perspectives, they were to varying degrees interested in seeking "*foundations* in *universal* principles applicable to all

human beings" and a broad identity that can unite peoples on an essential human nature based on rationality (Goldberg, 1993, p. 5). This essentialist conception of human beings and its commitment to colour blindness has continually influenced today's liberal debate over multiculturalism. For example, in a critique of Charles Taylor's work, Abu-Laban (2002) notes that "today most liberal thinkers hold that race is morally irrelevant (i.e. it should have no bearing on the rights accorded to individuals that should be universal and 'different blind')" (p. 466). Moreover, Goldberg (1993) argues that a liberal paradigm has also prevailed in social scientific analysis of racism in that racism is regarded simply as an individual prejudice from an irrational differentiation of people. Therefore, the solution underpinned by such assumptions focuses on identifying "the individual and intentional causes of racial conflict" and racial concerns were reduced to "the irrational prejudices of 'hate crimes' and 'hate offenses', 'white rights' and 'free speech'" (Goldberg, 1993, p. 7). This liberal treatment of differences also ranges from its claims of tolerating difference to "bleaching them out through assimilation or integration" in order to maintain a universal identity based on sameness (ibid.). To comprehend the various ways in which the concept of race has been socially constructed, it is imperative to trace its historical root in modernity, Enlightenment and liberalism. Further, it has been noted that the racial assumption that one's biological and physical features correspond to his/her intellectual and moral capacities could also have been found in social Darwinist, Spencerist, and Eugenicist thinking in the following centuries (Omi & Winant, 1994)

Canada as a Racial State and the "Chinese" as a Racial Identity: The History

There has been debate among social scientists on the use of the concept of race and whether it has any analytic value in contemporary Western society. Although social scientists agree that "race" as a historically and socially constructed concept developed in the context of European colonization, having no correlation with one's intelligence and other social cultural attributes, they disagree on whether the concept of race should be rejected. One group of theorists argues the concept of race as an ideological construction should be discontinued in social scientific research to avoid reinforcing a false classification of human beings. The other group instead emphasizes that no matter whether race is real or not, it still has real consequence on people's lives so it is still a significant analytic concept for studying the lived experiences of racialized minorities (Hier & Bolaria, 2006).

Omi & Winant (1994) note that the concept of race based on biologism was losing coherence in the early 1930s, especially under the attack of progressivism and by the work of the "Chicago School." Race was viewed as a social category, simply one of many determinants of ethnicity. Since the 1930s, however, the biologically-oriented approaches underpinned by the concept of race were replaced by the study of ethnicity. However, Omi & Winant argue that rather than dismissing "race" as an illusion or useless concept based on biological notion, race was in fact an important organizing principle of social relationships in North America. In their popular theory of racial formation in the United States, they sharply point out that the state is inherently racial. As they note "the major

institutions and social relationships of U.S. society – law, political organization, economic relationships, religion, cultural life, residential patterns, and so on, – have been structured from the beginning by the racial order" (p. 103). All the dimensions of the state, such as "the *institutions* [that it is composed of], the *policies* they carry out, the *conditions and rules* that support and justify them, and the *social relations* in which they are imbedded," are racial in nature (p. 105). Racial formation is "a process of historically situated 'projects'" with the racial state facilitating the interaction between individuals and social structures, the trajectory of racial relations and the patterns of conflict and accommodation (Hier & Bolaria, 2006, p. 81). Therefore, the significance of the concept of race should not be simply dismissed. As they said,

> The main task facing racial theory today, in fact, is no longer to problematize a seemingly "natural" or "common sense" concept of race – although that effort has not been entirely completed by any means. Rather our central work is to focus attention on the *continuing significance and changing meaning of race*. It is to argue against the recent discovery of the illusory nature of race; against the supposed contemporary transcendence of race; against the widely reported death of the concept of race; and against the replacement of the category of race by other, supposedly more objective categories like ethnicity, nationality, or class (1993, p. 3).

Omi & Winant's theory of the racial state, along with their emphasis on the continuing significance of race, has important implications for understanding the historical and contemporary social context of Canada where social identities of

Chinese are racially constructed as the inferior "Other," culturally undesirable, and socially unassimilable, in contrast to a national identity of "we," that is, White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASPs). Drawing on Omi & Winant's conceptualization, I argue that Canada is in essence a racial state despite its popular multicultural claims, given the fact that racial oppression and exploitation has been central to nation building and given that a racial hierarchy characterized by dominant-minority group distinctions is still the defining feature of contemporary Canadian society.

The early history of Chinese immigration was closely linked to the crucial period of Canada's nation building between the 1880s to the 1920s, during transformation from a rural agrarian society to an urban industrialized one, and from a British colony to a modern nation-state (Ng, 1993). The exploitation and discrimination that Chinese immigrants experienced during this period should be understood as an indispensable part of Canada's nation building agenda. On the one hand, there is a need for European colonists to maintain a subservient and disposable labour force at marginal cost to meet the unpredictable labour demand and supply (Li, 1998); and on the other hand, it is important to maintain a white settler society through the exclusion of racialized minorities from a constructed national community. It has been argued that few minority groups in Canada have been subjected to racial oppression to the same extent as the Chinese (Li, 1998; Fleras & Elliot, 2007). Economically, they were used as cheap labourers, doing the most dangerous work in building Canadian Pacific Railway while only being paid half the wages of White labourers. Politically, they were subject to numerous

legislative controls and exclusion. They were disenfranchised as early as 1875, barred from voting in both provincial and municipal elections in British Columbia. They were prevented from performing skilled jobs in coal mines, from obtaining a liquor licenses and hand-logger's licenses, barred from serving in civil service positions such as school trustees, prevented from hiring white or Indian women or girls and excluded from the professions of law and pharmacy (Li, 1998). In 1885, after the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Canadian federal government immediately imposed a head tax of $50 which was raised to $500 in 1903, equivalent to an average worker's two years' wages. In 1923, Chinese immigrants were completely barred from entering Canada with the pass of the Chinese Immigration Act.

In addition to laws and policies at federal, provincial and municipal level, Canadian mainstream media actively incited anti-Chinese sentiments by discursively and ideologically representing them as an inferior race, as heathens, and as uncivilized, degraded, and unassimilable. In 1879, one of the two major local newspapers in Victoria, the *British Colonist*, published a piece of illustrated news which mimics a dialogue between the newspaper owner, Amor de Cosmo and a Chinese labourer:

> *Amor de Cosmo:* The love of the world or the lover of mankind.
>
> *Heathen Chinee*: Why you sendee me offee?
>
> *Amor de Cosmo*: Because you can't and won't assimilate with us.
>
> *Heathen Chinee*: What is datee?

> *Amor de Cosmo*: You won't drink whisky, and talk politics and vote like us. (Weston, 1879)

The alleged cultural differences based on European norms and the discourse of blaming the victims for these differences (Chinese have been disenfranchised since 1875) was socially constructed by *British Colonist* to mobilize public support to justify the exclusion of the Chinese as well as to advance the political capital and interests of it owner. Amor de Cosmo's anti-Chinese political stance certainly did not hinder his transition from a newspaper owner to a popular politician. He became premier of British Columbia from 1872 to 1874 and served as representative of Victoria in the House of Commons from 1871 to 1882 (Cui, 2010).

As well, the idea that Chinese were an inferior race to Europeans and that their very presence in B.C threatened the wellbeing of white settlers, Western civilization and Christianity is further constructed by Canadian media through its vilified representation of Chinatown. As Anderson (1991) notes, Chinatown was represented by European settlers as a material manifestation of all the evil, inherent and essentialized characteristics of a "heathen Chinee"—an unsanitary sink and a morally aberrant community.

> …Chinese were seen as inveterate gamblers, Chinatown was lawless; as the home of opium addicts, the area was a pestilential den; as the home of evil and inscrutable men, it was a morally retrograde prostitution base where white women were lured as slaves (p. 92).

A reporter from the *Vancouver News* described Chinatown as "where the celestials congregate," and as "an eyesore to civilization" (p. 82). The Chinese, according to the *World*, were an inferior race "who scorn our civilization, who scorn our morals, who scorn our Christianity and who live amongst themselves" (p. 81).

Anti-Chinese sentiments and movements were manifested in almost all the major institutions of the Canadian state. Schools, as a part of the state system, were not an exception. According to Stanley (2011), during the early decades of the twentieth century, Chinese children experienced segregation in almost all the government-controlled schools in British Columbia, although with different patterns. Chinese children in Vancouver were segregated into a special class whereas Victoria's school board had a separate school altogether. The New Westminster School Board segregated Chinese children in a tent at a city park while the Vancouver Island community of Cumberland put the Asian and African Canadian children together in a segregated school. Government-controlled schools actively participated in racist state formation by treating Chinese children as an inferior race and as a supposed health and morality threat to White students, "carrying into schools what already exists in every other institution of society" (p. 98). In addition to organized racialized exclusion in material arrangements such as segregated schools, Canadian schools also indoctrinated the younger generations with "White supremacist forms of knowledge" through official curriculum that reinforced the socially constructed identity of Chinese, and made the operation of a racial state system appears natural and appropriate (p. 96). For example, an

elementary school textbook authorized for used in BC between 1911-1923 described the white race as "the most active, enterprising, and intelligent race in the world" while "the Yellow Race" was characterized as "some of the most backward tribes of the world [who,] as a rule, are not progressive" (Stanley, 2011, p. 108). As well, a high school geography text used between 1900 and 1920 had a detailed comparison of "Characteristics of the Races of Mankind," in which "the Mongolian was described as 'sullen; sluggish; … their culture not of the modern kind'" (ibid.). As Stanley argues, school textbooks were the key technology in the formation of a racial state.

> By imbuing racial concepts with the authority of science, textbooks made it as difficult for BC students to question the idea of innate differences between racialized groups as it would have been for them to question that the earth revolved around the sun…That 'the Chinese' had different characters and qualities than whites was something that they learned at the same time that they learned how to read. That 'the Chinese' were aliens and not 'Canadian' was shown to be natural and obvious. (p. 112)

Most historical accounts of early Chinese immigrants in Canada are located in British Columbia where a majority of Chinese were concentrated due to the Gold Rush and the building of the Canada Pacific Railway (CPR). The completion of CPR and economic recession in BC resulted in the first presence of Chinese labourers in Alberta, who came there to seek job opportunities (Hoe, 1979). It has been noted that their arrival in Alberta during the 1880s was greeted with a strong hostility by the local people. An article published in *Calgary Herald* in 1884

stated that "[w]e do not want Chinamen in Canada. It is desirable that this country shall not be peopled by any servile race" (Dawson, 1991, p. 44). Similar to their peers in BC, earlier Chinese settlers in Alberta were not allowed into pharmacy, law, teaching and politics which require citizenship. They had few choices except menial work in the service industry that White labourers avoided. Most of these jobs were grueling and wearisome, characterized by the long working hours, seven-day work weeks and low wages (Calgary Chinese Cultural Center website: History). One of the most widely known acts of violence against Chinese occurred in Calgary in 1892. It started when a Chinese man fell ill with smallpox after his visit in Vancouver. The officials burned the laundry where he lived and placed all occupants under quarantine. Two months later after these occupants were released from quarantine, a mob of 300 raided the Chinese community and burned down three Chinese laundries and a grocery store (ibid.). It has been noted that the first Chinese settlers in Edmonton were those who escaped from the 1892 riot in Calgary. Local media such as *Edmonton Bulletin* and *Calgary Herald* discursively constructed Chinese as a threat to the Western civilization and public health; arguing they should be excluded from a national community dominated by White Europeans.

It has been widely acknowledged that the nature of racism against Chinese is institutional and structural (Li, 1998; Fleras & Elliot, 2007). The oppression that earlier Chinese immigrants experienced was sanctioned by the state rather than simply individual misbehavior. This oppression was legal and supported by all the social institutions, policies, and rules of the state. A racial order and

hierarchy that subjugated Chinese near the bottom of the racial hierarchy was actively constructed by the state and was a crucial part of Canada's nation building agenda. Thus, given the racism that Chinese confronted in Canadian history and the construction of the "dangerous" Chinese immigrant, I argue that from the beginning Canada was a racial state.

It is worthwhile to note that although scholars agree that racism is institutional and structural, they place different emphases on the causes of racism. While some (e.g. structural Marxists) argue that it is mainly a class issue in that Western capitalism needs access to a cheap and dispensable labour force divided along racial lines, others (such as Neo-Marxists) prioritize the role of "superstructure" in terms of ideology and cultural hegemony. Rather than taking on an either/or approach, it is important to realize that the racism that the Chinese experienced in Canada results from a mutual interaction of both and is an ongoing process of "historically situated projects" rather than a finished product (Omi & Winant, 1994). As discussed above, the concept of race, the distinctions between the West and East, civilized and uncivilized, Christian and heathen, master and slave, White and non-White, "we" and "they" are central to the European Enlightenment. These ideas and discourses existed before Europeans colonized Canada and were further solidified during the crucial period of Canada's nation building (Anderson, 1991). Processes of racialization, economic exploitation, and the construction of a White settler society are inter-related and interconnected components in Canada's transition period. The racism the Chinese experienced should not be simply understood in terms of various material manifestations such

as exclusion and segregation. Rather, it has had long-term consequences for the making of the racial category of "Chinese" in Canada. During the process of racialization, the agents of the Canadian state played the most influential role in constructing the "Chinese" as a racial identity by essentializing their "alien" culture and fixing their "undesirable and unassimilable" differences against European norms. Through various racist laws and policies, the inferiority of the Chinese race was officially legitimated. In this way, the racial state hegemonically mobilized people to accept the "unifying discourse" of race for their own consciousness and interests (Anderson, 1991). Drawing on Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony, Anderson argues the Canadian state successfully secured popular legitimacy by excluding Chinese from an Anglo national identity and community. The power of articulation held by the state to construct a racial identity for the Chinese suggests that the state should be conceptualized "as much more than mere government" (p. 24). The hegemonic influence of the state extending from the political sphere to the cultural sphere means that, "the state is not a separate level from civil society but part of that society" (p. 25). Racist ideas about "Chinese" were discursively reproduced in politics and media and became taken-for-granted knowledge and part of the collective consciousness among White Canadians. Therefore, from the outset the identity label of "Chinese" is not neutral identity-- it is a racial identity constructed in sharp contrast to the norm as represented by Europeans and the Western civilization. Thus, the Chinese have been excluded from the national community and the national identity of "Canadian" since Canada's nation building period.

From the repeal of Chinese Immigration Act in 1945 to the initiation of Canada's Multiculturalism policy in 1971, only 26 years passed. It would be naïve to believe, therefore, that during this period the identity label of "Chinese" had transformed from a racial identity to a neutral ethnic identity such as "Italian," "Portuguese," or "Ukrainian," or as an identity that people of Chinese origin would feel safe to use for self-identification without running the risk of negative connotation. Due to the relationship between identity and the state, it is important to explore the current popular statement that Canada is a multicultural state. In other words, has Canada transformed from a racial state to a multicultural state? What is the nature of this multicultural state? What are the implications of this understanding for Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging?

Canada as a Multicultural State

The Concept of Multiculturalism

Before addressing the above questions, it is important to know first what multiculturalism means in a Canadian context. Li (1999) notes that it is "a muddled concept" because there is no agreement on its precise meaning (p. 150). As a federal policy, the program content of multiculturalism is subject to periodical changes under various social and political pressures. As a normative concept, it stands for an array of interpretations and public opinions on "what 'multiculturalism' has done, what it should have done, or what it could do" (p. 150).

Fleras & Elliot (2007) define multiculturalism as an empirical fact, an ideology, a policy, a set of practices and a critical discourse. Multiculturalism is

used to describe Canada's demographic diversity, which comprises Aboriginals, two charter groups, (the English and the French), and other ethnic groups from 170 different countries, speaking over 100 languages. As an ideology, it refers to "what ought to be." For some, the underlying assumptions of a multicultural ideology include a shared identity, a commitment to diversity within unity, the principles of cultural relativism and tolerant attitudes towards others. For others, it means a dominant ideology that produces conformity, control, power, privilege and maintains the status quo. As a policy, it has been employed as a strategy by the federal government to manage ethnic relations since its adoption in 1971. The focus of this official policy has been subjected to various shifts ranging from celebrating cultural differences during 1970s, to fostering equality during 1980s, and to promoting a commonly shared citizenship during 1990s and 2000s. As a set of practices, multiculturalism is used by politicians and bureaucrats to achieve a series of political and economic goals. Politically, this policy emerged at a time of political turmoil and was used by the federal government to quell Quebec separatism and maintain national unity. It was also used to counterbalance the encroachment of American cultural values and to inhibit intergroup competition for prioritization in the nation. Additionally, political parties use multiculturalism to secure ethnic votes during election time. Economically, the commercial value of multiculturalism was best elaborated in former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's conference speech in 1986 entitled "Multiculturalism Means Business," in which he emphasized how Canada's diversified population was a major advantage for accessing global markets and promoting Canada's economic

prosperity. As Fleras & Elliot (2007) point out, "capitalizing on differences is seen as good for the economy, especially when 40 percent of Canada's GDP is export-based" (p. 286). Canada's multicultural image helps it to attract international investors and capital, establish profitable connections, and penetrate export markets, "particularly by cultivating and tapping into the lucrative Asian market" (ibid.). It has been argued that with the expansion of the global capitalist market, "multicultural priorities will continue to be driven by an economic agenda more interested in improving Canada's competitive advantage than in securing institutional inclusiveness" (p. 287). Concurrently, minority groups use multiculturalism to articulate their demands and to attain their political and economic goals for equality and social justice. Finally, as a discourse, critical multiculturalism challenges the legacy of Eurocentricism and institutional inequalities. It calls for bringing about transformative social change rather than maintaining the status quo.

The term multiculturalism became more layered when academics tried to clarify its meanings through different theoretical lenses. For example, Kincheloe & Steinberg (1997) lay out five types of multiculturalism in terms of their various political positions, including conservative multiculturalism, liberal multiculturalism, pluralist multiculturalism, left-essentialist multiculturalism and critical multiculturalism. As well, Sandercock (2003) argues for a rethinking of the philosophy of multiculturalism for the twenty-first century by exploring five ways in which we might live together in all of our differences. If it can be said that the federal government designed the political discourse of multiculturalism,

then it was academic and civic participation in the multiculturalism debate that gave this ambiguous term the appearance of a scientific and legitimate theoretical concept (Li, 1999). As a result, the image of Canada as a multicultural reality which encourages ethnic diversity is further reinforced. Due to divergent ideological and political positions as well as academic theorizations, the nature of multiculturalism as a federal policy remains hidden. It is thus important to uncover the nature of multiculturalism policy to have a better understanding of Canada as a multicultural state in which Chinese youth construct identities and negotiate belonging.

The Nature of Multiculturalism Policy

The nature of Canada's multiculturalism policy can be summarized into three points: 1) as a contested site for political struggles; 2) as an ideological discourse to maintain the hegemonic domination of English Canada; 3) as a strategic tool to assimilate racialized minorities.

As a contested site for political struggles. Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau announced the adoption of multiculturalism in his famous speech to the House of Commons in 1971in which he borrowed "the well-worn planks of liberté, égalité, fraternité" from the French revolution to highlight the essence of Canadian multiculturalism as Liberty ("the idea of freedom of choice"), Equality ("the essential equality of all our people") and Community ("as a powerful bonding agent for Canadians") (Day, 2000, p. 188). What remained hidden behind this rhetoric, however, were the political purposes it aimed to achieve under certain historical and political conditions.

First, it has been argued that the emergence of multiculturalism has less to do with the growth of "visible minority" populations, which was only a noticeable phenomenon in the late 1970s and early 1980s, than a calculated political strategy to counteract Quebec nationalism and to appease the political demands of "other Europeans" who were non-English and non-French (Li, 1999, 2003). The English and the French, as two European nations competing for Aboriginal lands during the colonial period of Canadian history, established an uneasy relationship (the conquer–the conquered) after the battle at the Plains of Abraham (Bannerji, 2000, Day, 2000). However, the competition between these two "founding nations" for power has never ceased. In 1963, a reinvigorated French nationalism arose from the Quiet Revolution in Quebec (Abu-Laban & Gabriel, 2002, p. 107). In responding to this nationalist movement, the federal government appointed a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (B & B Commission) whose mandate was "to recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian confederation on the basis of equal partnership between the two Founding races" (Day, 2000, p. 180). However, the emphasis on two languages and two cultures provoked opposition from the "third force," who were non-British, non-French, and non-Aboriginal origin (especially represented by second-generation Ukrainians), in fear of their status and being subjugated as second-class citizens (Abu-Laban & Gabriel, 2002). In response to their political demands, "The Cultural Contributions of Other Ethnic Groups" was added to the B & B Commission report (ibid., p. 108). It was in this context that the Trudeau government adopted a policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework.

Therefore, the emergence of multiculturalism policy was a product of political struggles among various social forces rather than a spontaneous journey for liberty, equality, and community as indicated in Trudeau's speech. It is worthwhile to note that the "other ethnic groups" being referenced during the time that multiculturalism policy was adopted were largely composed of Europeans that were non-English or non-French (Li, 1999).

Second, Multiculturalism as an official policy is not a fixed entity. Rather, its contents and focus is under constant change due to economic demands of developing Canadian capitalism and pressures from various political forces. As Abu-Laban (1998) notes, multiculturalism policy was intertwined with Canada's immigration policy. During the 1960s, because of a lack of skilled labour and a domestic and international political climate critical of explicit racial discrimination, Canada began to revise its immigration policy by introducing a point system of selection in 1967. All applicants were assessed on their educational backgrounds and occupational skills rather than their racial and ethnic origins or skin color to see whether they could contribute to Canada's labour market need. The introduction of a point system brought in a large amount of immigrants from non-conventional source countries, that is, more "visible minority" immigrants from Asia, Africa, Pacific Islands and Middle East rather than White immigrants from European countries. As noted, among non-English and non-French origins, those of Asian and African origin increased from 3 per cent in 1961 to 13 per cent of 1981 and 25 per cent in 1991 (Li, 1999). As a result, the changing immigration policy led to a demographics change in Canada, which

in turn called for a shift of focus within multiculturalism policy from the goal of retaining ethnic cultures during the 1970s, to addressing racism and inequality during the 1980s. In 1983, in addition to the parliamentary hearing, the Special Committee on Participation of Visible Minorities in Canadian Society released a report entitled "Equality Now" which urged the federal government to introduce the Multiculturalism Act and to create a separate Ministry of Multiculturalism (Li, 1999, p. 154). This suggestion was further strengthened by the 1987 report of the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism which argued that the 1971 multiculturalism policy does not have the same statutory protection and infrastructural support as that of official languages (ibid). The political demands of racialized minorities to fight racism and promote equality did draw the attention of the federal government partly because of their value to Canada's economic prosperity and Canada's competitive position in the global market. This point was indicated in the former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's speech:

> The ethnocultural diversity of Canada's population is a major advantage when access to global markets is more important than ever to our economic prosperity. Protecting this advantage means that steps to eradicate racism are essential. Canada cannot afford to have any of its citizens marginalized. (Canadian Heritage, as cited by Fleras & Elliot, 2007, p. 286)

The attention of the federal government to these appeals was also partly due to the growing number of racialized minorities, and thus the increasing number of "ethnic" voters. In this context, the Multicultural Act was passed in 1988 and a

new Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship was formed in 1990. Further, it has been argued that the constitutional debates on national unity following the Meech Lake Accord of 1987 was another factor that made the federal government strengthen its commitment to multiculturalism for the purposes of accepting Quebec's special status on the one hand and showing the rest of the Canada this was not done at the sacrifice of their cultural protection (Li, 1999).

However, the critiques of multiculturalism have never ceased and they are not single-stranded but rather emerge from various perspectives and political positions. On one hand, racialized minority groups criticize multiculturalism policy for its mere symbolic nature and its lack of any substantive institutional support and therefore criticized it as a vehicle that is insufficient for bringing about real structural changes. On the other hand, people from the political right criticize multiculturalism for being divisive, thus threatening national unity. As Abu-Laban and Gabriel (2002) noted, the criticism of multiculturalism gained its strength with the inception of the Reform Party in 1987 which was the forerunner to the Canadian Alliance. The Reform Party opposed the "special treatment" of racial-ethnic groups by emphasizing equal individual rights, insisting on the integration of minorities into Canadian culture and called for ending multiculturalism funding. Critiques of multiculturalism became prevalent in the late 1980s and early 1990s. A 1993 public opinion survey showed that the support provided by Canadian government to maintain ethnic identities and ethnic cultures must be replaced by the American assimilationist ideology (*The Global and Mail*, as cited by Li, 1999). Further, the federal election in 1993 brought in a

large number of Reform Party members to the House of Commons. As a result, when the new Liberal government came into power in 1993, the Department of Multiculturalism was dissipated and was renamed as the Citizens' Participation and Multiculturalism Branch and merged with several other departments and agencies under a new department of Canadian Heritage (Abu-Laban &Gabriel, 2002; Li, 1999).

It is clear that the initiation and evolution of Canadian multiculturalism policy was closely linked with power struggles among various social and political forces, mainly including Quebec nationalism and minority groups' political demands against racism as well as political parties' different positions towards multiculturalism. Although its focus has shifted during different period of time as a result of the influence from various social forces, the nature of multiculturalism as a strategic tool to maintain the hegemonic domination of English Canada and to assimilate racialized minorities has relatively remained unchanged.

As an ideological discourse that maintains the hegemonic domination of English Canada. What is Canada? And who are Canadians? Bannerji (2000) poignantly argues that the answer to this question depends on which side of the nation we stand. For some, Canada is universally transcendent with a legitimately acquired territory and legislative right to "manage" a diversified population. For others, Canada means a particular capitalist state of English Canada which uses multiculturalism as a legitimating device for maintaining its domination through demeaning Quebec's separatist aspirations, Aboriginal land claims, and assimilating other ethnic minorities.

The Eurocentric history of Canada began with the battle between the British and the French for land and dominance over Indigenous people, with the British winning the control and further maintaining its domination by reinforcing a racial and ethnic hierarchy through policies, laws, and practices. Historically, the racial and ethnic hierarchy was sustained by an explicitly discriminatory immigration policy with British or American populations as the most sought-after groups, followed by French, Belgians, Dutch, and then less desirable groups such as Italians, south Slavs, and finally the undesirable groups including Jews, Asians, and Blacks (Abu-Laban, 1998). The major threat to British domination was French nationalism and separatist movements, not racialized minorities who were politically marginalized in major social institutions of the Canadian state. Although the policy of bilingualism and biculturalism legitimized the "official Canadian identity" as both British and the French, it is often narrated as though the British gave "the gift of equality to the French Other" (Day, 2000, p. 183). Therefore, French nationalists were not satisfied and the "Third Force," especially Ukrainians with a growing economic and political power were also unhappy with their second-class citizen status. In response to this, the bilingualism and biculturalism policy was creatively redesigned into multiculturalism within a bilingual framework. Not surprisingly, the French saw this policy as one which denied their special status as a founding people by positioning them along-side other ethnic groups. The Quebec government tried to counterbalance the influence of multiculturalism by introducing a policy of interculturalism with a focus on the importance of French language and culture. As Abu-Laban (1998) noted,

multiculturalism was in fact used by federal liberals as a tool for weakening Quebecois nationalism and ideologically challenging the dualism of two founding peoples. In other words, it was used as a strategic tool to maintain the hegemonic domination by English Canada.

Further, the racial and ethnic hierarchy did not disappear with the emergence of multiculturalism. Rather, it was deeply entrenched through new terms of "ethnocultural origin" replacing "race." Through studying the official multiculturalism discourse which emphasized that "we all have an ethnic origin," Day(2000) found that a circularity occurred when ethnic origin was defined as being dependent upon cultural, national, and racial origin and race was employed as a working term to describe ethnic origin ("Multiculturalism: Building the Canadian Mosaic," as cited by Day, 2000). This circularity showed "the Canadian state's attempt to find an 'acceptable' language' in which to express the will to problematic categorization of Others" (p. 190). As well, by examining the 1991 census data, Day noticed that the table of "Population by Ethnic Origin and Sex" was presented in exactly a racial and hierarchical order with British and French on the top followed by other Europeans, then Asians, then Blacks and Aboriginals. The dominant position of English Canada was not changed with the initiation of multiculturalism policy. Rather, it was strengthened through ideological and hegemonic discourse of multiculturalism in its diversity claim.

As a strategic tool to assimilate racialized minorities. Multiculturalism policy is also used by the federal government as a strategic tool to assimilate racial and ethnic minorities through separating language rights from cultural

rights as well as through the provision of symbolic funding for ethno-cultural groups. It has been argued that among the sixteen recommendations made by the Bilingual and Bicultural Commission (1969) to maintain the languages and cultures of ethnic minorities, the only recommendation adopted suggested increased funding for linguistic assimilation. The vital link between language and culture was denied in Pierre Trudeau's announcement of multiculturalism: "although there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other" (House of Commons, *Debates*, 1971, as cited by Day, 2000, p. 193). However, as Day pointed out, the importance of language as "a necessary condition for the complete preservation of a culture" and the importance of language in maintaining the hegemony of a specific culture has long been recognized by English Canada who "had always operated under this assumption" (p. 182). By dissociating language and culture, it "not only appears to negate the fundamental premise of several centuries of Eurocolonial and Canadian government action, but also contradicts some of the most influential analyses of the rise of modern nation-states" (p. 194). Li (1999) also notes that by separating language right from individual cultural freedom, federal multiculturalism policy serves to reiterate the legal status of English and French languages in public institutions while only offering symbolic endorsement of cultural diversity by rendering ethnic culture as a personal choice in the private realm.

Further, although multiculturalism claims itself as a policy of integrating ethnocultural groups rather than "assimilation," Day revealed that there was little

difference between these two terms. In official multiculturalism discourse, integration was defined as "a process, clearly distinct from assimilation, by which groups and/or individuals become able to participate fully in the political, economical, social, and cultural life of the country" ("Multiculturalism: Building the Canadian Mosaic", as cited by Day, 2000, p. 195). The question remains about how to make sure immigrants are integrated. We are told that "the strategy [of integration] emphasized language training and helping immigrants learn about Canadian values" ("Multiculturalism, What Is It Really About?" as cited by Day, 2000, p. 196). Day sharply points out the contradiction within the official multiculturalism discourse:

> If there is no link between language and culture, what would be the point of emphasizing language training? Why, in order to become a citizen, must immigrants 'show that they have learned some English or French' And, if there is "no official culture,' what could possibly be considered a 'Canadian value'? (ibid., p.196-197)

Official multiculturalism created an illusion of equality wherein everyone has the freedom of maintaining ethnic culture and ethnic identity in the "private" realm while needing to conform to official Canadian languages in "public" space (Kallen, as cited by Li, 1999). However, it has been noted that with the official languages connected with key cultural, educational, and political institutions, the forces of cultural and linguistic conformity remain strong. A wide array of research on the descendants of immigrants has indicated that over time there is a

substantial rate of ethnic language loss in terms of linguistic and social patterns (Li, 2003)

Through the symbolic recognition of and the lack of substantive support for cultural diversity, the federal government maintained an assimilatory stance. It has been noted that despite the establishment of the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship, the budget for grants and contributions to support multiculturalism has decreased from $54.7 million in 1991-1992 to $50.7million in 1992-1993, then further dropped to $47.6 million in 1993-1994 whereas operating expenditures respectively went up from $26 million to $61.6 million, then to $67 million. Judging from such expenditures, Li (1999) concludes that the creation of a new Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship did not lead to real support for multiculturalism programs but merely for a larger bureaucratic infrastructure. Abu-Laban (1998, 2002) further points out that funding was concentrated on supporting activities such as dance, music and theatre, as opposed to funding heritage languages. The total funding for multiculturalism, although it varied year to year, only accounted for between 2 and 8 percent of the expenditure on bilingualism. With the status of English and French legalized through the Charter of Rights and Freedom in 1982 and the Multiculturalism Act in 1988, the dominant status of English and French was further strengthened. Multiculturalism did not challenge and transform key social institutions of Canada linguistically, culturally, or politically. Rather, it was employed by the federal government as a strategic tool used to assimilate minority groups through the separation of language rights from cultural rights and by

symbolically recognizing their culture while not providing support. In short, Canada's multiculturalism policy within a bilingual framework is assimilation-oriented,

Two Key Themes in Multiculturalism Debate

Although Canada's multiculturalism policy is a product of political struggles among various social forces and used by the state to maintain the domination of English Canada and assimilate racialized and ethnic minorities, not all the academics interpret it in this way. I identified two key themes in multiculturalism debate: one focuses on the politics of recognition while the other discusses the relationship between national identity and ethnic identity. Both of them affect our understanding of how racialized minorities *should* be viewed and treated in relation to the dominant White group in Canada. In particular, the exploration of these debates has significant implications for my research on Chinese youth in terms of what questions should be raised about youth's identification and how to interpret their identification in relation to the multicultural state.

Debate on multiculturalism as a politics of recognition. The notion of "politics of recognition" was proposed by political philosopher, Charles Taylor and was viewed as the underlying principles of Canada's multiculturalism. His work, along with the work of others such Will Kymlicka are widely read to mean that Canada has come to be seen as *the* place where multiculturalism exists (Abu-Laban, 2002). For Taylor (1992), Western liberalism emphasizes individual rights, state neutrality and the value of difference blindness that treats everyone as

morally equal regardless of one's background, yet this serves to maintain one hegemonic culture and forces minority cultures to take alien forms. Therefore, Taylor argues, it is discriminatory and impractical to deal with the increasingly diverse population in the age of globalization. In this point, he suggests multiculturalism can be used as an alternative political philosophy in which the differences of minority culture are recognized and valued, and rights are accorded based on group membership. With the notion of politics of recognition, Taylor (1992) notes, "we all recognize the equal value of different cultures; that we not only let them survive, but acknowledge their worth" (p. 64). Although taking the moral high ground, Taylor's theorization of multiculturalism as a politics of recognition incurred sharp critiques.

***Essentialist understanding of culture and ethnicity*.** One of the major critiques of Taylor's politics of recognition is that it tends to essentialize ethnic culture by ignoring their heterogeneous and changing nature. Cultural essentialism tends to believe that "each culture has a unique, fixed essence that can be understood independently of context or intercultural relations, which makes an ethnic group act the way it does" (Modood, as cited by Abu-Laban, 2002, p. 461). However, as Abu-Laban (2002) notes, it was impossible to categorize human beings according to which cultural groups they belong, because individuals may identify with more than one culture. Li (1999) also argues that multiculturalism is mistakenly used by academics as synonym of cultural pluralism to analyze racial and ethnic relations. Like cultural essentialism, a cultural pluralist perspective tends to define ethnic groups as members sharing a

homogenous and primordial ethnic culture. This ethnic culture is usually taken as having defining characteristics and as a primary causal factor that explains how ethnic groups evolve and how they relate to each other. Whether an ethnic group is assimilated/integrated is usually judged by whether its ethnic culture weakened with the length of stay in receiving countries. Li argues that such an understanding of ethnicity and ethnic culture is problematic in four aspects. First, intergroup relations construct ethnicity and race, rather than the ethnic culture transplanted from their origin country. Second, the so-called ethnic culture is not fixed and stable but rather keeps changing to fit the social and cultural context of receiving countries. Third, even though people may come from the same ethnic group, they may not necessarily have a homogenous culture due to their divergent historical, social and political backgrounds. Finally, the maintenances of ethnic distinctiveness may not result from ethnic groups' own choices and preference, but rather it may be a response to their subordination and marginalization by dominant groups. Therefore, although Taylor and Kymlicka try to provide an alternative political philosophy to overcome liberalism's difference blindness, they justify their goal of achieving equality by merely recognizing the culture of ethnic groups in essentialist terms rather than supporting recognition and differentiated rights on the grounds of equity (Abu-Laban, 2002).

Diversity or difference? Recognition or Redistribution? The missing links. Taylor's politics of recognition treated differences among various ethnic groups simply as a cultural diversity issue. In so doing, Canadian multicultural

state was viewed as power-neutral, devoid of social relations based on race, gender, class and other social indicators. As Bannerji (2000) argues:

> Speaking here of culture without addressing power relations displaces and trivializes deep contradictions. It is a reductionism that hides the social relations of domination that continually create 'difference' as inferior and thus signifies continuing relations of antagonism (p. 97).

In Canadian history the so-called difference of racialized and ethnic minorities has been a European construction and representation underpinned by a racist ideology of White supremacy. Thus, it is not neutral but rather it has the racial meaning of being abnormal, inferior and deficit. It is ironic to understand difference as simply a cultural diversity "as though our different cultures were on a par or could negotiate with the two dominant ones!" (ibid.). The unequal power relations between dominant and subordinate groups were also manifested in Taylor's patronizing attitude in his theorization of recognition. As Bannerji (2000) notes, "the central questions for Taylor are: do 'we' have any obligation to recognize 'them', and do 'they' have any right to force this recognition from 'us'" (p. 135).

The notion of recognition was further challenged by Nancy Fraser (2000). She identifies two problems associated with it. One is the problem of displacement in that recognition displaces a more important issue of distribution by treating misrecognition simply as a problem of cultural depreciation. In so doing, misrecognition and demeaning cultural representations were viewed only as "free-floating discourses" and rather than linked to institutionalized patterns and rooted in the deep sources of economic inequality. The other problem lies in

the issue of reification wherein through a politics of recognition, individual members are imposed a homogenous and simplified group identity denying the complexity and multiplicity of individuals' identification. As well, it treats one's identity formation as an "auto-generated auto-description" rather than resulting from social interaction with other groups (p. 112). Thus Fraser (2000) proposed an alternative status model that treated misrecognition as status subordination. From this perspective, misrecognition was not simply viewed as one being looked down upon or devalued by others' attitudes and beliefs; rather, it meant one was denied the status as a full partner in social interactions. More importantly, this denial or misrecognition was perpetrated through the *institutionalized patterns* via laws, government policies or long-standing customs. In addition to recognition, the status model proposed by Fraser (2000) entails a dimension of (re)distribution to take into account how unequal access to economic resources affect one's full participation. These two dimensions "interpenetrate and reinforce each other" (Fraser, 2000, p. 118).

Taylor's theorization of multiculturalism as a politics of recognition reflects how mainstream political thinkers interpret racial and ethnic relations in Canada. Race is not relevant and an essentialized and reified culture is used as a defining characteristic of different racial and ethnic groups, rather than unequal power. The responsibility of the Canadian state for racialized and ethnic minorities is reduced to a symbolic recognition of their culture instead of helping them acquire equal status in accessing economic and social resources as well as facilitating their full participation in social interaction. The link between

liberalism and the concept of race has been discussed above. It is worthwhile to briefly reiterate this point here by drawing on Abu-Laban's (2002) poignant argument:

> Liberalism *itself* is central to processes in which racism becomes normalized. Thus today, most liberal thinkers hold that race is morally irrelevant … [in western history] the greatest and most influential liberal thinkers were steeped in race-thinking and held racist views. (p. 466)

In this sense, Taylor's theorization was criticized as "a modified liberal pluralist discourse," despite his communitarian view of the nation-state (p. 98).

Similarly, another influential contemporary liberal thinker, Will Kymlicka was critiqued for continuing to categorize people in a hierarchical way. In his theorization of multicultural citizenship, he divides the Canadian population into three kinds: the first is the colonizer/national majority (Anglophone); the second is the colonized/national minority (French Canadians or Quebecois and Aboriginal Peoples); and the third is ethnic groups/immigrants (non-British, non-French, non-Aboriginal immigrants). Obviously, such categorization reminds us of a racial hierarchy in Canadian history. By granting differential group rights based on this hierarchy, Kymlicka's multicultural citizenship was criticized for reinforcing "a Eurocentric history of colonization and the play of power" (Day, 2000, p. 216). Not surprisingly, a similar patronizing attitude also exemplified in Kymlicka's arguments. For example, he says, "I will discuss whether immigrant groups *should be given* the rights and resources necessary to sustain a distinct societal culture," he also suggests, "if people have a deep bond with their own

culture … *should we not allow* immigrants to re-create their own societal culture?" (Kymlicka, as cited by Day, 2000, p. 215-216, emphasis are Day's). In this sense, Taylor's communitarian position and Kymlicka's emphasis on individual rights in fact do share a common ground (Bannerji, 2000). The underlying assumptions of both their theorizations view the unequal power relations between the dominant groups and the minorities as natural and unproblematic.

Debate on multiculturalism as a cohesive or divisive force for nation building. It has been discussed before that historically, two goals are central to Canada's nation building: one is to meet the economic demands of capitalist development and the other is to maintain a white settlers' national community. Currently the nature of these two goals still remains unchanged but assumes a modified content. On one hand, Canada aims to maintain its economic competitiveness in a global capitalist market; on the other hand, Canada desires to maintain English Canada's domination within a national unity. Various policies and laws have been strategically passed and institutionalized towards these purposes and multiculturalism is one of them. Although the creation of multiculturalism was to appease Quebec separatism, to maintain the domination of English Canada and to assimilate racialized and ethnic minorities, it has been under constant attack for the risk it raises towards threatening national unity.

As Li (2003) suggests, the fragmentation and unity debate is usually linked to concerns about cultural diversity, which have been used to imply non-White immigrants and the so-called problems they bring to Canada. Li points out that "in reality, the view about 'diversity' causing divisiveness is not based on

solid scientific findings, but premised on the mere fact that 'non-white' immigrants have a different skin color and look different from European Canadians and on the rhetoric that immigrants must respect core Canadian values" (p. 131). Such concerns about cultural diversity have increasingly appeared in government discussion papers on immigration during 1990s. For example, a 1994 report by Citizenship and Immigration stated,

> …they [White Canadians] are also worried that their country is becoming fragmented, that it is becoming a loose collection of parts each pursing its own agenda, rather than a cohesive entity striving for the collective good of Canada (as cited by Li, 2003, p. 132).

In a similar vein, Canadian Heritage issued new guidelines after a program review of multiculturalism between 1995 and 1997. The new policy aimed to enable "people of all backgrounds [to] feel a sense of belonging and attachment to Canada" (Department of Canadian Heritage 1997, as cited by Abu-Laban & Gabriel, 2002, p. 113). Therefore, the focus of multiculturalism policy changed from celebrating cultural differences during 1970s to promoting a commonly shared citizenship and identity during 1990s and 2000s. Symbolically, the "Secretary of State for Multiculturalism" in the Liberal governments, was renamed as "Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity" under Harper government (ibid.).

In addition to the state's policy change and actual political actions, academics were also involved in debating whether multiculturalism is a cohesive or divisive force. In 2008 *Canadian Ethnic Studies* published a special issue to

examine the fragmented discourse of anti-and/or post multiculturalism. According to the journal's definition, the central argument of "post-multiculturalism" is that multiculturalism contributes to social and political fragmentation of national community through creating ethnic enclaves, multiple identities, divided loyalties, inter and intra-group conflicts, and that therefore it should be replaced by alternative philosophies or models to manage ethnocultural diversity in order to achieve social cohesion and a singular national identity (Garcea, Kirova & Wong, 2008). Researchers from a variety of fields critique the fragmentation argument in the special issue. For example, Garcea (2008) identified ten postulations regarding the fragmentary effect of multiculturalism as policy and philosophy articulated during the past forty years. He concluded that these postulations are not based in evidence or fact. Likewise, Wong (2008) analyzed the work of five sociologists that have viewed multiculturalism as a force of societal fragmentation. He found the fragmentation discourses were problematic because they did not have a clear definition of what constituted societal fragmentation. He also questioned the one-dimensional or either/or approach to multiculturalism, in that this debate posits multiculturalism as being about *either* unity *or* fragmentation. Drawing on Stuart Hall, who viewed difference as a weave of similarities and differences, rather than fixed binary oppositions, Wong argues that difference and diversity does not necessarily lead to fragmentation given the fact that "Canadians diverge on many social issues and values, which is certainly deemed acceptable in a democracy" (p. 26).

Despite the strength of these critiques, they unfortunately do not touch the root of the problem and revealed the nature of the fragmentary discourses. For example, Wong (2008) draws on Hartmann & Gerteis's social cohesion model to critique fragmented pluralism and to argue for interactive pluralism. What is problematic here is that the model itself is premised on an essentialized and reified individual or group identity and is used to measure to what extent ethnic minorities can be assimilated into the majority groups to achieve a moral bond with dominant values. As well, what also needs to be questioned is whether the so-called discussions and negotiations among different ethnic groups that Wong suggests could happen are possible given that Canada is an English Canada and there are unequal power relations between various groups. Since its inception, multiculturalism has been criticized by the political right for encouraging diversity and threatening national unity. Thus, the goal of fragmentation discourse, to a great extent is to assimilate ethnic minorities under the assumption that their very differences in terms of cultures, values and beliefs will threat Canada's national culture and a Canadian identity represented by White, Anglo-Saxon and Protestant people. Unfortunately, in the discussions provided by Garcea (2008), Wong (2008) and a few others, little information is provided on this point. On the contrary, these researchers tend to group the critique of multiculturalism from both the political right and the political left by offering them as a general critique. In so doing, they not only remain silent on an assumption of assimilation from the political right who argue for a singular national identity, but also deny the valid critique from the left that multiculturalism does not address power relations. By

hiding their own political stances and offering a general critique for both, they lead readers to believe their only purpose in critiquing post-multiculturalism discourses is to maintain multiculturalism itself (not clear as a policy or a value) while leaving the real problems in relation to multiculturalism untouched. In this way, their critique of fragmentary discourses does not achieve much for social justice and equity and maintains the status quo. In fact, regarding fragmentary discourse, Li (2003) has insightfully pointed out it was difficult for such claims to hold true as the forces of cultural and linguistic conformity have been strong. The multiculturalism policy within a bilingual framework has legitimated the dominance through positioning English and French language and values as norms in the public sphere. The debate on multiculturalism as a cohesive or divisive force for nation building reflects the underlying assumptions of the Canadian state and the dominant group that view the very existence of the racialized minorities as a threat to a white settlers' national community. To address the nature of this debate, we need to ask: who said multiculturalism is divisive, under what social conditions, to target which group and to achieve what purposes? It is not a simple answer.

The Implication of Canadian Social Context for Studying Chinese Canadian Youth

Based on the above discussion, what are the implications in the Canadian social context for studying Chinese Canadian youth, particularly in terms of their identification and sense of belonging? Historically Canada was a racial state. As a British colony, the concept of race and racial categorization of human beings

promoted by European Enlightenment thinkers was widely accepted during the crucial period of Canada's nation building and was central to its political philosophy of liberalism. The racial oppression that early Chinese immigrants experienced was institutional and structural. The category of Chinese constructed by a racial state was by no means neutral but a racial identity associated with various stereotypes that have been discursively reproduced across time and space. The idea that Chinese were undesirable and unassimilable foreigners has been deeply embedded in Canadians' collective consciousness. It would be naive to assume the identity label of Chinese has lost racial meaning and become an innocent ethnic option for Chinese Canadian youth to freely choose in their self-identification, given that the nature of contemporary Canadian state is still racial. Despite its multicultural claim, Canada's multiculturalism policy serves to maintain the domination of English Canada and to assimilate racialized and ethnic minorities. The identity label of Chinese still indicates a minority status in relation to the dominant white, thus taking on a racial and inferior meaning. Influential Canadian political philosophers denied the significance of race in constraining the social mobility and life opportunities of racialized minorities but suggest instead, equality among different ethnic groups can be realized through a symbolic recognition of essentialized and reified cultures. What multiculturalism seems to have achieved is that individuals can freely identify with their "culture"; one's identification is interpreted in cultural and individual terms rather than based on unequal social relations *through* social interaction. Drawing on the critiques of multiculturalism as a politics of recognition, I will not treat the identification of

Chinese youth as an individual auto-description, instead, I examine the institutional factors such as school, family and media, and particularly how their social relations with dominant groups affect the process of their identity construction. Therefore, research questions will focus on uncovering unequal power relations in their daily life rather than simply asking how they identify themselves. Further, given the multicultural claim, will Chinese youth feel free to choose an ethnic identity of "Chinese"? Does this identity still signify a racial meaning in youth's perception? Or given the strong assimilation force of multiculturalism in a bilingual framework, does this language assimilation affect Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging? Do the debates on multiculturalism as a divisive force as discussed above hold true for Chinese Canadian youth?

In next chapter, I will discuss the existing literature on Chinese immigrant youth, identity, and belonging.

Chapter 2 A Review of Literature: Chinese Immigrant Youth, Identity and Belonging

Introduction

In the previous chapter I identified the historical and contemporary Canadian context within which Chinese youth construct identities and negotiate belonging. Chapter 2 will provide a review of literature on Chinese immigrant youth, identity and belonging

Research on Chinese Immigrant Youth

Research on Chinese immigrant youth, particularly on second generation youth in Canada has yet to be fully developed. Most studies on Chinese immigrant descendants are contextualized in the United States, spurred by growing academic interests in "the new second generation" - children of post-1960 non-European immigrants. It can be argued that as this generation begins to come of age in large numbers, the classical assimilation theories based on European immigration patterns are not applicable. Thus, in the U.S. one of the major research themes concerning Chinese immigrant youth is their adaptation and assimilation. For example, the segmented assimilation model suggests second generation Chinese youth may take three divergent paths and consequences of assimilation: one is to become white-washed and assimilate into white middle-class; a second is to assimilate into the oppositional culture and underclass in the inner city, and a third is to achieve socio-economic mobility while deliberately maintaining ethnic values and solidarity (Portes and Zhou, 1993; Zhou, 1997). In Canada, research on the second generation is relatively recent (Kobayashi, 2008).

Although Canada's immigration policy was revised in 1967, it is only in the last decade or so that Canada has received a large number of non-European immigrants from new source countries such as Asia, Caribbean, Latin America and Africa (Jantzen, 2008). Despite the fact that Chinese people comprise the largest "visible minority" group in Canada with 1.1 million, or 3.7% of the total Canadian population, it is nevertheless a recently migrated group (Arthur, Chaves, Este, Frideres & Hrycak, 2008). The 2006 census shows that the majority of non-European origin respondents are in the first generation whereas people of European origins, particularly those from British and French groups are generally from third-plus generations. Not surprisingly, among the second generation population aged 15 years and older, people of non-European origin account for only 19%, outweighed predominantly by people of European origin (Jantzen, 2008). For the Chinese in Canada, 74% of them are foreign born with 32% coming to Canada during the 1980s and 40% during 1990s (Hiller & Chow, 2005). Among the second generation visible minority groups, Chinese is still the largest category and a young age group with 76% of them between 15-34 years old. As early as 1998, Li argued that over 60% of native-born Chinese in three census years (1971, 1981 and 1991) were under 16 which suggests that "the emergence of the second and third generations of Chinese-Canadians was rather slow" (p. 106). In the 21st century, these second generation Chinese youth have come of age. Canadian policy makers and academics have questions about this, which is best summarized by the following statement:

> The important policy questions that have emerged are whether the children of immigrants coming from these new source countries have overcome the integration hurdles encountered by their parents and whether they have thrived in a country that is still largely British and European in stock and based on Christian values? (Jantzen, 2008)

A review of literature indicates that most research on the Chinese community in Canada focuses on history, community service organization, immigration and integration of adult immigrants particularly in terms of their socioeconomic mobility, non-recognition or devaluation of their foreign credentials, immigrant women, immigrant parents, Chinese transnationalism, media misrepresentation and racism--yet little is known about Chinese immigrant youth. Although some research does touch on this topic, these studies are primarily concentrated with comparing and explaining Chinese youth's educational and occupational achievements in terms of ethnic variations and intergenerational mobility (Boyd, 2002, 2008; Halli, 2007). Despite the importance of this type of research, McDonald & Quell (2008) argue that in a pluralistic society a focus on identity and developing a sense of connectedness to the larger society are as important as socioeconomic inclusion; without a sense of civic inclusion and cohesion, people may still regard themselves as outsiders even if they are socio-economically included. Chinese Canadian youth are usually stereotyped as model minorities and rendered invisible in identity debates. How they struggle with identity formation and negotiate belonging within Canadian school, family and through their contact with the mainstream Canadian media are often ignored. The 2002 Ethnic

Diversity Survey (EDS) shows that children of racialized minority immigrants reported a higher rate of racial discrimination in Canada than do their parents and thus have a decreased sense of belonging in Canada. Among these children, 33 percent of Chinese reported experiencing racial discrimination and this figure ranks second highest after Blacks (Reitz and Banerjee, 2007). This incurred vigorous debate among Canadian scholars who understand it as a critique of Canadian multiculturalism. Drawing on their research data on second generation youth in Calgary, Winnipeg, and Toronto, Herbert, Wilkinson & Ali (2008) argue that youth's multiple identification does not diminish their national identity. Particularly, Wilkinson (2008) notes that her research in Winnipeg shows different findings from that of Reitz & Banerjee in that most second-generation students have positive view of Canada, and thus ascribe to a Canadian national identity rather than their ethnic identities. However, few of their research participants are Chinese. Therefore, it is difficult to know whether Reitz and Bannerji's findings still hold true for Chinese youth. More importantly, their research reveals that under the multiculturalism ideology, research on second generation youth tend to focus on measuring their ethnic identity in relation to Canadian identity as well as assessing their sense of national belonging to Canada. In other words, it is a Canadian version of assimilation research on children of non-European immigrants. In an article entitled "The rise of the unmeltable Canadians? Ethnic and national belonging in Canada's second generation"(Jedwab, 2008), Chinese youth along with South Asian, and Black youth were selected to measure their strength of belonging in comparison to a

non-visible minority. The author, Jedwab concludes that ethnic persistence does not undermine sense of belonging to Canada. Obviously, the loyalty of racilized minority youth, the extent to which they are Canadianized and embrace a Canadian national identity is still a significant concern of Canadian mainstream scholars. Further, utilizing the data collected through the "New Canadian Children and Youth Study," Arthur, Chaves, Este, Frideres & Hrycak (2008) examine the perceived discrimination, impact and response among three groups of 1.5 and second generation youth, including mainland Chinese, Hong Kong Chinese and Filipino children. They conclude that one-third of their research participants experienced discrimination but also exhibited healthy resilience patterns which allowed them to turn adversity into opportunity for growth. It seems Chinese youth in Canada can overcome the barriers of structural and institutional racism through individual resilient strategies. Notably, among the 27 articles on "the experiences of second generation Canadians" published in a special issue of *Canadian Diversity* (2008), none of them explore specifically the everyday experiences of Chinese youth, except the research on discrimination by Arthur, Chaves, Este, Frideres & Hrycak (2008), that is discussed above. In another special issue on "the experiences of second-generation Canadian youth" (2008) published by *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, which include articles on the experiences of Greek, Jewish, Finnish, Sri Lankan Tamil youth, little is written about Chinese. As the largest "visible minority" group racially labeled by the Canadian state, it would therefore seem that there is a lacuna in Canadian scholarship regarding the lived experiences of Chinese youth. Research on this group, particularly how they

construct identities and negotiate belonging in relation to their experiences is much needed.

Research on Identity

Given the above discussion that outlines how Canada is a racial state and that the identity label of "Chinese" has racial connotations, the racial and ethnic identification among Chinese youth is one of my primary focuses in this study. Traditionally, ethnic identity is examined in relation to incorporation or assimilation. For example, Gan (1979) raised the famous concept of "symbolic ethnicity" which argues that immigrant descendants will be sooner or later assimilated into the mainstream society, therefore it is impossible for them to maintain ethnic cultures and organizations, but rather what is left with them is simply a symbolic ethnic identity, the feeling of being Jewish, or Italian, or Polish (p, 7).

> It is characterized by a nostalgic allegiance to the culture of the immigrant generation, or that of the old country; a love for and a pride in a tradition that can be felt without having to be incorporated in everyday behavior (p. 9).

Gan's (1979) symbolic ethnicity was criticized by scholars for romanticizing identification as a neutral concept that is premised on the assimilation experiences of European descendants. For racialized and ethnic minorities, their identification with their parents' country of origin very often is associated with social cost as a result of racial hierarchy in North American society (Waters, 2006). Guided by the theoretical framework of assimilation, researchers tend to study ethnic identity

in terms of ethnic culture retention across generations. It was not until the 1980s that researchers of ethnicity came to accept the fact that "in spite of assimilation, some percentage and some form of ethnic identity often remains in the second, third, even later generations" (Isajiw, 1990, p. 45). Although early researchers reject the zero-sum assumption in terms of the relationship between ethnic identity and assimilation, which means if one strengthens, then the other will weaken, they still tend to examine ethnic identity in essentialized terms, based on a fixed ethnic culture and a common ethnic origin (Driedger, 1996; Isajiw, 1990).

Using a deconstructive approach, Hall (2011) argues that such an essentialized understanding of racial, ethnic and national conceptions of culture identity should be put "under erasure" as they are no longer "good to think with" (p. 2). In particular, he points out that,

> In common sense language, identification is constructed on the back of a recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation. In contrast with the 'naturalism' of this definition, the discursive approach sees identification as a construction, a process never completed – always 'in process'. It is not determined in the sense that it can always be 'won' or 'lost', sustained or abandoned (p. 4)

For Hall (1990, 1996), one's cultural identity is not a fixed essence, but a positioning, which is conditional and contingent. It is a matter of becoming as well as being. Hall's identity theory is based on his distinction of three types of

subject (1990). The first is the Enlightenment subject, which positions a human being as a unified individual with an unchanged inner core or centre throughout the whole life process. In other words, one's identity is inherent and fixed. It's an individualist conception of identity. The second is the sociological subject who also has an essence or inner core but it is formed through a continuous dialogue with the outside world and in relation to "significant others" and is not "autonomous and self-sufficient" (p. 275). It is an interactive conception of identity which "stitches the subject into the structure…making both reciprocally more unified and predicable" (p. 276). The third is the postmodern subject who has no fixed, unified, or essential identity but rather assumes different identities at different times. They are fragmented, temporary and sometimes contradictory. As Hall (1990) argues, "[i]dentity becomes a 'movable feast': formed and transformed continuously in relation to the ways we are represented or addressed in the cultural systems which surround us. It is historically, not biologically defined" (p. 277).

With such conceptualization of subject, Hall (1990) discusses two different theorizations of cultural identity. The first theorization is premised upon the assumption of similarities, that is, cultural identity is based on "one shared culture" and common historical experiences "which provides us, as 'one people', with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history" (p. 223). This understanding of cultural identity as "oneness" is manifested in the traditional studies of ethnic identity, which is based on a stable core of the self that "remains

always-already the 'same'" (2011, p. 5). The second theorization of cultural identity, however, emphasizes how difference rather than similarities constitute what we really are. Identity, for Hall is never unified, but "in the late modern time, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions" (2011, p. 5). In this sense, cultural identity "is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture" (p. 225). Rather, it undergoes constant change but remains historically rooted in the sense that "histories have their real, material, and symbolic effects" and "[t]he past continues to speak to us." (ibid.). For Hall, cultural identity is "not an essence but a positioning" (ibid) and is formed along two vectors. One is the vector of similarity and continuity which grounded in the past while the other vector is based on difference and rupture from one's ethnic origin due to colonization and migration, which in turn "unified these peoples across their differences" (p. 227). This theorization of (ethnic) cultural identity has political significance, specifically in terms of constructing a politics which works with and through differences. On one hand, we need a common ethnic identity to create a political struggle focused on resisting oppression and marginalization, while on the other hand; we need to recognize the heterogeneity of interests and identities "without fixing those boundaries for eternity" (Hall, 1996, p. 444). As Hall notes, drawing on Gramsci, what we need is an identity politics based on the war of positionalities.

Further, Hall (2011) conceptualizes identities as constructed through, not outside differences. He notes that identities are constructed only through the relation to the Other and to what it is not. "Identities can function as points of identification and attachment only *because* of their capacity to exclude, to leave out, to render 'outside', adjected." (p. 6) As he argues:

> If an object manages to partially affirm itself it is only by repressing that which threatens it. Derrida has shown how an identity's constitution is always based on excluding something and establishing a violent hierarchy between the two resultant poles –man/woman, etc. What is peculiar to the second term is thus reduced to the function of an accident as opposed to the essentiality of the first. It is the same with the black-white relationship, in which white, of course, is equivalent to 'human being'. 'Woman' and 'black' are thus 'marks' (i.e. marked terms) in contrast to the unmarked terms of 'man' and 'white' (Laclau, as cited by Hall, 2011, p. 6).

In other words, identity construction is associated with unequal power relations in terms of race, gender, class and other social differences. In this logic of reasoning, Hall (1996) points out the dominant discourse of ethnicity in the UK is linked with nationalism, imperialism, racism and the state, through which a distinctive and regressive English national identity has been constructed. This national identity indicates a hegemonic notion of "Englishness," and an example of British racism (p. 447). By contrast, he conceptualizes a new concept of ethnicity that suggests everyone has an ethnic identity, which is historically rooted, time and

space contingent, difference based and recognizes language, culture and knowledge as positional and socially constructed. To quote Hall (1996),

> A recognition that we all speak from a particular place, out of a particular history, out of a particular experience, a particular culture, without being contained by that position as 'ethnic artists' or film-makers. We are all, in that sense, ethnically located and our ethnic identities are crucial to our subjective sense of who we are (p. 447).

Hall's theorization of ethnicity is crucial for interrogating the traditional sense of ethnic identity that assumes only racialized and ethnic minorities have an ethnic identity and which is often constructed as dichotomous from the dominant national identity. Ethnic identity, for Hall, becomes a crucial component for everyone's identity.

Similarly, Li's theorization of race and ethnicity also critiques the essentialist understanding of culture and highlights the role of state in defining the boundaries of racial and ethnic groups through laws and policies. As Li (1999) notes: "these laws not only provide a legal and therefore a formal basis for designating groups as ethnic and racial but also define the institutional framework within which subsequent race and ethnic relations are to take shape" (p.7). Li also points out how the Multiculturalism Act of 1988 provides an example of the Canadian government's role in redefining and legitimating race and ethnic relations. Therefore, Li (1999) argues we must examine racial and ethnic groups as formed on the basis of unequal power relations between dominant and the subordinate groups, not on static cultural features.

With regard to the unequal power relation along the racial line, critical race theory provides another analytical lens for examining how White privilege and White supremacy affect the identification of Chinese youth. Two themes of critical race theory provide valuable insights for my study. First is the concept of intersectionality. This concept highlights that race alone cannot account for the oppression, marginalization and subordination that Chinese youth experienced as racialized and ethnic minorities, but rather, it is the interplay of race, gender, class, and other social differences that needs to be examined. Second, critical race theory gives centrality to the experiences of racialized and ethnic minorities. It not only values their perspectives but validates their narratives or counterstories as sources of knowledge. In other words, it challenges the dominant discourses or "the majoritarian story through the foregrounding of the counternarratives of people of color" (Anderson, 2011, p. 2).

Summary

This chapter reviewed the major literature pertaining to Chinese Canadian youth, identity, and belonging. In particular, the literature discussed above provides valuable insights for studying the identity formation and belonging negotiation among Chinese youth. To invoke an ancient Indian fable, they each touch one part of the "elephant." For example, Hall's cultural identity emphasizes the flexibility, relationality, and multiplicity of identification while Li emphasizes the role of state in defining group boundaries. Further, critical race theory highlights the concepts of intersectionality and gives importance to the counterstories of racialized minorities in researching their identity formation.

These literatures are thus not contradictory but rather complementary in that they all address identity formation as a result of unequal power relations while emphasizing distinct but interrelated dimensions of identity construction. Despite the theoretical insights they each provide, none of them address specifically how Chinese youth construct identities and what factors contribute to their identity formation and belonging negotiation. For example, although Hall argues that "the boundaries of difference are continually repositioned in relation to different points of reference" (p. 227), he did not specify how the boundaries of difference are constructed and what points of references people use in their identification. As well, Hall points out that: "Precisely because identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies" (2011, p. 6). However, little is known about how discourses in the major social institutions such as school, family and media effect the identity construction of Chinese youth. In a similar vein, little is known about how unequal power relations in this specific institutional site, along with state policy such as multiculturalism, affects the identity formation of Chinese youth. In this sense, a grounded theory approach is employed in my study to construct a substantive model grounded in empirical data that addresses the identify formation among Chinese youth in Alberta. In next chapter, I will discuss the research methodology of grounded theory that is used in my study.

Chapter 3 Methodology

The grounded theory approach is the most influential paradigm for qualitative research in the social sciences today (Denzin, as cited in Patton, 2002, p. 487)

Introduction

This chapter discusses some key concepts and stages for using grounded theory to examine and understand the identification and sense of belonging among first and second generation Chinese Canadian youth in Alberta. The discussion consists of five parts. First, I identify my philosophical assumptions in terms of ontology, epistemology and methodology. Second, I reiterate my research questions and discuss the rationale of selecting grounded theory as research methodology. Third, I describe the four kinds of sampling methods I used to recruit research participants, including criteria sampling, maximum variation sampling, snowball sampling and theoretical sampling. A justification of the selection criteria for participants will be provided, followed by a summary of demographic information of research participants, and a discussion of how I collected data through survey questionnaires and interviews. Fourth, I explain how I analyze data in this study with a particular focus on the coding strategies I used which include initial coding and focused coding. I then discuss the data analysis process through the use of the qualitative research software, Atlas-Ti, as well as memo-writing. Finally, the strategies that are used to increase validation and credibility will be discussed and researcher's reflexivity will be highlighted.

Researcher's Philosophical Assumptions

> *Academics without arguments are like paraders without costumes or sports teams without uniforms – it's how the players differentiate themselves and figure out who to applaud* (Patton, 2002, p. 78).

Qualitative researchers bring divergent philosophical assumptions, paradigms, theoretical frameworks, and methodological foci to their research projects, all of which inform how they conduct research and influence the specific type of knowledge they produce. Therefore, prior to describing how one conducts a research project, it is important to make one's philosophical assumptions explicit. However, there is no universal typology of various philosophical and theoretical perspectives and consequently no consensus among qualitative researchers on those categories. So for example, Guba and Lincoln (1994) in the first edition of the *Handbook of Qualitative Research* identified four inquiry paradigms, including positivism, postpositivism, critical theory and constructivism. Other researchers such as Crotty highlight three primary epistemological positions, including objectivism, constructionism, and subjectivism (Patton, 2002). Even within a single term such as constructionism, there are competing versions.

This diversity of typologies demonstrates how people in different theoretical schools and disciplines, individually and collectively, construct meaning and knowledge. In opposition to separating paradigms from philosophies, theoretical orientations and design strategies, Patton (2002) argues such distinctions within any particular approach are "both arguable and somewhat arbitrary" (p.80). He

proposes using foundational questions as a basis to understand different inquiry approaches. To avoid being lost among the controversies and debate, as a beginner researcher, I draw on Guba and Lincoln (1994, 2005) and Cresswell (2007) to discuss my philosophical assumptions in terms of ontology, epistemology and methodology.

Ontology

Basically, ontological questions are concerned with the nature of reality, or whether the world has a "real" existence outside of human experience of that world (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). The discussion of ontology is usually centered on two extreme ends: positivism (naive realism) vs. constructivism. Positivist ontology assumes there exists a "real" reality, which could be approached or apprehended using scientific methods and knowledge of it could be summarized in cause-effect laws (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Whereas constructivist ontology, however, argues there are multiple realities which are socially constructed. Knowledge of the reality is context-based and "interpersonally forged", and based on the "consensus among informed and sophisticated constructors" (Patton, 2002, p. 96). These two polarized ontologies (positivism vs. constructivism) are in fact based on the dichotomy between subject and object, between thinking and being. Personally, I reject the extreme dichotomies between native realism and radical constructivism, instead taking a mediating position. In other words, I assume an apprehensible and virtual reality shaped by "a congeries of social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender factors" over time, and then "crystallized

into a series of structures that are historically situated but inappropriately taken as real" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 110-111).

Epistemology

The epistemological questions are concerned with the nature of knowledge, or the relationship between the knower and the known (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, 2005). As researcher, I do not believe I could study the participants in an ethical objectively way by resorting to various strategies to avoid bias and values. The purpose of my research is also not to replicate other people's findings, or to prove certain knowledge is "true." On the contrary, I regard knowledge as co-constructed between the researcher and the researched, which is affected by the values of the researcher, and therefore is value-mediated. In this sense, I assume "what can be known is inextricably intertwined with the interaction between a particular investigator and a particular object or group" (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 110).

Methodology

The question regarding methodology focuses on "how can the inquirer (would-be knower) go about finding out whatever he or she believes can be known?" (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 108). The choice of methodology is closely linked with and constrained by one's ontological assumptions and epistemological positions. For example, positivist methodology, as Guba and Lincoln identified, is experimental and manipulative in that it aims to use quantitative methods to verify hypothesis (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, Creswell, 2007). By contrast, constructivism's methodology is hermeneutical and dialectical. Researchers

within this framework look for the multiple and subjectively constructed meanings participants hold during the process of interaction. The research goal is to reach "a consensus construction that is more informed and sophisticated than any of the predecessor constructions." (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 111). In this point, my research aims at reconstructing previously held constructions to bring a more informed understanding of the object or group under study. It moves beyond simple understanding and works towards critique and challenge. As Crotty argues, "it is a contrast between a research that seeks merely to understand and research that challenges… between a research that reads the situation in terms of interaction and community and a research that reads in terms of conflict and oppression… a research that seeks to bring about change." (as cited by Merriam, 2009, p. 10)

Selecting Grounded Theory as Research Methodology

The Rationale

It has been noted that grounded theory is a good research design when there is no or only incomplete theory available to explain the phenomenon under study (Cresswell, 2007). The rationale for selecting grounded theory is closely linked with my research purpose and research question, which is to find out and explain how Chinese youth construct identities and negotiate belonging. Specifically, I ask, "What are the factors that contribute to their divergent identifications and sense of belonging?" The existing literature and theories about immigrant descendants (see Chapter 2) either focus on their social mobility in terms of academic or economic performance (e.g. segmented assimilation model)

or tend to study ethnic identities in essentialized cultural terms or in relation to assimilation or integration (Isajiw, 1990; Driedger, 1996). Little is known about how unequal power relations between the dominant and the subordinate affect Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging. In other words, what is missing from the existing theories is a substantive model that identifies different factors that contribute to youth's identification and sense of belonging. Due to the lack of literature, and complex theorization of identity formation among Chinese youth, a grounded theory approach is best suited for the above research purpose and questions.

Grounded Theory

The grounded theory approach is argued to be the most influential paradigm for qualitative research today (Denzin, as cited by Patton, 2002). Similar to other forms of qualitative research, the primary instrument of data collection and analysis in grounded theory is the investigator who takes an inductive stance in deriving understanding from the data. While different from other qualitative approaches, its main purpose focuses on developing a theory of a process, action, or interaction that is grounded in empirical data from a large number of participants who have experienced the process under study (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, Cresswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009). Grounded theory was first developed in 1967 by two sociologists, Glaser and Strauss, who found that taking an *a priori* theoretical orientation was often not appropriate for research findings. They proposed that theory development should be grounded in the field. The nature of the theory developed through grounded theory, as Merriam (2009) notes,

is substantive, rather than "grand" in that it has specificity to address a particular problem in everyday situations as is often lacking in grand theory. Grounded theory as an evolving methodology is not a fixed approach that is agreed upon by all the interested qualitative researchers but is subject to ongoing debate as to its meanings and procedures. Among two types of grounded theory that are most often discussed and employed by qualitative researchers, that is systematic approach (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1998) and constructivist approach (Charmaz, 2006), I align myself with the latter, Charmaz's constructivist grounded theory.

The basic distinction between constructivist grounded theory and systematic approach lies in their epistemological assumptions. According to Charmaz (2005), the systematic approach represented by Glaser and Strauss "draw upon objectivist assumptions founded in positivism" (2005, p. 509). Systematic grounded theory assumes that there is an external reality - data and theory can be discovered through scientific methods by neutral researcher. However, as Charmaz (2005) argues, research activities do not occur in a social vacuum but should be viewed as an interactive process between researchers and participants who bring their past interactions with people, current interests, and perspectives into research. Theory is not discovered by researchers but constructed during the interaction with participants. Moreover, it is important for researchers to take a reflexive stance and make their own assumptions explicit. After all, "what observers see and hear depends on their prior interpretive frames, biographies, and interests as well as the research context, their relationships with research participants, concrete field experiences, and modes of generating and

recording empirical materials" (ibid). In other words, neither the researcher nor research analysis can be ethically neutral and culturally impartial but are all situated in specific times, places, cultures and situations. For constructivist grounded theorists, facts and values are inter-related in that what the researchers see or do not see depends on their values. Rather than claiming value-free neutrality, researchers need to realize "what we know shapes, but does not necessarily determine, what we 'find'" (p. 510). Thus, constructivist grounded theorists view the resulting theory as an "interpretation" in that it "depends on the researchers' view; it does not and cannot stand outside of it" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 130).

Further, despite epistemological disapproval of systematic grounded theory, Charmaz also emphasizes that grounded theory methods can be systematic. She argues that the methods of systematic approach can be used as guideline for data collection and analysis but it should be used in flexible not rigid way. These guidelines from systemic approach have "the additional advantage… that show us *how* we may proceed." (2006, p. 3) She notes that, "a constructivist grounded theory… adopts grounded theory guidelines as tools but does not subscribe to the objectivist, positivist assumptions in its earliest formulations" (Charmaz, 2005, p. 509). For her, the guidelines "offer a set of general principles and heuristic devices rather than formulaic rules" (p. 2), or "recipes to follow" (p. 10). In alignment with Glaser and Strauss's argument that researchers can use grounded theory strategies flexibly in their own way, Charmaz (2006) emphasizes "flexible guidelines, not methodological rules, recipes, and requirements" (p. 9). In this

point, some key method features of systematic approach need to be briefly discussed here. For example, it uses theoretical sampling for the purpose of building theory. In other words, participants are selected in terms of their relevance to the evolving theory. Researchers primarily use 20-60 interviews as data source and collect data through several visits to the field until the categories are saturated. And data analysis begins simultaneously with data collection, using a constant comparative method. Basically, this data analysis method involves comparing data to identify similarities and differences. Similar data are grouped together to form a category. A theory is developed based on the interrelationship of these categories. As Creswell (2009) notes, it may take the form of a story, or a visual picture, or propositions that describe this interrelationship. Charmaz integrates guidelines for this basic method in her constructivist version of grounded theory. For example, she advocates collecting rich data and situating them in relevant contexts. She views some basic guidelines such as coding, memo-writing, comparative method and theoretical sampling as neutral, although the way that researchers use them are not neutral.

In addition, constructivist grounded theory also involves a critical and social justice perspective in that it is concerned with making explicit the differences and distinctions between people based on race, gender, class, and hierarchies of power in specific conditions. As Charmaz argues (2005),

> [t]he critical stance of social justice in combination with the analytic focus of grounded theory broadens and sharpens the scope of inquiry. Such

> efforts locate subjective and collective experience in larger structures and increase understanding of how these structures work (p. 508).

The analytic focus of grounded theory "moves social justice studies beyond description, while keeping them anchored in their respective empirical worlds" (ibid). Social injustice is not simply an abstract concept but "*enacted processes*, made real through actions performed again and again" (ibid). In this sense, grounded theory provides a theoretical understanding of the conditions and processes as social injustice develops and changes.

Entering the Field and Generating the Data

Sampling methods

Similar to most qualitative studies, I use purposive sampling as a data collection strategy. Purposive sampling covers a wide variety of approaches such as extreme case sampling, maximal variation sampling, snowball or chain sampling and convenience sampling (Patton, 2002; Flick, 2009). Charmaz (2006) argues that doctoral students using grounded theory should build several stages of data collection into their research proposal: "they could begin by taking population distribution into account but plan to follow the leads in their emerging analyses thereafter" (p. 122). In this sense, in my study I first use maximum variation sampling and snowball sampling to recruit a diverse group of participants and then use theoretical sampling for theory development. With all these sampling methods, I follow the general principle of purposive sampling, that is, to select "information-rich cases" from which researchers can learn a great deal of the research topic (Patton, 2002, p. 242); or selecting a "good informant" who

has the necessary knowledge or experiences that can help researchers to address the research question (Flick, 2009, p. 123).

Maximum variation sampling and snowball sampling. Chinese youth is a heterogeneous group and varies in terms of class, gender, place of origin, age, generation status, length of stay in Canada (to name just a few). In this sense, maximum variation sampling is used to capture "the central themes that cut across a great deal of variation" (Patton, 2002). In order to reach a diverse Chinese youth population, I contacted several local Chinese community organizations, including ASSIST Community Services Centre, the Confucius Institute, the Edmonton Chinese Bilingual Education Association, the China Institute, the Association of Chinese-Canadian Professors, Calgary, the Chinese Community Services Association, the Chinese Scholars and Students Association, the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers and a private Chinese Saturday school. Research recruitment flyers in both English and Chinese were distributed in all the above places. I also posted the flyers on major local Chinese websites, such as www.edmontonchina.ca/ and on the bulletin board in the cafeteria, libraries, student residence buildings at University of Alberta main campus, as well as the University of Calgary. I then received emails and phone calls from students, parents, and staff of community service centers who either expressed interest in my research or recommended people they knew. In this way, I recruited a diverse youth sample who varied in their social-economic backgrounds (whose parents are professors, successful businesspeople, social workers, or unemployed), geographical origins (Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan), bilingual ability

(familiar with Chinese, or only English-speaking), generation status, age and length of stay in Canada, gender, academic performance (university student, those in academic program or low achievers in high school), etc. In addition, snowball sampling was employed to locate "information-rich key informants" (Patton, 2002, p. 237). For example, in trying to find some second generation youth, I asked my participants to recommend their friends who met such criteria. In this way, I located a chain of informants with similar background such as generation status and language ability in order to compare and identify important factors related to youth identification.

Theoretical sampling. Theoretical sampling is one of the key features of grounded theory. In addition to maximum variation sampling and snowball sampling, I use theoretical sampling for theoretical elaboration and refinement in order to develop a theory as an end product of my research. As Charmaz (2006) argues, "[i]nitial sampling in grounded theory is where you start whereas theoretical sampling directs you where to go" (p. 100). During the first round of my interviews, some preliminary and tentative categories emerged which may be thin, rather than robust, so I used theoretical sampling to collect relevant data to elaborate categories for the purpose of theory development. This means I "deliberately [sought] participants who have had particular responses to experiences, or in whom particular concepts appear significant" (Morse, 2007, p. 240). My study does not aim to represent a population or increase generalizability but rather aims for conceptual or theoretical development. Further, as Charmaz (2006) notes, the logic of reasoning for theoretical sampling is abductive in that it

"starts with the data and subsequently moves toward hypothesis formation" (p. 103). In other words, it entails both inductive and deductive reasoning. Therefore, through theoretical sampling, I moved back and forth between data collection and data analysis by constructing tentative ideas from the data, then following hunches about collecting further data to illuminate the categories and relations between them. For example, in trying to identify the factors related to school experiences that affect Chinese youth's identification , I went back to several participants I interviewed before to ask them more focused questions based on some ideas that emerged from my initial analysis. In this way, what were initially obscure ideas and categories had the benefit of clarifcation and confirmation/disconfirmation.

All three types of purposive sampling were used together during data collection in order to have a deeper understanding of how Chinese youth identify and the factors that contribute to their different identification and sense of belonging.

Research Participants, Survey Questionnaire and Interviews

After the approval of ethics review, a total of 36 Chinese Canadian youth were recruited to participate in my research. After initial contact, 35 people agreed to come to my office for an interview. The exception was one participant whose mother insisted on having the interview at her house. That I am the sole occupant of the office and it is located at University of Alberta campus guaranteed confidentiality to some degree and increased the sense of security among research participants, especially for those senior high female students who decided to go to

an unfamiliar space and talk to a "stranger" face to face. I prepared tea, pop, water, candies and cookies to create a pleasant and relaxing interview space and atmosphere. Before interviews began, each participant was asked to sign two copies of a consent letter (one copy for each side) which contained a written introduction to the research project, what they are expected to do in the research, a guarantee of confidentiality, their right as a research participants to withdraw, a contact person if they have any complaint, and whether or not they would like to be contacted for further research, etc. (see appendix B for details). They were also asked to fill out a survey questionnaire which aimed to capture their demographic information, including, name, gender, age, place of birth, arrival age (if he/she was not born in Canada), length of stay in Canada, school attendance (since elementary), parents' occupations, number of family members, participants' current affiliation or status (student or not and in which year) and contact information (see appendix C for details). This information was entered into an excel database immediately after each interview. Due to the space constraints and the limits of confidentiality, I cannot show all the columns and rows of my database, but an example of one row of the database is partly shown in Table 1. The name used here is a pseudonym. BI means before immigration and AI refers to after immigration.

An Example of the Research Participants Database

Name	Pseudo name	gender	age	Place of birth	Arrival age	Length of stay	Occupation	Elementary School	Junior school	Senior school	F occupation	M occupation
Mary Liu	F5	F	19	Hong Kong	8	11	University student	Several (one in Hong Kong, three in Canada)	Grandview Heights	Old Scona	Professor (BI)/ Technician (AI)	Teacher (BI)/ House-keeping (AI)

Table 1 An Example of the Research Participants Database

Based on the survey questionnaire information, there were 19 males and 17 females. 21 participants are characterized as first generation (6 years old and above) and 15 as second generation (0-5 years old). Their place of origin in relation to generation status is shown in Table 2. The average age of participants is 19.2 years old.

Generation Status and Place of Origin of Research Participants

	First Generation (6 years old and above)	Second Generation (0-5 years old)
Mainland China	17	8
Hong Kong	3	7
Taiwan	1	0
Total	21	15

Table 2 Generation Status and Place of Origin of Research Participants

After participants filled out the survey questionnaire, I conducted a 1.5-2 hour interview with each of them. An interview guide was prepared beforehand which contained semi-structured interview questions mainly covering the areas of school,

family and media. Some questions are more open-ended than the others because I lacked enough relevant information at the outset of my study to form specific questions. The type of questions ranged from "hypothetical questions," to "devil's advocate questions" to "interpretive questions" (Strauss, Schatzman, Bucher, & Sabshin, as cited by Merriam, 2009, pp. 97-98). With the "hypothetical questions," participants were asked to speculate what they might do in a particular situation, for example: "suppose there was a job opportunity in China after you graduated, would you like to go back to work in China and settle there?" Participants were also challenged to give their opinions on some controversial topic, through "devil's advocate questions." For example, "what do you think of the stereotyped media representation of Chinese immigrants?" Most often I asked "interpretive questions" which were used to check my understanding or tentative explanations for theory development. For example, "Would you say that friends are one of the major factors that contribute to your ethnic identification?" After the first few interviews, some questions were reworded, removed or added either because they proved irrelevant or on the suggestion of the research participants. Merriam (2009) suggests that researchers begin with some relatively neutral, factual and socio-demographic-type questions and leave the sensitive questions at the end because "by then the respondent has invested in the interview and is more likely to see it through by answering these questions" (p. 103). Thus, I first asked research participants to describe the schools they attended based on the information they provided on the survey questionnaire before asking about any difficulty they might have experienced at school. With the interview, they were also probed on

certain topics for more details and clarification. For example, regarding some unfriendly teachers, they were asked: "Can you give me an example of that?" After each interview, I also wrote memos of my impressions and observations of each participant. All of the interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim both by myself and transcribers paid for through research funding.

Data Analysis

My Coding Strategies

My data analysis began simultaneously with data collection. It was a "zigzag" process, as described by Cresswell (2007) in that I collected the information, analyzed it and then collected further data through theoretical sampling to refine tentative categories. In this way, I started my data analysis inductively and then went back to check theoretical understanding abductively. At the beginning of data analysis, I used initial coding to develop codes and ideas (Charmaz, 2006). Codes remained open, short, simple, concise and provisional. This method of coding, as Charmaz (2006) argues, "curbs our tendencies to make conceptual leaps and to adopt extant theories *before* we have done the necessary analytic work" (p. 48). The openness of initial coding aims to "spark your thinking and allow new ideas to emerge" (ibid). This is followed by more focused coding, particularly, axial coding to crosscut or relate different code, categories and ideas (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). I specify (a) what identities (e.g. Chinese or Canadian) that youth took in their self-perception and description; (b) what caused their divergent identification and; (c) what context influenced youth's identification. Different from initial coding which separated data into distinct

codes, the intention behind the use of axial coding was to bring data back together in an attempt to answer questions such as " when, where, why, who, how…" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, as cited by Charmaz, 2006, p. 60). Both coding strategies were facilitated by using the qualitative data analysis software, Atlas-Ti.

Atlas-Ti and Memo-writing

I used Atlas-Ti to manage a large amount of interview documents, codes and memos. For each interview transcript, there were around 30-50 initial codes. A total of 36 interviews created hundreds of codes. These codes were linked using selected quotations of interview transcripts as well as memos. Through using Atlas-ti, I could easily rename codes or relink them with certain interview quotations and memos. I could also immediately get a list of all the related codes among 36 interviews on certain theme or topic. For example, all the codes related to school choice. Moreover, a "relation manager" function of Atlas-Ti, which specified how codes related to each other, such as "[code A] is a part of [code B]", "[code A] is cause of [code C]", was particularly helpful in doing axial coding that aims to identify relations among codes, concepts and ideas. Another function of Atlas-Ti that I used more frequently was memo-writing. According to Charmaz (2006) "memo-writing is the pivotal intermediate step between data collection and writing drafts of papers… because it prompts you to analyze your data and codes early in the research process" (p. 72). After each interview, I immediately wrote a memo about some thoughts and observations I had about the research participants. In the process of data analysis, I kept writing memos about new ideas, insights, and follow-up questions that progressively deepened my level of analysis and

fine-tuned my subsequent data-gathering. Using Atlas-Ti, I could link my memos with both selected interview quotations as well as codes.

Validation and Reliability

Questions of validation and reliability are concerned with how to produce valid and reliable knowledge--or how to ensure research results are trustworthy. There has been an ongoing debate among qualitative researchers in terms of how to address the terms, definition, and procedures of validation and reliability. For example, Misher reformulated the concept of validity as "validation," a process of validating, and of recognizing the social construction of knowledge (Flick, 2009). Creswell (2007) identified a typology of perspectives and terms used in qualitative validation, such as positivist terms used by LeCompte & Goetz (internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity), or Lincoln & Guba's naturalist concepts of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Even for the same author, the conceptulization of validation can change. In *Getting Smart*, Lather (1991) redefines four types of validation from a postmodern perspective, including triangulation, construct validation, face validation, and catalytic validation. In her 1993 article, she uses different terms more closely allied to feminist perspectives such as ironic validation, paralogic validation, rhizomatic validation, and voluptuous validation, all of which indicate the uncertainty and complexity of data and the researcher's challenging attitudes towards truth, taxonomies, and constructs. Researchers' philosophical and methodological assumptions influence which terms and strategies they use and to what extent they try to increase the credibility of their research. Despite the

unsettled debate on whether to develop quality criteria for qualitative research as whole or distinct validation criteria for any specific approach, some basic strategies have been widely used by qualitative researchers across disciplines and various qualitative approaches. According to Creswell (2007), it is simply a matter of degree, either with less or more emphasis on validation. Among various debates and conceptualization, I align myself with Creswell's (2007) understanding of validation as "an attempt to assess the 'accuracy' of the findings, as best described by the researcher and the researched" (p. 206). This point of view also recognized that my research findings were co-constructed by the participants and myself.

Reliability in a traditional sense meant the extent to which research findings could be replicated. Undoubtedly, this positivist understanding which assumes a single and objective reality does not hold true for qualitative research. Lincoln and Guba reconceptualized reliability to indicate, "whether the results are consistent with the data collected" (Merriam, 2009, p. 221). Flick (2009) argued that the criterion of reliability was reformulated towards checking the dependability of data and procedures. Therefore, the more detailed the research process was documented, the better the reliability of the research. In my study, I employed several strategies to increase the validation and reliability of research, which mainly included triangulation, member check, rich data and thick description, as well as attention to researcher's reflexivity.

Triangulation, Rich Data, Thick Description and Member Check

As Merriam (2009) argues, from an interpretive-constructivist perspective triangulation remained a principle strategy to ensure validation and reliability. Flick (2009) notes that by using triangulation researchers took different perspectives in addressing the research questions in order to provide corroborating evidence. Among the four types of triangulation proposed by Denzin (1978), data triangulation was particularly useful in my research. I used multiple data sources through collecting data from people with different perspectives to understand identification from multiple angels without assuming there is one story or "truth" about identification, or that they all tell the same story about the phenomenon.

Another strategy used in my study to ensure validation and credibility was the collection of rich data and thick description. As Charmaz (2006) noted, gathering rich data lay a solid basis for building a significant analysis. Rich data reveal not only participants' views and feelings but also the contexts of their lives. In order to gather rich data, I used maximum variation sampling to recruit a diverse group of participants with different backgrounds and social positions in terms of class, gender, generation status, place of origin etc. I also used theoretical sampling to collect rich information until theoretical categories were "saturated," which means, according to Charmaz (2006), "gathering data no longer sparks new theoretical insights, nor reveals new properties of these core theoretical categories" (p. 113). In addition, thick description was used in presenting my research findings. Particularly, I provide detailed descriptions of the data, for example, to use as many interview quotations as possible for readers to determine whether

these research findings hold true for them, or can be transferred or applied to their particular situation or context.

Further, I also used member check (also called respondent validation) to solicit feedback from participants in terms of data, analysis and findings. It was regarded as the most critical technique for establishing credibility or the single most important way of identifying misinterpretation of what participants say and do and researcher's own bias and misunderstanding (Cresswell, 2007, Merriam, 2009). By engaging in the process of member check, I brought both the interview transcripts and preliminary analysis back to the participants for confirmation.

Researcher's Reflexivity

The meaning of reflexivity varied depending upon "the researcher's philosophical orientation and the degree of relevance accorded to the process" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 31). For some, being reflexive aimed to examine researcher's bias in order to enhance objectivity while, for others, it is used critically to undermine objectivity. To put it differently, researchers' ontological, epistemological and methodological positions influenced the kind of reflexive analysis they accept or reject (Mruck & Mey, 2007). According to Charmaz (2006), reflexivity refers to

> the researcher's scrutiny of his or her research experience, decisions, and interpretations in ways that bring the researcher into the process and allow the reader to assess how and to what extent the researcher's interests, positions, and assumptions influenced inquiry. A reflexive stance informs

> how the researcher conducts his or her research, relates to the research participants, and represents them in written reports (pp. 188-189).

As a researcher, I was conscious of how my social positions as a non-native English speaker, as a female, as a racialized minority, and as a professional from Mainland China as well as the time, space, and the context I belonged to affected the whole research process. This included, for example, the research questions I raised, the specific research design I decided on, and my interaction with research participants during the process of data collection, data analysis as well as the final theory developed and the dissertation writing. During the initial stage of research, my research questions depended on the stock of accessible knowledge and training I have received in my doctoral program, my lived experiences in both China and Canada as well as the context of application.

Further, during the interview process, I realized some participants anticipated and recognized my interests and motives in conducting this kind of research. This, in turn, sometimes affected the extent to which they wanted to be involved in the interview. Also, it is undoubtedly true that my perspectives on certain topics, such as racial discrimination, might be conveyed to the participants, who in turn could then be expected to adjust their stances and opinions in response to mine. I was also aware that although I tried to build rapport with research participants, some of them still avoided discussing certain parts of their life, choosing to reveal only those aspects of their experience which they thought were appropriate for sharing with me. They might tell a different story when they spoke to a close friend. As well, the fact that I was an immigrant woman from

mainland China might affect the way I communicate with participants who had a different political and ideological perspective from mine. For some second generation youth, who might view me as a "FOB" (someone "fresh off the boat") in terms of the way I spoke and the way I dressed, they might not like to talk with me at a deeper level. As Mruck & Mey (2007) noted, "both researchers and research participants provide a unique 'stimulus' for each other, determining what is mentioned and what not" (p. 522). In a similar vein, Gardner argued that, "each encounter or interview, even if it is concerned with the same topic and conducted with the same participants, will produce different data, since it is a product of the unique circumstances operating at the time" (as cited by Mruck & Mey, 2007, p. 522). In this sense, the nature of the whole research process was based on the co-construction between the researcher and the researched. In order to get a better understanding of the lived experiences of research participants, I tried to build an equal relationship with them by giving power to them, by letting them lead the direction of conversation to a certain degree, and by respecting their opinions by assuming an open stance towards them and answering their questions. In this way, I collected a large amount of rich data about the lived experiences of Chinese youth in Alberta.

Summary

In this chapter I discussed the selection and employment of grounded theory as a research methodology. It highlighted the researcher's philosophical assumptions, the theoretical descriptions of grounded theory, strategies and

processes of data collection, and data analysis as well as concerns over validation and reliability.

In the next three chapters, I move to present my data in relation to Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging within school, family and through their contact with media. I discuss how Chinese youth construct identities and negotiate belonging via three major agents of socialization—family, school and media. Data presented in these three chapters aims to build toward my final identity models: one is "Identity Model I: Points of References that Chinese Youth Draw on in their Identification and Sense of Belonging" (i.e. Figure 1); and the other is "Identity Model II: Factors that Contribute to Chinese Youth's Identification and Sense of Belonging" which includes two figures (i.e. Figure 2 and Figure 3). Both data presented in Chapter 4-7 and the identity models constructed in Chapter 7-8 serve to address the research question raised at the beginning of my thesis: a) How do Chinese youth construct identities and Negotiate belonging, particularly what are the points of references they use in the process of their identification? b) What are the factors that contribute to their identification and sense of belonging?

Although these data presented in separate chapters, they are not isolated but interrelated and complementary to each other. For example, what happened in family, such as whether youth would like to speak or learn to speak Chinese with their parents is affected by the linguistic and cultural socialization that they are exposed to every day at school. Conversely, the choice of a specific school, either with an overwhelming White student population or Chinese students may be

partially determined by one's family socioeconomic status; and a certain school choices may shape the specific way youth are educated and socialized, which in turn affect their identification with parents' cultural background and their relationship with parents, as well as their response to racist ideology and stereotypes represented by the media. In other words, all these factors and impacts associated with these three agents of socialization are inextricably interwoven, contributing to Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging in an intersecting way. What I am doing in the following three chapters is to highlight these interrelated but unique factors/threads in each of these institutions, and then reweave them into a fabric that shows a picture of the identity construction and belonging negotiation among Chinese youth and displaying it in both the historical and contemporary background of Canada. This fabric and the consequent picture that is made with it is not my own product but a result of co-weaving process between the research participants and I, informed by the Charmaz's grounded theory approach.

Chapter 4 The Influence of Family on Youth Identification

Introduction

Family, as one of the most important agents of socialization, is argued to play a crucial role in forming youth's basic sense of self and their initial values and beliefs in terms of learning gender roles, accumulating cultural capital associated with class, as well as developing racialized and ethnic identities. Under multiculturalism discourse, family, for immigrant population has another alleged function--that is to maintain and pass on so called ethnic language and culture to immigrant descendants. In particular, multiculturalism policy within a bilingual framework (except Quebec) assumes Chinese youth will ordinarily speak English in public spaces (e.g. school) while shift to Chinese language in private spaces, such as home. In this sense, home is often viewed as the most important space for immigrant descendants to maintain strong ties to their ethnic culture and for them to develop an ethnic identity (Gans, 1997). This chapter examines the influence of family on Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging. The multiculturalism discourse's simplistic placing of ethnic heritage maintenance within the family is problematized. Several factors that contribute to the construction of Chinese youth's identification models are identified and discussed, which mainly include 1) parents' attitudes towards ethnic heritage maintenance; 2) Chinese language maintenance; 3) Youth's perception of "Chinese" cultural practices; 4) youth's perception of cultural values; 5) opportunity of travel and youth's impression of China; and 6) the impact of intergenerational relation on youth's identification and sense of belonging.

Parents' Attitudes towards Ethnic Heritage Maintenance

The multiculturalism policy of 1971 and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988 acknowledge "the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage" (Government of Canada, n.d., p. 3). In reality, however, this may not necessarily the case. Many participants revealed that their parents did not put specific emphasis on ethnic heritage maintenance. Rather, their parents expected them to integrate into mainstream society, speaking fluent English and having a good knowledge of dominant cultural norms either due to their plan to permanently settle down in Canada or their expectation of a better future for their children. For example, F5 was born in Canada and her parents emigrated from Hong Kong over twenty years ago. She noted that her parents were satisfied with living in Canada without any intention of going back and emphasized assimilation since she was young.

> My dad doesn't speak very fondly of Hong Kong. I think he doesn't like how crowded it is. I think he likes having his own property and his own backyard and just having a piece of land and I think he really likes that. I ask him whether he likes it here and he says ya I wouldn't go back to Hong Kong.

Her father's view of Hong Kong affects her own future settlement plan. As she continued, "So in that way, I don't think…I would decide to go back [to Hong Kong]." Such attitudes also affect F5's interest in learning Chinese at a Saturday Chinese school she attended for nine years. As she stated: "you're always attempting to assimilate so why bother learning this language." Years later, when

her interest in learning Chinese was reignited, her parents did not provide as much help for her to learn Chinese as she expected.

> My parents used to speak Chinese to me, I'll respond in English usually so I can understand. But I think they are starting to speak more English in general so that may be dying as well. I'm not sure. I always ask them to speak Chinese to me but sometimes they just speak English…In general when we were kids, we sort of rejected Chinese culture in general because we thought we needed to assimilate.

Growing up in this way, F5 identified herself as a Canadian or CBC (Canadian born Chinese), who has no sense of belonging to her parents' country of origin.

> I have no concrete connection with Hong Kong. It's always been through the intermediate of my parents and so I don't really consider myself as someone from Hong Kong. If anything, I just think of myself as a Canadian or CBC for that matter.

There are also some Chinese parents who believe that assimilation into dominant culture will give their children an advantage in the long run, not vice versa, based on their own lived experiences as racialized and ethnic minorities in Canada. As M3 (G1) reflected:

> They [my parents] haven't explicitly taught me the Chinese tradition. In a way they do want me to assimilate with the majority culture. Because what they have learned, if you assimilate into the majority culture, there are more doors open. Even though all paper say that all people should be treated the same. In practice, that paper doesn't hold that much.

Very often, the issue of integration or ethnic heritage maintenance is constructed as a dichotomy and interpreted by some Chinese parents as a zero-sum relationship, which assumes that if one strengthens, then the other will weaken. It is manifested in the specific question of whether to learn Chinese, as shown in the decision that F4's parents made for her program choice. F4 came from a working class family background. Her father is a restaurant cook while her mother became a housewife after years of unemployment. Although F4 attended a Chinese bilingual school, her parents insisted on putting her in an English program "because they scare that I would catch the Chinese accent [when speaking English]", as she revealed. Having been intentionally prevented by her parents from learning Chinese and having had little opportunity to make friends with those in Chinese program, F4 came to self-identify as Canadian and she tried to distance herself from all those so-called Chinese cultural practices, which she believed were associated with newcomers and have a derogative meaning (I will discuss this point again in the section on "Youth's perception of 'Chinese' cultural practices"). What is also worth mentioning is that years later, her parents found they inevitably faced a communication problem with F4 who did not have a good command of Chinese while they knew little English. In fact, such communication barriers between parents and children exist in many Chinese families and are another important factor that affects Chinese youth's identification with their parents' cultural heritage.

Chinese Language Maintenance

Multiculturalism policy within a bilingual framework legitimates the official language status of English and French while subjugating other types of language used by immigrants as "ethnic" which could only be used in the private domain (at home). Although multicultural discourse gives symbolic recognition of the equal status of "ethnic" language and symbolically encourages its maintenance, what actually happened in many Chinese families is that children chose to use English as their primary or sole commination tool with family members. They indicated that they feel more comfortable and confident speaking English because they are educated and socialized in an English world, using English in daily school life. As F2 noted:

> My parents they speak Chinese to each other and my sister and I kind of picked up on it like Cantonese and like they kind of sneak it in with English words too. I guess Chinglish…I can understand quite a bit of it but I probably speak it with a really bad accent. At home, I speak mostly English with my parents.

F4's made a similar comment: "Yeah. So I can understand them [her parents], perfectly fine. But at home, they usually speak in Cantonese so I just replied back in English." Participants, especially the second generation, indicated that they have a wider vocabulary for English than they do for Chinese.

Although many participants have been sent to either Chinese bilingual schools or Saturday Chinese schools, they revealed that they had little interest in learning Chinese, as it was irrelevant to their life in Canada. As mentioned before,

F5 attended nine years of Saturday Chinese school but still cannot read or write Chinese. As she explained:

> It doesn't immediately apply to my life. You know what I mean? It's an idea of retaining culture that kids don't understand and I think when they get older they understand. Now I understand but at the time, I didn't feel it was very important.

As well, F3 attended approximately six years Chinese bilingual school at her mother's request but later decided to go to an English school after grade 6. She stated:

> I didn't want to do it anymore because I didn't really see first of all the benefit. I saw the benefits in terms of being able to understand the language but in the long run, I mean all the writing skills are not going to be beneficial unless I'm going to actually live in China for the long term. So it's just…once the beginner kind of groundwork was laid, it was possible to just regularly speak Chinese with relatives and other people in just the language that way rather than having to take courses for it. So then I went to an English school.

Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging is closely related to their Chinese fluency that is exercised through their communication with their immigrant parents and other family members at home. Very often, Chinese youth use the level of their Chinese language fluency as a point of reference to indicate their level of "Chinese-ness." For example, participants revealed they could not

identify and felt little connection with their parents' cultural heritage, mainly because they do not know the language. As F2 put it,

> I think if I spoke the language better I would feel more of a connection. I guess so like I mean I can probably order food off a menu. I think it's a lot harder when you don't speak the language so I feel like I wouldn't really connect as well.

F4 made a similar remark:

> The fact that I cannot even really speak the Cantonese language technically pushes me away from ability to be even a part of that. So I would probably consider myself pretty much Canadian especially in terms of beliefs in my inability to speak Cantonese properly.

It is worthwhile to note that although one's Chinese language fluency plays a main role in Chinese youth's identity construction, it does not act as a decisive factor in an absolute sense; rather, its influence varies among individuals depending on its interaction with other factors such as friends. For example, as F4 revealed, although she could not speak Chinese fluently, she was more willing to identify as "Chinese Canadian" rather than "Canadian" when she felt she was more accepted by a group of Chinese friends in Vancouver than those she met in Edmonton:

> When I go to Vancouver, because I have a quite a few Chinese friends in Vancouver. When I was there, I feel a lot more, I guess Chinese Canadian, rather than just Canadian, because, with them, I feel a lot more close to. Because I was allowed to speak random words of Cantonese not being

> made fun of. While here, since I have been friends with them since grade 8, I got made fun of because they said I have English accent when speak Cantonese. I feel a lot more connected depending on which group and just how much they allow me to randomly play around with Cantonese.

F4's comments indicate that Chinese youth use Chinese language fluency, friendship dynamics and specific time and space as three distinct but interrelated points of references in constructing their identities. In other words, the more one feels accepted by a group of Chinese friends in a specific context, the more one is willing to exercise speaking Chinese and the more one feels "Chinese" in that specific context. It also shows one's identification is not fixed but flexible and fluid--contingent on specific time and place as Hall (1990, 1996, & 2011) argues. Conversely, participants' Chinese language fluency also affects them in making friends and their relationship with parents, both of which in turn frames their sense of belonging and self-perception. For example, M7 identified that he could not fit in with "the cool Chinese" who are newcomers.

> But it's okay on a small talk. If I go to a family friend's house, ask how their kids are doing, what's new, that's fine. But talking with people, the cool people that talk really cool and the girls are all so pretty and they have Louis Vuitton bags and they all talk in a certain way, for me, I feel like I can't talk cool Chinese, I can talk cool English. I can't talk cool Chinese. In that way, I can't really fit in with the cool Chinese crowd sort of.

M7 also discussed how language use affects relationships among family members. As he put it:

> Your family has a big part to do with it [identification] too because especially as a kid. If as a kid you go to a White person's house…you go there to work or to have fun and then your mom comes to pick you up and then your mom can't speak English properly and then that other kid's mom is an English native speaker then it's hard for them to get together. If they can't connect then it makes you feel weird. It feels like mom how come you can't speak English. It makes you feel weird. Whereas when you get older like this, the friends I've made they don't necessarily meet my parents so it's okay but as a kid, bring your parent in for teacher meetings and they can't understand, they can't speak English. Bringing your parent in and bringing them to your friend's house and your friend talks to them and they can't understand. It really affects how confident you are about your own culture. You feel embarrassed and then you kind of want to move away from your culture kind of.

In this passage M7 poignantly describes the difficulty of making friends when other family members are not able to communicate with peers. Particularly, he revealed that his younger sister was quite mad at his mother's English and that became the main reason for intergenerational conflict in his family.

> Her [his mother] English is still not very good. She knows it and we know it and with me, I've kind of like accepted it, I'm patient with her but my sister, who's younger, she always gets frustrated with my mom. She kind

> of makes fun of my mom, like mom what are you talking about? I can't understand you and stuff like that. For my mom, it's embarrassing and frustrating but then it's like for me your English is not very good. When she's talking to White parents, when she's talking to our teachers, when she's talking to neighbors and stuff, sometimes I feel I'm better now…before I would get embarrassed. Even now sometimes if I try to explain things to her and she doesn't understand I get frustrated too even though I try to be understanding. My sister's really bad, it's been a problem; she gets mad at my mom a lot.

The intergenerational conflict caused by language barriers is another important factor that affects Chinese youth's emotional bond with their parents, and the Chinese identity that their parents symbolized. I will discuss this point in detail in the last section of this chapter.

The examination of Chinese language maintenance among Chinese youth shows that it becomes increasingly difficult for youth to become fluent bilingual speakers, given the strong linguistic assimilation force in Canadian society, and despite the multicultural claim that ethnic groups can maintain their own ethnic heritage at home. On this point, my findings contradict with Hiller & Chow's (2005) research on the second generation Chinese youth in Calgary which argues that almost all of the second generation participants were bilingual "which facilitated comfortable interaction in both the private sphere of the home and in public" (p. 90). Their findings are based on a survey questionnaire through which they found "ninety-one percent continue to speak Chinese with their parents with

52% ‘almost always’ doing so and 39% ‘sometimes’ doing so” (p. 89). Based on my interview data, I argue that it is important, however, to ask at which level such communication happens rather than simply whether they can use Chinese to communicate. Additionally, it is crucial to consider how Chinese youth understand this communication as highlighted in M7’s interview. Data show that although some second generation youth can communicate with their parents in Chinese, it is more likely that they are simply functional speakers and listeners. In other words, they can talk about basic daily life but cannot communicate at deeper levels, given the lack of Chinese fluency among youth and their parents’ lack of English fluency. As Louie (2006) notes, the loss of ethnic language among the Chinese second generation contributes to the distancing between family members as children cannot communicate with their parents about complex personal or political issues. Her research shows that second generation youth expressed frustration with the inability to communicate with parents at deeper level due to the lack of Chinese proficiency or fluency.

As Portes & Rumbaut (2001) argue, it is typical for Asian children to take a longer time to learn English, but once they do, they tend to shift to exclusive monolingualism (e.g. only English). Although immigrant parents speak their home language and youth can understand it, their insistence on replying in English indicates a dissonant acculturation happened in many immigrant families. This is characterized by different linguistic and acculturation rates between parents and children with children learning English and dominant cultural norms at a quicker rate, therefore maintaining a growing distance from parents and the

ethnic culture that their parents symbolized. Dissonant acculturation may result in a lack of emotional connection between children and parents, or an affective separation and the weakening of parental authority. As a result, intergenerational conflict occurs. Portes & Hao (2002) argue that selective acculturation characterized by fluent bilingualism is a more desirable outcome than full acculturation and its associated English monolingualism for children of immigrants and their families in that fluent bilingualism helps to reduce family conflict. They note that this is because fluent bilingualism means more than open communication with parents but also helps children to anchor their identities in understanding the culture that their parents are associated to a certain extent. As they state: "cut these moorings and children are cast adrift in a uniform monolingual world. They, their families, and eventually the communities where they settle will have to pay the price" (p. 908). The intergenerational conflict between M7's younger sister and her mother, based on language barriers best illustrates this point. More importantly, the embarrassment that M7 and his younger sister felt about their mother's English indicates the ideology and hegemony associated with language use in Canadian society; this is, lack of English fluency means an inferior and unequal status with native English speakers. This undoubtedly affects youth's identification with Chinese community and heritage as well as their emotional attachment to it.

Youth's Perception of "Chinese" Cultural Practices

By using the term "Chinese" cultural practices, I do not mean to essentialize Chinese culture. As a heterogeneous population, there is not a fixed,

"one shared culture" among the Chinese with "stable, unchanging and continuous frames of references and meaning" (Hall, 1990, p.223). The way I use "Chinese" cultural practices, rather, refers to either youth's own definition of certain cultural practices that their immigrant parents or other family members engaged with, which they believe are associated with "Chinese" culture; or some forms of entertainment written or spoken in Chinese (e.g. Chinese websites and Chinese drama). My interview data show that Chinese youth use these "Chinese" cultural practices as a point of reference for identifying who they are or they are not. They also construct their identities based on how these "Chinese" cultural practices are perceived or received by the dominant society. For example, as M14 noted:

> Like if anybody stepped up to me now and asked me oh what ethic background are you from? It's unlikely I would say Canadian because you kind of assume that being in Canada that you'd be Canadian so I say Chinese but I mean when somebody asks you your ethnic background or whatever, I don't really do a lot of Chinese things and the customs have kind of dropped off through the generations. My mom doesn't do a lot of the Asian customs are home like the incense burning and the paper burning and those kind of traditions. My grandma will do them, my grandparents will do them but my mom doesn't do it anymore. The chances of me doing that are probably very slim.

Strong linguistic and cultural assimilationist forces in the public space push youth to distance themselves from the "Chinese" cultural practices their parents may engage with. They revealed that so called "ethnic culture" is not a neutral term

with which individuals could freely identity Rather, it has an implicit negative connotation which means "one does not conform to the norm, not culturally assimilated." As F4 noted,

> I eat Chinese food at home. That's probably the only thing I do. My parents watched Chinese TV all the time and they listened to the Chinese music. And I always pushed away from that because as the kid, I often gotten made fun of, not me personally, but just the idea of, Oh, that's right. They are Chinese FOBs [people "fresh off the boat"]. FOBs don't have very good image...

Although multiculturalism is criticized as only celebrating cultural diversity at a superficial level, often characterized as "DDD", that is, "Dance, Dress and Dining", even diversity at this level may not be easily accepted. Many youth revealed they prefer not to bring Chinese food to school because their schoolmates do not like the food smell. As M15 recalled:

> I remember bringing food to school to eat for lunch and then there would be a microwave right and after we heat it up you open the lid and people would be like oh that smells, what is that? After a few times, I was like…I went to my mom and said can you give me something else for lunch because it smells and she's like, no, just take it and eat it whatever. After a few times of kids just going like that, I just didn't care anymore. Recently I kind of…maybe it's from that but I prefer if my mom would make me a sandwich or something. I don't know if it's because of that or just because it's easier to eat a sandwich.

Similarly, F8 described a difficult time in school immediately after immigration when she had to return home for lunch rather than eat at school for fear of peer complaints about the smell of her Chinese food. She revealed that students might tease each other with such taunts as "you smell like Chinese food." There was a time when she felt she was targeted, and asked her mom to wash all her clothes after school.

These examples manifest the contradiction that Chinese youth experienced between two worlds of culture: family versus school, and the private space versus the public. It shows that the identity construction of Chinese youth is affected not by a single agent of socialization, such as family alone, but rather through the interaction among multiple stakeholders, such as family and school. More importantly, these data indicate how the dominant cultural norm in terms of what is acceptable or not, affect Chinese youth's identity construction. Particularly, some of them even felt shame about the food they brought to school, despite the multicultural claim of the equal value of different cultures.

Although multiculturalism discourse assumes immigrant families can maintain ethnic culture at home and pass on their ethnic heritage to their descendants, it is not necessarily the case for many Chinese families. In addition to the negative meanings associated with some "Chinese" cultural practices as deviant to the norm, lack of Chinese language proficiency prevented many Chinese youth from accessing various forms of entertainment and sources of

information written or aired in Chinese which their immigrant parents may continuously use in their daily life. As M7 noted,

> Like my mom basically everyday she has to go onto China.com and read the news or whatever but me since I'm not able to read, I don't do that…when I watch dramas and stuff I can read easy stuff but I can't read newspapers.

M14 made similar comments:

> I would like to go to Chinese websites but unfortunately my language skills aren't that good enough to navigate all the websites, especially like even my mom finds it's difficult to Chinese websites. You can read it all but the terminology is different. Like technology is growing …Even if you can read the characters, you might not know what they mean together.

Again, as M3 revealed:

> I have been raised in an English based lifestyle so I am illiterate in Chinese. My Chinese vocabulary is very limited… I can say basic things, but when it comes to discussion or anything more than just daily stuff, I cannot find the exact word and anytime there is idiomatic expression used. Chances are that I may not be able to understand…[When accessing Chinese website], I cannot understand most non-literary meaning, figurative meaning of ideas and words.

Further, there are no fixed "Chinese" cultural practices and Chinese tradition with an essential core that is agreed upon and observed in each Chinese immigrant family. The so-called "Chinese" cultural practices are not only heterogeneous but

also subject to change when Chinese parents immigrated into a new social context. The issue of whether certain cultural practices are kept is not simply a matter of personal choice and or personal intention. Rather, these determinations are driven by the actual living and surviving needs of daily life. For example, many Chinese families prefer to watch Chinese drama and listen to Chinese music rather than consume English media. This does not necessarily mean they want to maintain "Chinese" culture, however. Rather, these may be the only accessible forms of entertainment for Chinese immigrants due to their lack of English proficiency. Particularly, for Chinese youth, they perceive these "Chinese" cultural practices in functional terms, as something their parents like or get involved with, not as something chosen or decided by them. As Louie (2006) argues:

> For the second generation, home serves as a symbolic connection to the family's country of origin much as it does for their parents. The crucial distinction is that for the children, the representation of the home as "a place in the past" is mediated through their parents— who themselves have strong material connections to that past while the children do not. (p. 373)

Therefore, even though they were exposed to these "Chinese" cultural practices every day, they still prefer to self-identify as "Canadian." For example, F6 mentioned the main reason for her to be exposed to Chinese media is because of her dad. As she put it: "You know, my dad, he is like, if we have cable, we need to get Chinese channel, bla, bla....It's always on in our house." Again, M14 (G2) identifies himself as "Canadian" although he acknowledges "I have it

[Chinese food] for breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day." In this sense, my findings challenge the traditional approach in ethnic identity studies which assumes that there is a simplistic causal relationship between one's ethnic identity maintenance and one's ethnic cultural practices and which believes the salience of one's ethnic identity can be measured by one's ethnic cultural practices (Driedger, 1996; Isajiw, 1990). Thus, what I found from interview data is that participants use certain "Chinese" cultural practice as an indicator to signal that they are culturally assimilated and as a point of reference in constructing their "Canadian" identity. This was accomplished through expressions about their lack of Chinese language proficiency for accessing various "Chinese" cultural practices, their lack of emotional connection with these cultural practices, and the negative connotations that they perceive to be associated with these cultural practices. For example, M18 (G2) uses his distance from Chinese food and Chinese music to indicate he is completely Canadianized. As he noted:

> At home sometimes I make my own meals because I don't really like that food that's cooked. There are a lot of the bitter foods that I just don't like. You know growing up here, the kids are so used to candy and sweet things right so when my mom cooks something like bitter melon, I'm like not suiting my taste buds…I'm not going to accommodate that so basically I cook my own things whether it be lasagna or spaghetti or hot dogs, burgers, whatever.

With regard to Chinese music, he said:

> Even just as in a simple taste of music, a lot of the Chinese music I can't stand it to be honest. My grandparents, they used to like all the Chinese opera right and I think it's actually worse, in my opinion, than fingernails on a chalkboard.

As well, what to eat and where to eat is also interpreted by some Chinese youth as being a matter of assimilation, a transition from embracing traditional cultural habits to enjoying a Western lifestyle. It is also a class issue that is closely linked with the financial situation and socioeconomic status of immigrant families. As M7 (G2) described:

> Before when I was in junior high and elementary we went out because there was nothing to eat at home so we went out to have a real Chinese meal and then we got to a Chinese restaurant. In the past two years or so, now that we are a little bit better off, we've been in Canada for a long time. We've kind of paid off most of our debts and stuff like that. When we go out to eat, it's more of a family thing. We kind of…we only go to Caucasian like Western restaurants with like nice atmosphere where we can just sit at a table and just talk as a family and stuff like that. And my mom she's been cooking more and more Western food. She's been trying different things like trying pasta and stuff like that.

In addition to certain "Chinese" cultural practices that are used by participants as a point of reference in identity construction, they also use some values to distinguish themselves from their peers.

Youth's Perception of Cultural Values

Again, by using the term of cultural values, I do not mean to essentialize culture and reinforce group boundaries in cultural terms. In other words, I do not assume that there is a fixed essential core of values in different cultures. The way I use cultural values is based on participants' own perceptions that cultural values differ, particularly with regard to those values held by themselves and their peers. I was able to ascertain that these participants were using these perceptions of difference to construct their own identities accordingly. For example, F2 self-identified as Canadian who had been linguistically and culturally assimilated. She still thought she was different from her Canadian peers in terms of some "Chinese" values she holds dear, however. As she stated:

> I would identify myself as Canadian still and then…like I still have the values… my parents …I still hold to the values that they would call Chinese like doing well in school and getting a job and going to university right away and believing you should work before you play kind of thing, which I think makes you different from some Canadians but like culturally, I know more about the Canadian culture.

She further elaborated on her understanding of Chinese values:

> I think they have a good work ethic and good values and they are realistic too. I don't think it's right to tell your kids to have fun and everything will be okay and everything works out. I think you have to ensure they work hard and you can't slack off for your entire life because eventually you can't live with your parents anymore and stuff.

Participants also talked about values in terms of child disciplining based on their childhood experiences which may seem to conflict with mainstream Canadian norms but were deemed acceptable and not a big deal among themselves. As shown in the statement of F4, a Canadian born Chinese:

> …And I know especially in terms of childhood brings ups, the majority of my Chinese friends, actually almost all of them, if you talked to them about childhood, they have been beaten in one time or another. But if you would say that to any white kid here, they would be in shock. And they instantly go to the extreme that you are being beaten to death. But it is not. It's simply...In a matter of fact, a lot of us don't actually hate our parents for that. Something like, this is normal. And actually it's funny because *only talking to my Chinese friends, we found our identity there* (emphasized by the author). Oh, wait, you were beaten as a kid too. And you share stories about that. And like, none of us has been beaten to the point where we were being bruised. So it's really a small thing to disciplining.

As Sethi (2008) argues, "[t]he biggest limitation in the research on immigrant families is the tendency to examine issues in light of the 'Western' model, which is usually considered to be the benchmark" (p. 39). Particularly, "the definition and meaning attached to various concepts in the mainstream Canadian culture might not necessarily be the same when viewed from the perspective of the

population being researched" (ibid). This can be seen in F4's understanding of child disciplining, which differ from her White peers.

Further, some negative parts of what participants called "Canadian" values such as swearing and disrespect for seniors as well as wasteful habits push them away from identifying with that Canadian identity. It is worthwhile to note that very often participants' understanding of "Canadian" values is derived from their interacting with a specific group of population. For example, F6 described her understanding of the negative part of "Canadian" value:

> Especially like swearing. swearing at home, we are going to get into trouble but you know, right now, kids are using, I did too for a little while, using swears as verbs and nouns so now I just cleaned up a little bit but so swear…That's Canadian. You don't swear in front of your parents but they swearing at their parents and their parents are swearing at them. It's really weird and I am just like "Wow." And they show rarely respectful. And I found I am really respectful to anyone who is older than me like all my seniors, especially teachers. But then here, you can call your profs by their names, and I am like, that's weird. I don't call my profs name, I call them Mrs. or Dr. whatever.

She also identified different consumption habits, particularly at the beginning of school term and at high school graduation:

> You know they came to school, the first day of school, they got all new stuff. All brand new stuff and their parents spend so much money on them. It might be financially, we can do it but they get all new stuff. I was just

> like, you used whatever left over from last year. If you don't have enough, you buy that stuff… They are very materialistic and they are wasteful… I am using a backpack three years in a row. They get new backpack every year. why? you can still use it…They placed really heavy emphasis on graduation. Limos, nice dresses … they spent hundreds of dollars on their dresses, and I am like, you just graduate from high school. What's the point of putting on so much money when you are going to leave? It's not a really big deal for high school.

F6's understanding and comments about the negative part of "Canadian" values is based on her experiences at a Catholic school, which has a predominantly White student population. Obviously, swearing, disrespect for seniors, and wasteful habits exist among a heterogeneous population across different ethnic groups—these are not unique features of Canadian culture. Similarly, working hard and doing well in school is also not an exclusive Chinese value but something that is shared by many people across group boundaries. To further disaggregate these factors from presumed ethnic characteristics, we might also argue that different consumption patterns are also a class-based, determined by one's socioeconomic status. However, it would not be appropriate to dismiss F6's narratives as not "true" since she found what she accepted and believed from being socialized in a working class Chinese immigrant family conflicts with what was accepted in that specific Catholic school and from most of her White peers. What this example reveals is that one's understanding of cultural values and identity construction are relational, based on intersections of race and class, and contingent on a specific

time and space--rather than assuming that cultural values have a fixed essential core. More importantly, it also manifests we need to understand Chinese youth's identification in the context of capitalist society in which not only profit maximization and capital accumulation are the gods that many people worship in their daily lives (Satzewich, 1999) but also extravagant consumption and its acceptance with tolerant attitudes in specific time and space. What needs to be reflected upon is not only some participants' essentialized understanding of cultural values, but also why they feel confused about the fact that what is not acceptable at home is actually viewed as a "normal" thing in school. Undoubtedly, the Chinese families in which these youth grow up provided them with an alternative perspective, or frame of reference that enable them to rethink about acceptable norms at school as well as dominant values and beliefs in the broader society. In this sense, family is an essential factor that affects Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging.

Travel and Impression of China

Traveling back to China and visiting their parents' homeland has been identified by the participants as an important factor that affects their identification. M7 recalled that his China-trip when he was in grade eight boosted his interest in learning to be Chinese.

> …after I came back from China last time, I was very, very interested in building my Chinese-ness. I really liked my relatives. I felt like my Chinese wasn't good and I wanted to make my Chinese better. When I came back in grade 8 I felt like I really wanted to become more Chinese.

> At that point, I stopped listening to Western music completely for two years I always downloaded Chinese…like (Chinese singer's names) S-H-E. F-I-R. Really intense I was downloading all the newest albums and stuff like that and try to learn to sing it and learn the words and stuff like that.

As M7 mentioned, his interests in China are mainly based on the very positive impression his relatives left him. As he noted:

> I see my relatives and they are rather I guess poor, they are not as well off as we are. They work hard for what they get and stuff and I feel very close to them even though because they are very, very pure people. They won't…I don't know how to say it, they don't understand a lot of city jokes or stuff, they are very, very pure, honest farmer people. I really respect them and I get along with them really nice. I don't feel uncomfortable around them. I don't feel like they think my Chinese is bad so they are going to not like me or anything. It's fine.

More importantly, his China trip tightened his bond with his father, enabling more understanding of his father's background and more admiration for his current achievements as a successful professional. This in turn ignited his interests in learning to be Chinese. As he put it,

> Like I said, my dad's from a farming background, a very, very poor country, rural background. So when we go to his hometown, there's no running water. The last time I went back, I felt like it was really kind of inspiring knowing that my dad came from such a poor background he's become the person that I am and it kind of gives me pressure. Growing up,

> I've had it so much better than my father, but I still don't feel like I'm doing as well as he's doing, I'm not as smart as he is and stuff like that.

Intergenerational relation is another important factor that affects Chinese youth's identification which I will discuss in the following section. M7's narratives indicate the interactions of multiple factors in the process of their identity construction.

Further, through traveling back, they get first-hand experiences, observations and impressions of China. The actual travel may reinforce or challenge various stories they heard about China while in Canada. As M1 noted:

> …because my mom always talks about when she was younger and I know my brother and I are always interested to ask her what it [China] was like. She tells us stories about her childhood and everything. And then I think I just got interested and started looking up information about it on the internet…

M1 first went back to China in Grade 6, and this gave him an actual sense of what it looked like:

> I've been there, I've seen what it's like and I guess grade 6 curriculum we studied China and I just happened to go to China that year at the same time so I could say a lot of stuff. I'd seen a lot of stuff.

Traveling back to China does not always leave participants a positive impression. Some of them mentioned that the environment and quality of life there are problematic. As F6 said,

> I like HK, it's good to go on vacation but not to live there. I think it was too fast paced in everything. Everyone is stressed.

F4 has gone back to Hong Kong twice and she said:

> I don't really like it. Just because the environments. Just how crowded it was. I like the fact that here, there is open space for you to see.

F3's impression of China was filtered through the dominant North American perspective:

> Very crowded, I can't breathe. I don't think I would like to live in China because I don't agree with the weather. I like Canadian weather…well let me think…a lot of the rivers and stuff are really polluted and I think it's almost…the parks you can go to are nice but it's almost kind of a sense of artificial. There's some that are okay but for a large part, it's all kind of specially made for looking at. The places in Canada it's grown. Let's just leave it like that, we'll fence it off and call it a National Park. I had that impression that China at least for a lot of the places in China it's just more…less of a natural kind of thing and more of a man made…it's just such a high population density.

Not surprisingly, F3 identified herself as Canadian. By contrast, M6 had a very positive memory of China. Coming from a southern city in mainland China, he has lived in Canada for over two years. Compared with Canada, he felt the life in China was more comfortable and desirable. As a southerner, he could not endure the cold winter in Edmonton, as well as the limited Chinese food variety and restaurants. More importantly, he preferred the robust urban living style in China.

During the interview, he expressed the desire to go back to China during the summer to play with his friends at beaches and enjoy his favorite Chinese food. As his father runs a successful family business in China, M6 decided to go back to join his father after getting a degree at a Canadian college. In responding to my question on identity, he replied without hesitation: "Chinese, of course, Chinese."

It is worthwhile to note that, regarding the frequency of traveling back, most participants revealed that they only traveled back once or twice. Louie (2006) explains that the sparse quality of youth's experiences with the ancestral homeland may have a class-based explanation. As F4 noted, "My parents, because we were so focused on saving money. We don't normally go on family trips at all. The last time when I went to HK was, I think I was eight." Even for those managing to travel back, it is very likely that they only stay there for a short term, visit only a few places and form their impression of China based on a constant comparison with Canada. In this point, Chinese youth's impression of China is also class-based as shown in M6's comments in which he described a better quality of life in China than he had here. For some participants, such visits were made through "the lens of a tourist, rather than [as] a revisiting of the familiar. Just as the traditions they celebrated in the home with their parents were somehow 'foreign' to them, so was visiting the parental homeland" (Louie, 2006, p. 376). The sense of foreignness was further heightened through the socialization they received in Canada and the dominant North American values they internalized in terms of what is normal and what is beautiful, as seen in F3's comment about the parks. For others, however, traveling back fostered a positive closeness to their

parents and boosted their Chinese identity. They were interested in being a part of it rather than simply assuming a tourist role and regarding themselves as an outsider. However, without constant contact with China, M7 revealed his interest in learning to be Chinese faded with time: "But then in about grade 10 or 11 I was kind of like the Chinese is nice but I don't mind Western music so I started listening to Western music again and now I don't download Chinese music anymore." Undoubtedly, no matter whether traveling back promotes closeness or foreignness, it is definitely an important factor in Chinese youth's identity construction and negotiations with their sense of belonging.

Intergenerational Relation

Intergenerational relations are another factor affecting Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging. More specifically, a good parent-child relationship increases the possibility that children identify with their parents' ethnic origin. Conversely, a conflicting and stressful relationship is very likely to drive Chinese youth from this identification. There are many factors that may influence intergenerational relationships and it is beyond the scope of my thesis to examine all of them. In this section, I only highlight some of these factors identified from my interview data and focus on discussing how these factors affect parent-child's relationships and consequently Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging.

For example, F4 self-identified as Canadian, particularly in relation to her Chinese parents. She described her conflict with her parents in terms of different ways of life:

> I found that, personally, I guess I have taken more Canadian way of life other than my parents. My parents have instilled in me essentially the core of me, but what I actually chose to go is towards more Canadian way of life, which it seems a lot of difficulties of me on my parents because I against my parents all the time.

F3 disliked her mother's emphasis on academic achievement which, she revealed, moved her to make primarily "non-Asian" friends, and distance herself from the "Chinese" culture that her mother embodied.

> But I know from my biological mother, she really stresses education, so I kind of for me and her…we never really got along but it just drives me insane kind of because all she's focused on is doing academic successful. If you are academically successful, you can be those doctors and lawyers but it doesn't guarantee that person's going to be happy or not. I think that's more important than being academically successful at present.

In reflecting on her identification, she said,

> I don't agree with a lot of the things that…like I don't agree with the strong emphasis on academics like a lot of people …most of my friends [at university] are not Asian…so I don't really relate as well personally even despite my ethnicity to Asians more so than Whites. I had that fear of being kind of one of the group in terms of being considered being just an ordinary Chinese Canadian kind of thing. I identify more with Canada than China.

Intergenerational relations between children of immigrants and their parents are often viewed as a state of conflict based on dissonant acculturation in terms of language and cultural values. In other words, if there is any conflict between parents and children, it is because they are socialized in different cultures. For example, Lalonde & Giguére (2008) noted that second generation youth may feel torn or caught between two cultural worlds, that is, the norms of majority Canadians and those of their heritage. Particularly, in terms of education and career choices, the Western norms of individualism and autonomy may guide youths to follow their passion and interest while Eastern norms of family connectedness and interdependence may pressure them to find a job that is linked to financial security and valued by the community such as law and medicine. Lalonde & Giguére find children of Chinese immigrants were under greater parental pressure to excel in academic performance compared with their European Canadian peers so it may result in both interpersonal conflicts with their parents and intrapersonal conflict within themselves.

In a similar vein, Zhou (2006) identified intergenerational conflicts in Chinese families which are premised upon four sensitive topics – the issue of education, work ethic, consumption behavior and dating. Particularly, three assumptions that Chinese parents held affect their relationships with children: the notions of filial piety, unconditional obedience to authority, and face-saving. Children are supposed to obey their parents unconditionally, not questioning or

challenging their parents. Children's academic performance is believed to link closely with the honor or shame of the whole family.

Although such arguments seem convincing at the first glance, they tend to essentialize Chinese culture as a fixed entity and reinforce the dichotomy between the East and the West. A number of empirical studies have revealed that these issues such as emphasis on education and assumptions about parental authority are not exclusive to Chinese families. And even in Chinese families, chances are that they are observed to varying degrees. To put it another way, parents' emphasis on education and their expectations for their children should not be understood as a unique feature of "Chinese" culture as parents from other ethnic groups may have similar demands on their children. Rather, immigrant parents' aspirational pressure may come from their own difficult experiences and disappointments in the Canadian labour market which cause them to shift their own aspirations to their children. Participants' different understandings of their parents' aspirational pressures can lead to different responses, which in turn can result in a stronger bond with their parents or vice versa. Unlike F3, some Chinese youth respect their parents' emphasis on education, particularly in observing the difficulties their immigrant parents experienced in Canadian labour market due to language barriers, lack of Canadian work experiences, non-recognition or devaluation of their educational credentials, or their experiences of discrimination as racialized minorities.

For example, F1 immigrated to Canada at the age of 16. Her mother was a school teacher in China. After immigration, she could not find a professional job

due to language barriers so she had to do housekeeping work. In perceiving her parents' immigration experience, F1 revealed she became more positive, motivated, and goal-oriented towards her school work, "in looking at my mom's job, that sort of labour job, I said to myself, I don't want [a] labour job, I want something better, a lot better. I want to make them be proud of me." This strong motivation framed the way she chose friends and made her feel she could not identify herself with the fun-seeking popular group at school due to different life goals. She also had a part-time job during high school to help relieve her mother's financial burden. In responding to my question: "Do you think your parents made the right decision to immigrate to Canada?" she said: "My parents always said, they did if I feel happy living here." In appreciation of her parents' sacrifice for her, F1 has a strong bond with her family, which in turn strengthens her mother's authority in disciplining her behavior when any conflictive issue arises in the family. For example, in grade 12 her mother did not allow her to go camping with her classmates for the safety concern and she obeyed. Further, F1 indicated she would not reject a job offer in China, if there is a good one, "because parents are living there now. I think it's good [to go back]."

Further, the existing literature on intergenerational relations seems to overwhelmingly focus on conflict. My research data show that the relationship between parents and children are not always characterized by conflicts. If there is any, thus usually depends on how both sides perceive the conflictive issue—it is not an unresolvable cultural gap. Instead of always treating their parents'

expectations and advices with a hostile attitude, some participants did have a critical understanding of them as shown in M7's comments:

> I think from too young an age Caucasian parents are like okay well they give too much freedom to their kids so in the end the kid says I don't want to do it and you can't make me. I don't think it's good either because as a kid, until you're 20 or 25, I don't think you're mature enough to see the things your parents see so if your parents tell you to do something, usually it's because they understand a little bit more than you do.

Growing up in a middle-class family where both his parents are professionals, M7 revealed the parenting style in his family is the key to maintaining good intergenerational relations. As he described:

> Returning back to my family, we are still relatively traditional as a Chinese family but we've adopted a lot of Western things and I think that's the best way to raise kid. I feel my parents are doing a pretty good job of raising me and my younger sister where it's like they still give us pressure, they still emphasize academic performance. It's very, very important but they also make us do other things. They push us to do piano, try out for the basketball team, to go and do model United Nations and stuff like that. We have biweekly family discussions where if we are unhappy about something; my sister's mad at my mom for some reason, we always talk it out and stuff. I think that's really good because it helps us connect emotionally whereas with a lot of Chinese families, emotional

> means you do good in school, you make your mom happy, that's it. With us, we talk about a lot and we are very, very close and we all get along.

M7 noted family was an important factor that affects his identification, not only because of his relatively harmonious and close relationship with family members but also due to his admiration of his father. As he put it:

> For my dad, I think I feel very proud to be his son because he's a professor at XXX. He's doing a very good job. When they say what do your parents do? I don't say they are working in a restaurant. I don't say they are a barber. My dad he's a professor at XXX. So I feel proud to be his son … And he speaks perfect English. He doesn't talk with an accent or anything … With my dad I'm never embarrassed when he's with my friends and stuff ...

M7 also revealed his father could help with school work in English:

> … my dad speaks a lot of English … sometimes when I'm trying to explain something especially related to school, I don't know [Chinese] terms for biology, for medicine, for government and stuff like that politics so naturally I'll just speak in English or if he's explaining stuff for physics or math, he'll use English.

Rumbaut (1994) argued that children with high-status professional parents are more likely to choose a national origin identity, that is, ethnic identity, due to the social honor and pride that is associated with parents' national origin. It is also likely that children will identify with their parents when they do not feel embarrassed, or when parents are more involved or influential in children's lives,

such as in school work. M7's case partially supports Rumbaut's argument but goes beyond it. His willingness to identify with his parents' ethnic origin depends on a specific time and space and is determined through the interaction of many factors. As mentioned before, after he came back from China in grade eight, he become very interested in exploring and developing his Chinese identity. Such interest faded after two years without further opportunity to come back and/or environmental support to strengthen his Chinese identity. But this trip enabled him to have a better understanding of his father's background and increase his admiration for his father's ability and his emotional bond with him. So his willingness to identify with his Chinese part, although he is Canadian born, is primarily based on his identification with his father, whose English fluency, knowledge and help in his school work, a more open-mined and less authoritarian parenting style, and an inspiring history of personal struggle from poor country boy to a successful professor work in an interacting way that strengthens the parents-children relationship. On this point, it is clear that intergenerational relations are one of the important factors that affect Chinese youth's identification. This finding supports Rumbaut's (1994) argument that "[e]thnic self-identity is, among other things, a measure of the degree of the children's sense of identification with their parents" (p. 756).

Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the influence of family on Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging. Based on interview data, I argued that Chinese youth draw on Chinese language fluency, "Chinese" cultural practices,

and cultural values as points of reference in constructing who they are and who they are not. Further, five factors associated with family were identified as contributing to Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging including, 1) parents' attitudes towards ethnic heritage maintenance; 2) Chinese language maintenance; 3) youth's perception of cultural values; 4) the opportunity of travel and corresponding impressions of China; and, 5) intergenerational relationships. More specifically, I identified that:

1. The less emphasis there is on ethnic heritage maintenance and more on integration by immigrant parents, the more likely their descendants will identify themselves as "Canadian."
2. If Chinese youth do not have a good knowledge of Chinese languages, it is very likely they choose not to identify themselves as "Chinese."
3. Even if some Chinese youth identify themselves as "Canadian," they still may believe they are different from their White Canadian peers in terms of certain "Chinese" cultural values.
4. The more positive the impressions that Chinese youth hold towards China, the more likely they will be to construct a Chinese identify.
5. Good parent-child relationships increase the probability that children will identify with their parents' ethnic origin and vice versa.

Further, although I identify and discuss these factors separately, they do not function in an isolated way but in fact interact with one another to affect Chinese youth's identification. In addition, my findings discussed in this chapter also challenge the dominant multicultural discourse which posits that racialized and

ethnic groups can maintain their ethnic heritage within family. My participants reveal that their parents did not put specific emphasis on so-called ethnic heritage maintenance at home; but rather prefer to assimilate them into the dominant cultural norms for a better opportunity for social mobility. Even in those families where parents do want their children to learn Chinese, it is difficult for Chinese youth to become fluently bilingual, given the strong linguistic and cultural assimilation forces in the public sphere, such as at school. Language barriers not only prevent them from accessing various resources and entertainment in Chinese but also affect their relationships with parents. Finally, data in this chapter indicate that the factors associated with family also affect and at the same time are influenced by those in school. In next chapter I examine Chinese youth's identifications in relation to school.

Chapter 5 Socializing in Canadian Schools

Introduction

As Comacchio (2006) notes "the central institution of modern adolescence [is] undoubtedly the high school" (p. 99). School, as a major agent of socialization, plays an important role in selecting individuals to fill in different positions in a social hierarchy by grading and granting credentials and inculcating individuals with dominant cultural norms. School also provides an important interactional space where individuals develop a self-concept through interpretation of others' reaction to and evaluation of them (Wotherspoon, 2009). In this chapter, I identify and discuss four factors related to school that affect Chinese youths' identification and sense of belonging, including 1) school and program choice; 2) friends and peer pressure; 3) student-teacher relationships; and 4) school knowledge. Further, based on such discussion, I theorize four types of identities developed among Chinese youth in the school context: 1) an academically-based Chinese identity; 2) a resistant Chinese identity; 3) a culturally-based Chinese identity; and 4) a racialized Canadian identity.

School and Program Choice

The specific school and program that Chinese youth enroll in has significant implications for their identity construction. To elaborate on this point, in this section I first identify two types of schools and programs that a majority of research participants attended: 1) schools with a Chinese bilingual program; 2) academically-focused schools or programs (International Baccalaureate program and Academic Challenge program). I then focus my discussion on explaining how

Chinese youth develop "an academically based Chinese identity" through enrolling in the above schools or programs. Finally, I will examine how the racial discrimination that Chinese youth experienced within the schools of small towns and rural areas contributed to the development of "a resistant Chinese identity."

The Types of School for Chinese Youth

Most students in Edmonton are enrolled in either the Edmonton Public School Board (EPSB) or the Edmonton Catholic School District (ECSD) with the former including approximately 81,600 students in 208 schools while the latter has about 32,000 students in 81 schools (Taylor & Woollard, 2003). The reform and changes made to the Alberta School Act in 1988 allowed school boards to provide alternative programs to address students' needs in particular areas such as religion, language, fine arts, gifted and etc. Among them, alternative academic programs such as International Baccalaureate program (IB) and Academic Challenge program (AC) are very popular and well adopted in many high schools. Although parents and students are able to choose schools and alternative programs, most schools in the EPSB must serve students in their designated geographical area first and then select out-of-boundary student applicants through a lottery (ibid). Some very academically-competitive schools even require students to take an entrance test first.

Data collected from survey questionnaires, which asked participants to list all the schools they attended from elementary to senior high, did show some identifiable patterns in high school choice. Take Edmonton participants (n=30) as an example, as shown in table 1 and table 2:

Junior High School Choice among Chinese Youth in Edmonton

School Name or Type	Number of people
Grandview Heights Junior High School	6
Crestwood	1
School with Chinese Bilingual program • Londonderry Junior High • Parkview Junior High	4 (3+1)
Avalon Junior High	3
Riverbend Junior High	2
Vernon Barford	2
Ottewell Junior High	1
Other schools in Edmonton or in other Canadian cities	8
Schools in China	3
Total:	**30**

(Table 1)

Table 3 Junior High School Choice among Chinese Youth in Edmonton

Senior High School Choice among Chinese Youth in Edmonton

School Name or Type	Number of people
Old Scona Academic	8
Harry Ainlay	6
School with Chinese Bilingual program	8 (Total)

• Ross Sheppard High School • M.E. LaZerte High school • McNally High school	5 2 1
Other schools in Edmonton or in other Canadian cities	8
Total:	**30**

(Table 2)

Table 4 Senior High School Choice among Chinese Youth in Edmonton

Of the schools that my research participants attended, Grandview Heights, Old Scona Academic and Harry Ainlay were among the best junior and senior high schools in Edmonton, which offer either the Academic Challenge program (AC) or the International Baccalaureate program (IB). Chinese youth who chose these two senior high schools (Old Scona and Harry Ainlay) account for almost half of the total sample (14/30). Junior high school choice seems more diverse than senior high. However, it is worthwhile to note that junior high schools such as Avalon, Riverbend, Venon Barford and Ottewell are all within the designated school area of Harry Ainlay, which means students graduating from the above junior high could directly enroll in Harry Ainlay. In fact, among six youth who attended Harry Ainlay, five of them came from one of the above junior high schools. All six graduates from Grandview Heights were accepted by Old Scona (6 out of 8) which requires an entrance test. Although the sample is small, the school choice pattern identified in Table 1 and Table 2 does show that many Chinese youth gave enrollment preference to an academically-focused school or program. Interview data further support this point.

F12's family immigrated to Canada from mainland China when she was ten years old. Upon reflecting her school choice of Grandview Heights and Old Scona, she noted:

> At that time, I only came for a short while and my English is not good. I want to challenge myself to see how far I could go. I heard Grandview is the best junior high in Edmonton and it has some academic program, so I went there to take entrance test. After the test, they decided to accept me.

F2, who is Canadian born to immigrant parents from Hong Kong, recalled her enrollment in Old Scona:

> Actually I went to a pretty small high school like Old Scona. It has about 300 people and we had to write an exam in the beginning because it was more of an academic-focused school and so ya it was pretty focused on like grades and everything like that more than most schools. And I guess my parents kind of emphasized that growing up because I went to an academic junior high [Grandview Heights] as well.

She further highlights that the majority student population in an academically competitive school such as Old Scona is "Asian."

> Actually a lot of the students in my school were Asian. Actually the majority of the races there were probably Chinese and probably Korean and probably East Indian as well. So I never really felt too much of a minority kind of…

For Chinese youth enrolled in Harry Ainlay, almost all of them chose the International Baccalaureate program (IB), as noted by F5, who is also Canadian-born and from a Hong Kong immigrant family,

> Ya I went to a really academic program in high school [Harry Ainlay] so there were always people fighting for marks that didn't matter…The program I went through was called the IB program. It was mainly populated of Asians and Indian and very few Caucasians.

Another identifiable pattern regarding school choice among Chinese youth are schools with Chinese bilingual programs (Chinese bilingual school), the enrolment of which accounts for almost one third of the total senior high sample (8 out of 29). This type of school not only provides Chinese youth with an opportunity to learn Chinese, but also offers academic programs such as the IB or AC program, examples being the IB program in M.E. Lazerte, Ross Sheppard, and McNally, and AC program in Londonderry and a Pre-Advanced Placement program in Parkview. Interview data shows that a majority of Chinese youth who attended Chinese bilingual school were also accepted into IB and/or AP programs. Some may choose to follow their friends to remain within the bilingual school throughout senior high. M8 is such a case. Emigrating from Hong Kong at the age of two, he took a Chinese bilingual program since elementary school at Meadowlark and then enrolled in an AP program at Parkview junior high and IB program at Ross Sheppard senior high. He explained his school choice in the following way:

> My parents didn't say I have to go to Ross Sheppard, but since it did offer IB and Mandarin, I will choose to go there and also because my friends, if most of them went to a different school, I will follow them.

Notably, the school context in Alberta (mainly Edmonton) is unique in terms of the availability of Chinese bilingual schools (five elementary schools, four junior high and three senior high), academically focused schools (e.g. Old Scona) and academic programs (e.g. IB and AC). Such school options contribute to a relatively large concentration of Chinese students in the above types of schools and programs. However, not all the Chinese students chose these types of schools. To be exact, to attend which kind of school is beyond their choices, some Chinese youth struggled with their school work and did not meet the criteria to be accepted into any of these academically focused school or program. While others have to enroll in a neighbourhood school as their parents neither have the car nor the time to send them to a school far from home. For example, M14 came from a working class family whose parents worked at a local Chinese restaurant and garment factory when they first arrived in Canada. With long working hours and low wages, his parents have to send him to a school with free daycare, close to his home. He recalled that,

> At that time, my family was kind of lower income because we had just immigrated to Canada not that long ago and there aren't that many finances available at home. So the government provides subsidy for low income families for free daycare program at the time. So I would go to that school and I'd have kindergarten in the morning and daycare in the

> afternoon. All the meals and everything is provided and you don't really have to bring anything to school. Paper, pens, whatever it's all provided, all government subsidized and that school was very…there were no Asian people there, except me actually because the demographic region that we lived in didn't really have many Asian people it was more White and Aboriginal people. The neighborhood wasn't actually that safe or that…it wasn't a very great neighborhood.

Worried about his safety in that neighborhood, his grandma walked him to school every day. This situation lasted until he finished elementary school, which is just across the street from his daycare, when his family was able to move to another neighborhood and enroll him for the first time in a Chinese bilingual school.

> This is again closer to home but this is the school that my mom wanted me to go to. They have Chinese at this school. They do have the bilingual program there but I didn't take it. I took beginners Mandarin because I didn't have the Mandarin experience from elementary school…There was also…it's called an academic challenge program so they look at your grades from elementary and they saw that I had higher grades so they put me into that advanced program.

M14's narratives indicate that school choice is more than a matter of individual preference. It is also constrained by one's socioeconomic family background. In other words, it is a class issue. School choice in turn influenced the settlement pattern of Chinese immigrants in that some parents plan ahead to buy house in the designated school area of Chinese bilingual school or academically focused

school. The reasons why Chinese parents and students made such school choices are multi-faceted and debatable. Some argue for a cultural explanation which posits that Confucian culture values education or that children's school success is viewed as an issue of face-saving for the family, while others suggest a functional explanation which suggests that the academic aspiration of Chinese students results from their survival needs and desire for social mobility as a racialized minority (Conchas & Pérez, 2003; Zhou, 2003). However, no matter what the explanation is, the concentration of a large number of Chinese students in Chinese bilingual schools and academic programs has significant implications for identity construction.

An Academically based Chinese Identity

This concentration provides a structural basis for forming a relatively close-knit ethnic social network among Chinese youth, where they form their friendship groups. For example, F4 who is a Canadian-born university student, notes that her main social network in high school is with the students in the IB program, although her high school is known for being multicultural, with students coming from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

> In XXX, people group. I was in the IB program so I pretty stuck with all the kids [in that program]. But the way the school differentiates itself actually is you have a hallway of the IB kids, which most of them are Asian. And you have the kids of jaw of hallway which most of them are whites. And you have the hallway…which most of them were actually African Canadian or Lebanese. It actually differentiates a lot…As an IB

> kid, we pretty much stuck together from grade 10 to 12 because unlike the regular stream, you got stuck with them. Another thing with IB is everyone is going for a goal and doing well in school. On that sense, you get along for sure.

Being surrounded by a number of Chinese students in the IB program is identified by F4 as one of the main factors that strengthened her Chinese identification.

> I just think myself as Chinese Canadian. Just because the way I grew up, because of the fact that I have been surrounded by so many Chinese friends. I still associate myself as being Chinese. If I have gone to the different schools and if I had not as much as supposed to have Chinese people, I probably consider myself as Canadian…I think the one, continue to have ties with some Chinese group, will continue to identify themselves as Chinese Canadian, whereas I believe that, a lot of people who don't have that kind of group, or they tend to end up with making friends with a whole bunch of white people, Then they tend to go, I am Canadian. I am not Chinese what are you talking about?

This overlap between academic and social components of school was also illustrated by M8 who noted that most of his high school friends are from the AP and IB programs.

> The social group I was really in was mainly the academic ones. In junior high, there was an Academic Challenge program…we are on the same classes and we studied the same thing every day. As to other students, they have some specific blocks, they didn't see the same students from

> every class, and this was the same for high school too. I was in the IB program, so our class size was only 12 students…We spent more time together. In terms of friends circle, most my friends, I guess are from the academic circle.

As well, M7 is a Canadian born university student who graduated from Old Scona held that:

> So if you think my graduating class had 100 people exactly, there probably, maybe, 15 White girls. There were only two White guys. That's really weird. Naturally, all my friends were Asian or Brown. It's not because I didn't get along with White people. It's because there weren't any White people to meet with…Going to Grandview, going to Old Scona, both for the last couple years, those six years, there were always more Asian people than there were White people. So the friends that I made naturally they were Asian. So I say ya for sure nowadays I hang out generally more with Asian.

He further elaborated on his identity change in relation to school context. Compared with junior high school where he played basketball as the only "Asian" and had more "Black" friends, he notes that:

> Then going to Old Scona (senior high school), like cutting off my connection with basketball, cutting off my connection with that good friend of mine who went to another school and having Asians around me, I really became more Asian.

The high concentration of Chinese students in academically-focused schools or programs provided a space where Chinese students could share similar lived experiences, values, and life goals in relations to their peers. This in turn strengthened their identification with an academically-based Chinese identity and they made friends accordingly. For example, although M7 highlighted that the main reason he made "Asian" friends was that there were few White students in his high school, he further acknowledged that it was much easier for him to make friends with students of Chinese origin than with other groups.

> …they were automatically my friend. I don't know why we felt some sort of connection or common base. It just seems a little easier. I guess as a child, it's not something you really think about…I think you maybe naturally feel more comfortable but it's not something that you're conscious of in your head. You're just like…I get along with them, it's not because he's Chinese. I guess it might be something to do with…we have common background. You don't acknowledge it; it's in the back of your mind. My parents they both treat us in a certain way, they both expect us to get really high marks or something and kind of relate to each other a little better.

He also explained that he did not have many White friends, not because of their "race", but because they could not get along.

> I hung out more with Asians at Grandview but I don't feel it was because I didn't fit in with the White people. It's just because I felt in junior high the Asians were a little bit more obedient, a little bit calmer. At Grandview,

> the White people were really wild. They started smoking and doing drugs and stuff like that I don't care if they are White, Brown or Chinese. It's just that they are going to do those things. I don't want to associate myself with them…

In a similar vein, M1 explained how the Chinese bilingual education affects his choice of friends and identification.

> My earlier bilingual education that definitely influenced me to be more Chinese oriented compared to Canadian oriented as a child because at school there's different cliques kind of. There's a group of smart kids, sporty kids and then there's a group of people who don't do anything, people who don't do homework but go out to the mall and hang out, just different groups of…I guess because I was more of a Chinese going into it more of a smart kid that would hang out with the Chinese kids. That makes me more Chinese I guess.

According to the interview data, theoretically, an academically-based Chinese identity has three characteristics. First, it is contingent on the high concentration of Chinese students in either academically-focused schools or programs. The availability of such schools and programs provides a structural basis for Chinese students to develop an academically-based Chinese identity. Second, it is relational in that it is constructed by Chinese youth who define who they are based on comparisons with their peers from other racial and ethnic (e.g. White) or subcultural (e.g. sporty kids) groups. In contrast to dominant discourses and racial stereotypes which view Chinese students as overly academically

focused and nerdy (themes that will be discussed in the media chapter in relation to the "Too Asian' article), an academically-focused Chinese identity is perceived and defined by Chinese youth as a positive self-image which is associated with honour, pride, and status earned through hard work. Research participants revealed that they even joked with each other about being a nerd, which had no derogative meanings but was synonymous with "being smart." As indicated in M14's comments, "sometimes I joke with my friends, 'oh you're such a nerd' because they know how to do it and you don't know how to do it. It's kind of in a joking way, fun way." Many research participants tried to highlight their academically-based Chinese identity as an "IB student" and use it as the main marker for defining who they were during their whole middle school years. Many also indicated that they were proud of being a member of IB or AP programs or being accepted into a very academically competitive school such as Old Scona. Third, based on an academically based Chinese identity, a relatively closely-knit social network among Chinese youth is built where similar concerns values, norms, and life goals are shared, reformed, and strengthened under peer influence and pressure. In examining the adaption experiences of Chinese youth, Vietnamese youth and Korean youth in the United States, Zhou (1994, 1997, 2006) points out the important role of social capital and community forces in providing support as well as exercising control over these community members. Zhou found that Vietnamese youth in New Orleans lived in a watchful Vietnamese community where they were constantly reminded of traditional values and behavioral standards. Such community networks provided them with a better chance for

upward social mobility rather than assimilating into the under-advantaged local environment. Similarly, the nation-wide Chinese language schools in the U.S. played a similar role through their function as an ethnic community that provided youth and parents with a safe and stimulating environment to share similar concerns and figure out possible strategies to deal with intergenerational conflicts and other adaptation problems. Particularly, the social capital formed within the community helped reinforce parental authority, "to moderate original cultural patterns, to legitimate reestablished values and norms, and to enforce consistent standards" (Zhou, 1997, p. 997).

Further, the ethnic social network also served as a mechanism for maintaining social control. Drawing on Durkheim's theory of social integration which emphasizes group control over the individual as greater when the individual is more integrated into the group, Zhou (1997) argues that " in the context of immigrant adaptation, children who are more likely integrated into their ethnic group are likely to follow the forms of behavior prescribed by the group" (p. 998). Although the concepts of social capital and social integration are used by Zhou to primarily explain why Chinese youth perform well in school, these concepts also have important implications for theorizing how Chinese youth develop an academically-based Chinese identity. Participants revealed that they become more "Chinese" after enrolling in a program with a high Chinese population, evidencing the group control over individuals when they become more integrated into the group. In a relatively close-knit social network, group members share similar values and goals towards education for three to six years

on a daily basis. Further, social capital is defined as "the existence of a system of relationships that promotes advantageous outcomes for participants in the system" (Coleman, 1990, Zhou, 1997, p. 996). For my participants, the social capital formed within this close-knit social network benefits them not only in terms of striving for academic excellence and creating more opportunities for social mobility, but also in terms of creating a safe environment to share concerns, modified values, and any confusion they experience with their immigrant parents. Such social networks also act as a buffer zone which protects Chinese youth from potential racism during interactions with White peers as exemplified in the cases of M3 and F11 in a small town or rural school (which will be discussed in next section). This is not to say that Chinese youth in these programs live in racism-free zone. Rather,the availability of these programs and the ethnic network formed helped to reduce the risk of racial discrimination based on White supremacy to a degree. More importantly, such networks provided a space for Chinese youth to construct a positive, academically-based Chinese identity through a collectively-constructed norm that values hard work and education rather than feeling shame based on racial stereotypes. Conversely, the importance of such a social network for Chinese youth's identity construction can also be seen from the school experiences of those who live in small towns or rural areas.

A Resistant Chinese Identity: Isolation and Marginalization in Schools of Small Towns or Rural Areas

Isolation and marginalization in schools of small town or rural areas strengthened youth's ethnic identification as Chinese. M3 left mainland China at

the age of eight. After moving around several cities in North America, his family temporarily settled down in a small town in Alberta, where his junior high school experience indicated isolation and discrimination. As he recalled:

> [… is a city of] descendants of the French colonialists so it's basically very white city. The general population is Caucasian. I am the only Asian in junior high. So the White kids I don't think they've ever met an Asian person before in their life so they are a bit nervous in a way but also cautious in their attitude toward me. Also at the same time, they are a bit discriminatory. Because just by appearance I look different from them and also by academic achievement, I differ from them quite a bit too.

He noted he has been excluded from school projects and has been addressed with racial slurs.

> There was one time in the social studies class we all had to assemble into groups. Basically all the White kids got into groups and I was basically forced to be excluded from any of the groups…eventually I got into a group and then they started piling all the work to me…They sometimes incorporate racial slurs in there. Like *Chinaman, chink*…those words would sometimes be used but not often. Mostly it's indirectly. I remember also in music class there was one guy who was pretty good with the guitar. Every so often when the teacher wasn't around, he starts playing (singing a tune) on the guitar and everybody in the class would start laughing. That was a little oriental tune…Basically in a society where they are not

exposed to multiculturalism, their thinking is very discriminatory and very White centered.

The racial discrimination that M3 experienced in small town contributed to his development of a resistant Chinese identity. As discussed before, although M3 acknowledged his parents wanted him to assimilate with the dominant culture and he became illiterate in Chinese. After "being raised in an English based lifestyle" (M3's narratives), he still identified himself as "Chinese." As he argued: "for me, the main factor is prejudice and discrimination that really wants you to have the idea that you're not Canadian you're Chinese with Canadian citizenship." In other words, the way that M3 identified himself as Chinese is not based on his knowledge of Chinese language and engagement with certain cultural practices but rather derived from his heightened racial consciousness and consequent resistance in face of racial discrimination and exclusion.

The similar sense of isolation and marginalization in attending school in small towns and rural areas was echoed in F11's comments. F11 came to Canada at the age of 15 and attended a high school in a rural area of Alberta where her mom remarried to a local farmer. As the only Chinese student in this school, she felt very lonely and isolated. As she noted: "like, if you go to school and just hang out with, and can only hang out with a group of people, and you don't feel as welcomed or as connected." She also described how racial stereotypes about Chinese constrained her social behaviors:

> [Regarding stereotypes of Chinese] **…**like good at math, and know Kong Fu, and eat noodles, they all study a lot, nerd, or achieve, not too generous in terms of spending, not so much from movies, just from friends…or they just make fun of them, saying if I don't want to spend a lot, they'll say you are so Asian, you are so cheap, that kind of joke… Before, I try to stay away from them, because people think I am cheap, they just misjudge, I will try not to prejudge that aspect for me in front of public, like if I spend more money than I should, or, *I'll try not to read or study in front of people, or people will think I'm a nerd* (emphasized by the author).

F11's school experiences in a rural area made a good contrast with those in an academically-focused school or program with a high concentration of Chinese students. With the lack of an ethnic social network which would act as a buffer zone, F11 found that she was easily targeted by her White peers based on racial stereotypes. As a result, she insisted on identifying herself as Chinese and deemed this identification as an act of resistance to the discrimination she experienced. It is worthwhile to note that after moving to university where she found it much easier to fit in and feel accepted, she began to identify herself as Canadian Chinese.

> University is kind of different, people like nicer and less judgmental than people in high school, like people want to make friends in general in university, and people won't judge you based on your skin color, stereotypes, so in that sense, it's easier for people to make friends, it's easier for people to be close friends.

M3's and F11's experiences reveal the important role of school context in terms of whether it is welcoming or hostile towards racialized minorities. A school's geographical location and the proportion of one's ethnic group members within a school affects Chinese youth's identity formation and sense of belonging. It has been argued that where people live determines the quality of education they receive as well as their returns from education. Particularly, people living in rural areas are more disadvantaged than those who reside in cities (Wotherspoon, 2009). For racialized minority students living in small towns or rural areas, the educational inequality based on regional disparity means more than simple measures of the educational quality and resources that are available. More importantly, it is also an issue of how well they are welcomed and accepted by the local community, which in turn affects how they perceive themselves in relation to the dominant White group. Further, M3's and F11's cases also indicate the connection of Chinese youth's identification with their parents' immigration and settlement experiences. Compared to the family-related reason in F11's case, the reason for M3's family coming to a small town seems more typical in the initial stage of adult immigrants' settlement - where they can find employment. In studying the settlement among some Chinese immigrants in small towns, Leung (2007) argues that "they had to take whatever opportunities available to them; location is not their primary concern" (p. 242). In this sense, youth's identification cannot be studied merely with reference to the youth's own terms. Rather, it is related to many external forces that are beyond their control.

Friends and Peer Pressure

Friends and peer pressure are identified as another factor that contributes to the identification of Chinese youth. It is closely linked to school and program choice in that who Chinese youth hang out with on a daily basis is to a large extent determined by the specific school and program they enroll in. Although the social network in bilingual and academic programs provides Chinese youth with a relatively insulated space that protects them from experiencing potential racial discrimination through the interaction with other ethnic groups, they are still exposed to internal exclusion and discrimination within the group. Particularly, a culturally-based Chinese identity (that of the FOB [or "fresh off the boat" person]), is employed by participants to distinguish between on another within the Chinese group.

A Culturally Based Chinese Identity: FOBs

FOB means "Fresh off the boat," which is used to describe immigrants that have not yet culturally, linguistically and behaviorally assimilated into the host country (Pyke & Dang, 2003). It is an identity label that is used by Chinese youth, particularly CBCs (Canadian born Chinese) to distinguish themselves from their Chinese peers who are newly arrived, and/or not culturally assimilated. Participants have different definitions of what a FOB means. Some contrast it with the so-called Canadian cultural norms. For example, F2 described the distinguishing characteristics of FOB from her CBC friends group:

> I think calling someone 'fob' it's like…it's just saying that they are really culturally like the people from China, they would do their hair really…they'd gel it up like the stars there or they would use their peace signs in their pictures. They would be interested in watching Chinese dramas whereas if you are more Canadianized, you like to eat Canadian food and you watch [Canadian] movies and do all the culturally normal things from here I guess. We would speak mostly English and they would probably speak Mandarin with each other and stuff…ya just like what interests us were different. They are still really in tune with what's going on in Asia and stuff and we're more not quite with the changing…they would dress different I guess.

With regard to clothing, F2 noted that FOB girls like baggy shirts and leggings whereas FOB boys wear tighter pants. They would do their hair up and dye it in red or copper color. By comparison, most CBC would choose a Canadian style of dressing such as jeans, T-shirts and hoodies. F4 also defines "FOB" as those who do not conform to "Canadian" standards in terms of the way of clothing and speaking with an accent.

> They dress in a certain way that would be weird by Canada's standards. This is seen a lot among guys. But FOB guys tend to really care about fashion. They care about fashion in a sense that girls would, which is kind of weird…And girl FOBs were always going for cute, always. Always about like, [a] certain way to make yourself cute and as young as possible. That would be girl fobs. With FOBs, they happen to be with heavy

> Chinese accent. That's how people call them, they are FOBs. In the Asian society, being a FOB is ok thing. It depends on the person you talked to. Some of them, they really like them, because FOBs are really cute and they are usually generally very nice. But if you talked to the White society, they are just like, oh, they are really weird. So because of that, I kind of push myself away from that kind of identity. So I am always like, NO, I am not that Chinese. I am Chinese but I am not THAT Chinese. So that's why I used always to push myself away from Chinese television and Chinese music. Because that's all associated with that.

M15 expressed a different opinion of what FOB means.

> For them [other participants] I would say it's more of on appearances, how they walk, how they talk and notions like that…I would say for me, it's less of the way they talk because for me, I have a large family and one of my dad's aunts is from Australia and I have a couple other relatives that are from England…so basically for me it's not really how they speak because I've already been accustomed to all these different accents. The way when I use the term FOB when talking about other Asians is basically those who don't understand purely if you speak English to them, they don't understand it. It's the people that I can't communicate with that I label as FOBs.

Despite the divergent definitions from youths' perspectives, there is a general consensus among participants that the label 'FOB" is stigmatized, implying a marginalized and unassimilable identity that is deviant from

"Canadian" norms. It becomes a widely accepted and popular discourse among Chinese youth to distinguish each other in terms of how well one is culturally assimilated and they make friends accordingly. As F5, a CBC growing up in a Hong Kong immigrant family puts it,

> I'm not very good friends with many fobs. There are definitely communication issues. My Cantonese is no longer existent…Naturally there's a stigma with fobs being not that cool or I don't know how to describe it. Culturally not with it…Just common pop culture references or like jokes you might make referencing Canadian media, they won't understand. It's kind of an issue of having to explain things in everyday life repeatedly to fobs which I find is kind of an issue.

As well, F2 distances herself from "FOB" and identifies her friends as those who are more Canadianized.

> Most of my friends are also same as me… Canadian born Chinese… I just related more to the Canadian-born because we were a little more Canadianized I guess.

The sense of distance and discrimination within Chinese youth community is further expressed by those labeled as "FOBs." F8 recalled the feeling of loneliness at school due to lack of friends when she first immigrated to Canada at the age of thirteen. She notes that although there were some "Chinese" faces at school, it was very hard for her to relate to them, "they are CBC, I immediately felt the difference between us even when talking to them briefly." Similarly, M9 who came to Canada at the age of seven describes the exclusion he experienced from

the "Asian" group who are more adjusted to Western lifestyles in elementary school.

> My second elementary there tended to be more Asians and I still haven't been able to adjust to the Western lifestyle so I was basically excluded from a lot of the people…Because I believe that it's because they've had more experiences in Canada…They are more adjusted to the lifestyle and I wasn't. The way they behave and think was totally different… So they did everything together and I was sometimes included, sometimes not.

Theoretically, the identity label of "FOB" can be conceptualized as the manifestation that Chinese youth internalize the dominant discourse of cultural and linguistic assimilation and use it to exclude and discriminate their Chinese peers and therefore reinforce a racial hierarchy based on and assessed according to the degree of assimilation. It is a specific form of internalized racism among Chinese youth. According to Pyke and Dang (2003), "internalized racism" refers to racialized subordination that is unconsciously accepted and internalized that justifies the oppression of their group based on a belief in their own inferiority. Those who exemplify internalized racism use various forms of "disidentifiers" such as unaccented language, clothing, attitudes and behaviours to distance themselves from other members in their ethnic group who are viewed as "too ethnic" in order to prove their assimilated status and to construct a positive self-identity. It also involves a process of deflecting racial stigma by denigrating and ridiculing those in their ethnic group with the purpose of seeking acceptance into the dominant group. Such dynamics are also called "defensive othering"

(Schwalbe, et.al. 2000). In denigrating their peers as "FOBs" in terms of their poor or accented English, an "un-Canadian" way of dressing, and lack of familiarity with Canadian popular culture and norms, some Chinese youth unconsciously accepted "the legitimacy of a devalued identity imposed by the dominant group" but at the same time tried to prove that "there are indeed Others to whom this applies, but it does not apply to me" (Schwalbe, et.al., as cited by Pyke & Dang, 2003, p. 152). In using the strategies of defensive othering to resist against racial stereotypes through labeling other Chinese youth as FOBs, some participants unwittingly legitimate and reinforce racist ideology. In studying the identity formation of Korean and Vietnamese immigrant descendants in the US, Pyke & Dang (2003) put forward another theoretical concept related to internalized racism—"intraethnic othering." This refers to the dividing process within racial/ethnic groups along an acculturation continuum characterized by two identity markers "FOB" and "whitewashed" at the extreme ends and bi-cultural in the middle. Similar to their findings, my research on Chinese youth in Alberta also demonstrates the phenomenon of internal discrimination and exclusion within the racialized and ethnic group. The identity label of "FOB" is widely used among Chinese youth to construct social boundaries within the group, both symbolic and interpersonal, to measure each other's acculturation degree, and to monitor and control each other's way of dressing, speaking, and other social behaviors and attitudes based on norms imposed by the dominant group. As dominant identity discourse regulating the cultural and social behaviors of Chinese youth, the term "FOB" not only acts as an othering function within the Chinese group, but also

acts as an assimilating force that pressures racialized minorities to accept norms of the dominant group.

A Racialized Canadian Identity: Discrimination from White peers

As discussed in chapter one (context), Canada is a society with deeply rooted racism in both history and in the present. This is not to say that all the Chinese youth will experience racial discrimination or that all have had unhappy experiences through their contact with White students. Some do have sweet memories of their friends from other ethnic groups. For example, M9 recalled that he made many White female friends in the first elementary school he attended while experiencing exclusion and marginalization from his more assimilated Chinese peers at the second elementary school. This experience and comparison drove him to make more White friends in junior high and identify himself as Canadian in relation to his friends. As he described:

> In junior high, I had most of my friends were Caucasian again. It's probably because of the effects from elementary that I started looking for Caucasian friends. They were pretty cool you know…in junior high, most of my friends were again Caucasian so that's I guess the major turning point in my sense of identity. That's when I started to learn how to be Canadian basically because they were Canadian born and they lived here all their lives and I hung out with them all the time…I learned how to play hockey, lacrosse, a lot of the Canadian sports.

However, the racist ideology and popular discourses is based on the dichotomy between the West and "the rest," occasionally sneaks into my participants' minds,

ruining the rosy or romantic picture of harmonious friendship. As M9 revealed, in trying to be friends with White peers, there was a moment in his life that he felt ashamed of being Chinese.

> Actually to be honest, I have [this feeling of shame]. Sometimes they'd make jokes about foreigners that I didn't really appreciate too much…they tried to impose their views on me so ya they say oh Canada is much better than where I come from. For a short period of time, I did hate myself for being different than other people but eventually I began to realize it's a stupid thing to think about because I mean I can't change that so I just have to deal with what I already have.

In reflecting on the discriminatory experience with both White and the more assimilated Chinese peers, M9 said:

> It is because there's a general stereotype against foreigners that sort of discriminates them and makes them appear less intelligent or inferior than the Western people and basically immigrants, especially younger people, use sort of a psychological defense mechanism to protect themselves against these discriminations so they work extremely hard toward becoming more Canadian and fitting into the society. So people who have managed to do that then turn around and start treating other foreigners as if…as they used to be treated. I think that's one of the cycles that doesn't change.

Similarly, M17, who came to Canada at grade 4, described the discrimination against Chinese youth at school and the peer pressure for them to assimilate into

the dominant culture.

> In some schools, some students will laugh at and bully Chinese students, then make you feel bad. The person who is picked on will try to learn what the White people do and try to eat what they eat, wear what they wear until they feel accepted by the White, then he/she lost his/her own traditional culture. One of my friends has given up his culture that he was loyal to, so every time when I ask him, he said "I am White." But really? He is Chinese.

M9' and M17's reflections illustrate how Chinese youth develop a racialized Canadian identity under the pressure and during the process of trying to "fit in." Obviously, when the dominant White group still holds racist values and beliefs against racialized minorities and treats them as inferior foreigners, any attempt or effort at fitting in with the dominant group may result in self-denial, low self-esteem and a sense of shame about one's ethnic origin and ethnic identity. Carl James (2010) told similar stories about how peer relations based on race affected identity formation of racialized minorities as shown in a participant's narratives.

> As a member of a minority group, I was forced to conform to the existing cultural norms of the white majority group. It wasn't that they forced me directly; it was all the things they said to me and the teasing that I couldn't stand. I dissociated myself from India and any links I might have had with it (p. 107).

In trying to be accepted by the White group, Chinese youth may become conscious of the fact that, no matter how hard they tried, they would never

become a Canadian like their White peers but rather a racialized Canadian. Such identity construction may be associated with distress that manifests through retaliating against one's ethnic heritage or simply ignoring it. It is very likely to end up with disappointment as they realize they still will be treated as a racialized Canadian by their White peers. Such racial consciousness is shown in M17's ironic comment "but really?" when his friend self-claims as "White." As James (1995) notes,

> While they were taking on the norms, values, and patterns of the dominant group in society – and attaining some level of proficiency in utilizing these cultural attributes for effective participation in the public institutions of the society at large – they remained, as many of them so painfully admit, different, minorities, foreigners, outsiders, immigrants, individuals with accents… (Kallen, as cited by James, 1995, p. 114).

It is worthwhile to note that the impact of racism and peer pressure on youth's identification varies among individuals. For some, it pushes them to try to fit in with the dominant group and develop a racialized Canadian identity. For others, it strengthens their ethnic identification as Chinese. For others still, they construct a resistant Chinese identity as discussed above.

Relationships with Teachers

Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging is also affected by their relationships with teachers. More specifically, on the one hand, students may feel empowered by teachers' encouragement, care, and help despite their racialized minority status, thereby forming a positive self-perception and

increasing self-confidence. On the other hand, they may experience ignorance and marginalization by school teachers who treat them unfairly based on racial stereotypes and beliefs, thus leading to their resistant attitudes towards school authorities and a resistant Chinese identity and a low sense of belonging to Canada. Research data with Chinese youth reveal both eventualities.

Negative Influence of Teachers

Racist beliefs as discourse and deeply rooted ideology are also picked up by some well-educated teachers. In addition to his racial experience with White peers as discussed above, M3 also recalled the racist discourses of his biology teacher towards immigrants which contributed to his construction of a resistant Chinese identity.

> I remember this one class about all the herbivores, there is no current war to keep that population down. The population of herbivores will eventually peak and fall. And the teacher will make comment like, while, looks like we were heading to, with all the immigrants coming in…the world will come to the end because all the immigrants come in. People here start losing jobs. Immigrants are having so many kids, now they move here and there, so they have more kids so we will run out of supplies. So the end of world…It was spread out the whole semester…that's the message."

It is worthwhile to note the manner in which this teacher delivers the racist message, as it illustrates how contemporary forms of racism manifest in implicit, subtle, and complex ways. M3 describes it as "once in a while." As he stated: "…but it was very like, just sort of slipped in and then changed to a new topic. So

it wasn't discussed in depth, but every so often, one or two these comments will slip in." As Fleras & Elliot (2007) point out: "racism is so naturalized in history and society that it constantly finds new and complex forms of expression by making itself more invisible" (p. 54). Henry, Tator, Mattis, & Rees (2006) conceptualize the contemporary form of racist ideology in Canada as *democratic racism*. At an individual level, it refers to a paradox of mentality that many Canadians confront: on the one hand, they reject biological racism and embrace democratic values; on the other hand, they continue to hold various stereotyped prejudices against racial and ethnic minorities at a subconscious level (Fleras & Elliot, 2007). Democratic racism is characterized by various discourses such as the discourse of free speech or the discourse of blaming the victim. In addition to Henry, Tator, Mattis, & Rees's (2006) list, I conceptualize the racist discourse made by M3's biology teacher as "the discourse of competition." This sort of discourse, which treats immigrants as foreigners and competitors rather than Canadian citizens and contributors to nation building, is not new. Rather, it is part of a broader discursive reproduction of racist discourses in North American history. For example, early Chinese immigrants were blamed for taking limited job opportunities from White workers during the historical economic downturn in both Canada and the United States (Li, 1998; Pfzelzer, 2007). In this way, Western states use Chinese immigrants as scapegoats to distract public attention from the real economic problems of capitalism. Further, the assumption that immigrants are harmful to Canada or its economy has been proved incorrect. As Li (2003) notes: "[o]n the contrary, most studies indicate that immigrants have

contributed to Canada in a variety of ways, and the weight of evidence suggests that Canada has benefited from immigration" (p. 99). The discourse of competition provides a good example of how a teacher can discursively reproduce racist discourses and beliefs in the classroom. As a result, M3 felt being excluded and discriminated against by both peers and teachers due to his Chinese origin.

Teachers' racist attitudes towards Chinese youth can also be expressed through distance and ignorance. F6 described his mom's unhappy experience at a teacher-parent meeting:

> I had a teacher that discriminated against Chinese people. It's just open hostility. Even to mom, when we go to parent-teacher [meeting], like she would like to ask certain parents for help and she would never ask my mom and she was just open discrimination.

Such embarrassing experiences made F6's mom decide to enroll her in a Catholic school simply because she believed "they are more accepting [of] different ethnicities."

Racial stereotypes such as the idea that Chinese students are not good at sports or that they do not have a good command of English can also be delivered through a hidden curriculum. For example, M18 is Canadian-born university student specializing in physical education. He once chose an athletic high school rather than an academic one due to his great interest in sports. However, he observed how racial stereotypes work in his class:

> … [Chinese] students weren't expected to reach the same level as a lot of the White kids just like for resistance training, they were pushed further

than we were. Like the teacher was basically like their expectation of you wasn't as great.

The stereotyped assumptions about Chinese students were also found in English class. F2, who is Canadian born Chinese, is quite proud of her enrollment in English IB (International Baccalaureate) in senior high as most Chinese students chose to enroll in Science IB. However, at the same time, she also had some concerns about teachers' stereotyped assumptions that were delivered through the hidden curriculum.

> I don't know if they [teachers] did it consciously but I guess they did make a distinction between the different races I guess kind of by expectation. Like they expect the Chinese students to do well but they also expect them to be bad in English and stuff. I'm pretty sure like in social and humanities, I think they kind of come in with the perception that you're going to do bad because you don't really speak the language… I think White teachers are probably the worst for it. They can be a little more prejudiced especially for classes like English and Social and World Literature and everything. They kind of pick on the people that they don't think are as good too. I think a lot of people don't like those kind of classes… the teacher has a lot of control and they can pick on you.

Theoretically, hidden curriculum, according to Wotherspoon (2009) refers to

> The understanding that students develop as a result of the institutional requirements and day-to-day realities they encounter in their schooling. This term typically refers to norms, such as competition, individualism,

> and obedience, as well as a sense of one's place in school and social hierarchies (p. 144).

In other word, it is "the tacit teaching of students of norms and values" (Apple, 2004, p. 13) and the unintended outcomes of the schooling process (McLaren, 2003). As Henry, Tator, Mattis, & Rees (2006) point out "one of the most difficult aspects of racism to isolate and identify is the hidden curriculum" (p. 204).

> It is manifested, for example, in school calendars (in their choice of which holidays are celebrated and which are ignored), concerts and festivals, bulletin-board and hallway displays, the collections in school libraries, school clubs, and the kinds of behaviours tolerated (e.g. racial harassment) (ibid).

For different racialized and ethnic groups, hidden curriculum is manifested in different ways. For example, for African Canadian students, it is argued to be a constant "gaze" they experience at school by White school authorities that treat them as potential trouble makers (Kelly, 1998). In the case of Chinese students, I argue that it is manifested in some teachers' low expectation of students' athletic potential and English language ability. Particularly, through hidden curriculum, teachers deliver implicit messages based on some racial stereotypes such as "you will not do well in English class and/or physical education class" to Chinese students through tone, eye contact, body language, grades, and marking. In this way, Chinese students may feel discouraged, thereby losing interests and motivations to excel in such classes. As a result, they may perform as badly as the teachers expected. This consequence illustrates the concept of self-fulfilling

prophecy, which is the notion that "the assumptions and expectations that teachers and other service workers hold about students can influence students' lives and futures" (Wotherspoon, 2009, p. 53). James (2003) calls for educators to critically examine the reasons why African Canadian students believe sports is the only vehicle through which they can fulfill their educational needs and aspirations (as cited by Henry et al., 2006). In the same logic of reasoning, I call for school teachers to think about why many Chinese students believe they can only excel in science rather than sports and humanities. More importantly, how does the hidden curriculum discussed above reinforce the racial stereotypes and racialized identities which suggest that Chinese youth are only good at science but weak in English and sports?

Positive Influence of Teachers

Despite deeply rooted racist beliefs and stereotypes in Western society, not all the teachers held discriminative attitudes towards racialized and ethnic minorities. Many participants recalled how lucky they were to have helpful and encouraging teachers, especially when they first immigrated. F8 depicts how her junior high teacher protected her from being verbally bullied by a White boy when she first arrived in Canada at the age 13.

> At that time, my English was not good. And I couldn't understand what he [the White boy] said to me, but I can tell his body language, the contempt and discrimination on his facial expression. He always said something negative to me, imitating my accent, which made me feel very unhappy. Until one day, when all the other students were quietly working on the

> assignment while he kept saying something bad to me. I couldn't hold it any more, yelling at him, "shut up!" I know "shut up" is a bad language. After hearing what I said, my teachers did not scold me but said to him, XXX, sit down, don't talk. If other students said the same thing, my teacher will say, "Watch your language."

Although as a newcomer who is still struggling with language barrier, her math teacher noticed her potential and gave her more opportunities to speak in class and to arrange for her to sit with good students and easy-going people for group work. Also, at teacher-parent meetings, knowing her parents' English was not very good, the teacher would speak at a very slow speed, using simple words and praising her abilities. She was even surprised at the teachers' encouraging feedback at the teacher-parent meeting which made her realize that teachers did care about her: "oh, [the] teacher even noticed that strength about me," she said.

M11 came from Mainland China at the age of 14; he recalled that his social science teacher used lunch time to help him. His English teacher patiently explained the material he did not understand. As well, M2 mentioned an English teacher and guidance counselor from high school who helped him to join a social group where his English improved substantially.

> She'd push me to join these things. She had a lot of foresight in that. She's actually teach English too so she gets involved with students' life and she comes over one day and says maybe you should join this group and it turned out to be a really good choice for me. Without guidance as with any teenagers growing up, you can get involved in the wrong group and be

> subjected to social pressure. Ms. XXX knew what kind of group I'd be suitable for. I was also in the multicultural club but then both groups, the stage crew and the multicultural club are sanctioned by the school and they'd have a teacher that would supervise these things too…The teachers nudge you in the right direction because all these groups are student body groups. Of course you can't really speak Chinese there and of course everybody know that you can't speak that good English so they are really forgiving and they are not really prejudice against you. That's really good.

It is worthwhile to note that the above students expressed a strong feeling of gratitude towards their teachers and a sense of belonging to Canada. Evidently, for those first generation new immigrant students with language issues, their sense of belonging to Canada depends on how well they are accepted by teachers and peers at school. The verbal encouragement and substantial help they received from teachers not only supported them going through difficult adaptation, and increased their hope to do well, but it also partially protected them from discrimination and exclusion.

School Knowledge

Interview data reveal that school knowledge plays an important role in affecting Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging, particularly for the first generation. Those who have received part of their education in China found school curriculum was Eurocentric. Most participants agreed there was little about China and the history of Chinese immigrants in social studies class. If there was any information, it was about the earlier Chinese immigrants building

Canadian Pacific Railway and the imposed Chinese Immigration Act of 1885. However, this part of history was not treated as the main learning objective of the class, but only briefly mentioned, "one paragraph or something" F1 recalled and "not in specific details" as M3 noted. Most youth do not even know the Chinese Immigration Act followed thereafter. What's worse, some teachers interpreted the exclusion of Chinese immigrant labourers in terms of their undesirable consumption habit, that is, that they are supposedly too cheap to spend money. As F1 noted:

> I remember my social study teacher told us many Chinese immigrants came to Canada to build Canadian Pacific Railway; they got paid and then became very rich. But they don't spend money. Many Caucasian labourers did not understand why the Chinese like to save and become rich rather than spending money. It did not make sense to them, so they began to discriminate Chinese immigrants because of that since then. (Translated)

This explanation from F1's teacher denies the severe exploitation that Chinese labourers suffered, that is, they were only paid half the wage of White laborers. This racist ideology also trivializes and misplaces the main economic and political reasons for excluding Chinese immigrants with a so-called cultural excuse in terms of their deviant consumption habits. Due to the fact that classrooms are the main place of knowledge construction and distribution, such interpretations reinforces the racial stereotypes of Chinese as being "too cheap," which was also echoed in F11's narratives that were discussed before.

Early Chinese immigrant history is not only misinterpreted but also underrepresented, although Chinese was one of the largest ethnic minority groups in Canada. As F2 (G2) noted,

> I guess in high school it was during History IB it was more like world history but European history so I learned a lot about the German unification or Italian unification and French revolution and that kind of stuff…

M5, a first generation mainland Chinese immigrant student, also noted that

> I think it's pretty weird why they would teach countries like Brazil, Russia and Japan, and Canada, but they would not touch very much on China, and I found this frustrating because I'm from China and born in China, and I wanna learn about that history about China.

Compared with China, Japan is often selected as the representative of Asian countries and treated with preference. Although many Chinese youth do not know the Chinese Immigration Act, they do know about discrimination against Japanese during the WWII. As M3 (G1), put it,

> No [the teacher did not mention Chinese Immigration Act] but she did mention also this one …I can't remember the name…this one Act that was passed to discriminate against the Japanese citizens living in Canada after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. She focused a great deal on how the Japanese including WWI veterans that fought for Canada and all the businessmen, everybody had their home taken away, had their property confiscated and they were not even the slightest threat to the security of Canada. They

were forced to live in small spaces that were basically resembling a prison for doing absolutely nothing but being Japanese.

F6 (G1) made similar comments:

> It [the history of Chinese immigrants] might be mentioned but really brief, like maybe in a sentence or two and it will be done, such as they are done the railway and they got taxed. It wasn't ... they didn't place heavy emphasis on it…No, I can't remember anything. I remember more about Japan, more than the Chinese.

M12's (G2) reflection also supported this argument:

> I don't think they really commented [the history of Chinese immigrants] because it wasn't a focus really. I think they brought it up at one point. Even if I was taught that, I just vaguely remember the image but it wasn't like a topic that we really elaborated on. I think that compared to the Japanese, they taught so much more about the Japanese in WWII…Because I remember I learned at a course…a topic for Japan in grade 2 and it was very extensive. We each had to make our own little Japanese passport like just for fun. Inside we had…every page would be a map of Japan and so I'm sure we did Japan in grade 2 and I think again in grade 7 and then you learn about Japan and WWII again in high school. I'm sure I've learned about it at least three times versus China, maybe once in elementary because I went to a bilingual school.

Many participants noted that there was a chapter about China in grade 6 social studies textbook, however, they were also concerned with the problem of misrepresentation of China from the dominant perspective. As F12 (G1) argued:

> The textbook was written many decades ago. It doesn't have a real and good description of China, very terrible. Because in our class, there are "White", "Black", Chinese. Some Black students said, 'oh, look, China looks so bad, streets are very dirty, their currency is not valuable. Pollution is everywhere. At that time, I told them, China does not look like that because I am from China.

What annoyed her was not only that the school curriculum overwhelmingly focused on the negative side of China such as pollution and over-population, but also that her social studies teacher tended to reinforce the dichotomy between the West and the East by critiquing China as a communist government and guided students to conclude that communism should be replaced by democracy. Being laughed at by her classmates for coming from such a country and feeling humiliated by teacher's remarks, F12 noted: "I don't think they really know what is communism and what is democracy."

These Eurocentric beliefs and White supremacist assumptions were not only manifested in the works of Enlightenment thinkers and in the school textbooks of Canadian history but also continued into the contemporary knowledge construction at Canadian schools. F9 (G1) recalled a frustrating test question in grade 10. Students were asked to explain why Asian people are

enthusiastic about cosmetic surgery such as making eyes bigger and noses longer. The correct answer was "Westernization."

> A lot of Chinese students thought it was racial discrimination because we have a different aesthetic value from Western people. How come they interpret the way we seek beauty as a desire to be Westernized! They thought cosmetic surgery was originated from Western world and then transmitted to Asia.

The underlying assumption that the West is more civilized than the East was also manifested in science class. For example, F9 mentioned that in terms of four great inventions, the Chinese were not admired for their contribution to world civilization for inventions such as gunpowder but rather despised for not bringing the gunpowder to its full use as the West did. As F9 noted, "My math teacher is not racist. But the hidden message he delivered to us [regarding the use of gunpowder] was: *Why the Chinese didn't come up with the idea of doing that*?"

Further, participants also mentioned some provocative political issue that was discussed in the class, such as Tibet and Dalai Lama. As F9 put it:

> Oh, Canadians like him (Dalai Lama) very much because they believe he is a peace-lover. Our social studies teacher claimed in class that Tibet should be independent because China does not deserve the right to get it. What he said made some of us very upset and annoyed. I began to argue with him. The reality in Tibet is not like what the Western media represented and what many Canadians believe because my mom has a friend who is Tibetan… The teacher cannot beat me in the argument so he

> just said, 'oh, well, oh, well'. I also asked him, how about Hawaii? It also asked for independence, then why the US does not agree to let it go? How about Quebec? Why don't you support Quebec independence?

Interview data reveal that school knowledge is not neutral. The choice of curricular materials is influenced by power relations and idea systems in wider society (Wotherspoon, 2009). And school knowledge in turn affects how students perceive and relate to each other and consequently social relations in the long term. The Eurocentric curriculum raises some critical questions for educators and policy makers to think about here: whose perspective does the school curriculum represent? What learning materials are used? What kinds of knowledge are made absent or ignored? The under- and mis-representation of China and the history of Chinese immigrants in Canada as well as some teachers' biased knowledge construction, consciously or unconsciously, illustrates that contemporary forms of racism are more subtle and complex than previous, more explicit iterations. According to Henry, Tator, Mattis, & Rees (2006), racism in the curriculum manifests itself in such subjects such as history, social studies, literature, geography, and science when the Eurocentric curriculum ignores the history and experiences of non-Western cultures. As they note "[t]here is an unwillingness to look beyond the study of British, American, or European history, and multicultural history is often considered as separate and distinct from Canadian history" (p. 202). Racism is also fostered in science classes, particularly as images and contributions of people of color to scientific development are absent (Henry, Tator, Mattis, & Rees, 2006). In addition to their arguments, my research with

Chinese youth also found that the contemporary forms of racism are also delivered through criticizing the country (e.g. China) where Chinese youth or their parents come from, rather than directly targeting the "race" of individuals themselves. Some participants noted that they felt annoyed, embarrassed, and uncomfortable when teachers negatively represented and interpreted China which is their own or their parents' home country. Some also noted that they were laughed and despised by their classmates from other racialized and ethnic groups. As a result, this treatment either raised their racial consciousness and developed or strengthened their identification as Chinese or it pushed them away from being associated with that identity.

However, it is worthwhile to note that participants have different responses to how school knowledge is constructed and delivered. Not every participant cares about whether China or the history of Chinese immigrants are under-or mis-represented in school curriculum or negatively discussed in the class. This was more of generation-based issue. For many first generation participants, particularly recent newcomers who have been educated and socialized in China, they feel frustrated by such biased representation and class discussion. By comparison, many second generation students who are born and educated here indicated that such representation about China or Chinese immigrants is not an issue for them. Similar attitudes of racialized minority youth towards school curriculum are identified by James (2010). In James' interview, a youth who "are proud to have assimilated so successfully" revealed,

> It did not bother me at all that my cultures were not represented in the school curriculum. Never once did I say that I was bothered by their Eurocentric materials. Never once did I think that something was wrong with what I was being taught. I never consciously noticed that every "good" person we talked about was European or Anglo-Saxon. In fact, I was never taught to think critically about my "place" in school. I was learning to be content with being a part of the "norm" (p. 106).

Such findings illustrates the assimilation force is so strong that many second generation youth take the negative characterization of China or Chinese as normal and unproblematic.

Summary

This chapter examined the role of schools in affecting Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging. Four factors related to school are identified, including 1) school and program choice; 2) friends and peers pressure; 3) student-teacher relationships; and 4) school knowledge. Based on interview data, I theorized four types of identities developed among Chinese youth in the school context. These include the academically-based Chinese identity, the resistant Chinese identity, the culturally-based Chinese identity, and the racialized Canadian identity. Particularly, Chinese youth tended to enroll in either academically-focused schools or program (e.g. IB, AC program) or Chinese bilingual programs. As a result of this enrollment, an academically based Chinese identity is developed and a relatively closely-knit social network among Chinese youth is built based on such school and program choices. Such identity and social

networks provides Chinese youth with a buffer zone to resist against racial stereotypes and racial discourses from wider society. By comparison, for those in schools of small town and rural areas, it is more likely for them to experience isolation and marginalization from the dominant group, and consequently, they tend to construct resistant Chinese identities. However, within the Chinese community, a culturally-based identity--the "FOB"--further discriminates and marginalizes those who are not linguistically and culturally assimilated from those who believed themselves to have successfully fitted in with the dominant group. Ironically, for those who hang out with the dominant group, they revealed racist discourse occasionally voiced by their White friends, which in turn raised their consciousness as a racialized and ethnic minority, and contributed to their construction of a racialized Canadian identity. Further, teachers' values and beliefs, as well as a Eurocentric curriculum are another two factors that affected Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging by either pushing them away from their ethnic origin and towards assimilation or arousing their resistance, consequently strengthening their ties with their ethnic origin. In next chapter, I will discuss the role of the media in Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging.

Chapter 6 Media and Identification

The role of media discourses in constructing "common sense" understandings, reinforcing racial stereotypes, manufacturing consent, legitimating dominance, and naturalizing unequal power relations has been widely documented in academia (Kelly, 1998; Cui, 2010; Henry & Tator, 2002; Hier & Greenberg, 2002; Fleras & Kunz, 2001). My research with Chinese youth shows that media plays an important role in affecting their identification and sense of belonging. In this chapter, I discuss how participants perceive media representation of people of Chinese origin and how such media representation affects them in the ways that they perceive who they are or are not. Particularly, five themes of media representation about Chinese are identified which include 1) under-representation of Chinese on Canadian media; 2) a racialized identity; 3) a classed identity; 4) a gendered identity; and 5) a consistent identity of being a threat. And their implications for Chinese youth's identification are discussed.

Media Representation of Chinese

It is worthwhile to note that during the period of my data collection, *Maclean's Magazine*, a very popular Canadian news magazine, published "Too Asian," an article that exemplifies the latest and most controversial media racism against Chinese students in the Canadian context. The article itself aroused national debates and protests, as evidenced by an open letter, entitled "A call to Eliminate Anti-Asian Racism," as signed by graduate students, faculty members, and community organizations, among others – was prepared and sent to *Maclean's* editorial board. Victoria, British Columbia became the first

municipality in Canada to pass a resolution condemning this article as offensive and intolerant (Cleverley, 2010). Given its influence, I asked my participants to comment on the article. Therefore, the four themes of media representation about Chinese discussed in this section include both participants' general impression of the media representation and their specific critique of this "Too Asian" article. In fact, certain themes recurred more than once among participants no matter whether they read the "Too Asian" article or not. This overlap indicates racist stereotypes and discourses can be discursively reproduced and distributed across different genres, forms as well as time and space.

Under-representation of Chinese on Canadian Media

Participants indicated that people of Chinese origin were under-represented in Canadian media. For example, M8 talked about the absence of Chinese reporters in Canadian news programs as well as the absence of Chinese role models represented in media. He noted that he can only access his role model, a well-known Chinese athlete, via the internet:

> … I don't really see Chinese reporters, there are not so many Chinese Canadian broadcaster for one station, there is one, but she doesn't do the local news or national news, but she does entertainment. She is an entertainment reporter. You mainly see Caucasian people. I say local TV and media are not much of the influence, but because the internet, you have more exposure to Chinese culture. One of my role model is a famous Chinese badminton player, Lindan, I wouldn't know him unless I have the internet, local media doesn't help Chinese identify at all.

M2 also mentioned the lack of Chinese people in movies. When Chinese people are represented in this media form, the movies tend to focus on a certain past historical period, rather than being contextualized in contemporary society where he can "see himself."

> Most of the movies in Canada are produced in Hollywood and in the States and most of them don't have a lot of representation of visible minorities in terms of Chinese. You have a lot of African Americans…the only representation that come into films are some stereotypical Japanese tribes or those kind of stuff but I think we've come a long way. Some of the older movies I've seen depict Chinese people as more like the Ch'ing dynasty. That's not happening anymore. The latest I can think of that had some Chinese representation had Jet Li in it. But that was a fictional period piece…the Dragon Emperor so that isn't really depicted as how Chinese people are being represented in the media.

Regarding media representation, Richardson (2007) points out: "it is also important to recognize that textual or journalistic meaning is communicated as much by *absence* as by presence; as much by what is 'missing' or excluded as by what is remembered and present" (p. 93). The absence of Chinese characters in Canadian media reflects and at the same time reinforces an unequal social relationship between the Chinese and the dominant group. More importantly, this lack of representation also delivers the hidden message to Chinese youth that they do not represent or belong to mainstream Canada.

Racial Stereotype: A Racialized Identity

A racialized identity of Chinese that is characterized by slanted eye shapes, speaking English with "funny" accents, being good at math, and knowing Kung Fu was recurrent theme in youth's narratives. As F5 stated:

> What are the stereotypes in the media? That we are good at math, that our eyes are slitty, because they always draw cartoons…all the cartoons have those eyes and then you go, that's an Asian there. They accentuate the shape of our eyes and how good we are at Kung Fu and math.

Similarly M9 noted:

> …if you look at TV shows like Family Guy or the Simpsons, they are obviously going to portray foreigners as with the funny accent and…Like the slanted eyes, choppy way of talking and the hardcore parents that are always trying to get their sons or kids to overachieve.

M7 described how the above racial stereotypes did not exclusively apply to Chinese. Rather, they were used to refer to all Asian people, to indicate a homogenous racialized Asian identity.

> There's a cartoon called Family Guy and there's this one character that's an Asian female, she's Japanese though, she's a news reporter and when they draw her like this [imitating her eye shape]. Then every time she reports, every time on the news story they'll be like and now Siazi Okazowa had a news story. Siazi Okazowa is our Asian reporter. They kind of mention it. I don't know why that's funny I don't think it's funny. Then it goes to her and then she has funny eyes and then she'll kind of

> have a little bit of an accent. I think there's a lot of making fun of Asian accents. I think the Mandarin accent is not as funny. It's okay I think the Cantonese accent it sounds very funny. A lot of people make fun of it. A lot of White people make fun of it…They kind of assume that all Chinese people are the same…some of my friends are like [began to imitating the choppy way of speaking] XXX [his name] why you so late. I'm like dude that's not how Mandarin people talk, that's Cantonese people. Or things like all Chinese people have the same accent and they make fun of it so I guess in media.

Although M7 tried to point out that the specific accents ridiculed by the media and his friends cannot be applied to the whole Chinese group, he did not resist the racial stereotype itself. He did not critically examine why, given that everyone has their own accent when speaking English, 'Chinese' was the one that is often singled out and picked on. He did not question the so-called norm or standard accent for speaking English against which all the other accents are measured. But rather, he tried to prove that "there are indeed Others to whom this applies, but this does not apply to me", given that both his parents and himself speak mandarin (Schwalbe, et.al., as cited by Pyke & Dang, 2003, p. 152). In this sense, his resistance against racial stereotypes is partial in that he to some degree accepted racial stereotypes represented in the media by referring it as the Cantonese accent not Mandarin and used it to construct his identity accordingly. More importantly, the assumption that Chinese speak English with a "different" accent is so widely accepted as common sense that "some people seem to be surprised to hear a

Chinese person without accent. They look at you and they suppose you to have accent, when you don't, they would be like, Wow" as F4 remarked.

Racial Stereotype: A Gendered Identity

The image of masculinity that comes to use from Hollywood movies and Western media is one of an ideal, sexy and charming man. This man is often represented as a big, tall and strong. By comparison, media representations of Asian men tend to reinforce a gendered racial stereotype that Asians are small, short and skinny. Such representations made some Chinese youth suffer from low self-esteem—they were not confident about their body image and felt unable to conform to "the norm" as constructed by the media. As M7 put it,

> I feel like one of the biggest things, before Asians were always short in media or TV, they were always short, whether they were cool or nerdy and smart, they were always short Asians and I felt that was weird. Nowadays there's more tall Asians around and like Yao Ming and stuff they get people know there are tall Asian…like before I always wanted to be taller…I'm 5'9 which is like okay but I always wanted to be taller…

Similarly, M12 mentioned that the main reason he went to the gym was to break this gendered racial stereotype. He noted:

> I think for myself one of the reasons I started going to the gym with friends is because usually when you look at FOBs right they are all so skinny and then you look at that and people always say you never see a big Asian. So stuff like that and then you say I'll say to you that not every

Asian is skinny. Because of that, you start going to the gym more just to break stereotypes.

It can be argued that through media representation, the Chinese identity has been imbued with various racialized and gendered meanings, and thereby associated with an inferior social status, which works to push many Chinese youth away from identification as Chinese. These youth are under great pressure to act "differently." Although participants indicated that their choices were to fight against racial stereotypes, the underlying assumptions behind their behaviors revealed a sense of insecurity and lack of confidence in simply accepting who they are. They are under consistent pressures when hanging out with their friends or in the public sphere to prove they are not stereotyped Chinese, or that they are "different" Chinese. Popular racist stereotypes maintained and (re)produced through media act as an "invisible package" that Chinese youth have to deal with in their daily life.

Racial Stereotype: A Classed Identity

Also, participants talked about a classed identity of Chinese students represented by the "Too Asian" article. More specifically, Asian students were argued to have class advantage through receiving more parents' help than their peers from other ethnic groups. This classed image of "advantaged and spoiled children" also intersects with a "model minority" racial stereotype about Asian, that is, nerdy and lacking in social skills.

The focus on academics was often to the exclusion of social interaction. "The kids were getting 98 per cent but they didn't have other skills," she

> [a guidance counselor] says. "Their parents would come in and write in the résumé letters that they were in clubs. But the kids weren't able to do anything in those clubs because they were academically focused" (Findlay and Köhler 2010, 78).

Such representations, however, did not capture the reality of Chinese youths' lived experiences that they revealed during interviews. For example, M1 is a top student in a very academically competitive high school in Edmonton whose father works in a local Chinese restaurant. He noted that he seldom saw his father, who works night-shift, during the school year nor did his father have either time or ability to provide the academic support *Maclean's* suggested gives Asian students the competitive edge. In fact, research participants revealed that their parents experienced a difficult time in finding professional jobs after immigration due to language barriers, credential devaluation, or lack of Canadian work experience and discrimination. Many of them, therefore, have to work several part-time jobs in the service industry as bus-drivers, dishwashers, waitresses, cooks, and housekeepers, in order to support their families.

Further, in response to another stereotyped image of Asian students as a "nerd" with lack of interest in social or extracurricular activities, F16 argues that: "when I first read this, my feeling was that lot of the comments are stereotypical[ly] Asian, not all of us are like that, like not all of us just study and have no social life at all." Many participants indicated their various involvements in basketball, volleyball, music and band, clubs, student organizations, and church activities as a counter-discourse to the stereotyped "nerd."

The above example illustrates the racial stereotypes about Chinese is not one-dimensional. In other words, they are not just racialized, gendered or classed. Rather, they intersect and interact with various historical and contemporary discourses in a discursive way to produce new racial stereotypes in a more complicated forms. In the above example, Chinese students are represented as class-advantaged but socially deficient.

A Consistent Identity of Being a "Threat"

Historically, Chinese immigrants were viewed as a threat to Western morality and civilization as in the metaphor of the "Yellow Peril" while in contemporary North American society, they are continually and consistently regarded as a threat but with a new meaning, that is, as a competitor for limited resources and as the world leading power. Participants remarked that the achievements of China at the Olympic Games are often represented by the media as threatening in some way. M4 mentioned how such characterizations affect his friends' understanding of China and Chinese immigrants in North America.

> Well they understand Chinese culture as what they watch on TV right? And then they watch South Park. There was an episode about Chinese people and the Olympics and how they are going to take over the world, and they joke around about that a lot…Making fun of the Olympics and how there was a lot of people and all the Chinese immigrants start to coming to North America have a plan of multiplying and taking over America.

Such media discourse demonstrates a revised and contemporary version of the historical discourse of the "Yellow Peril." As Park (2011) argues:

> Unlike the early twentieth century when Asian difference was seen as a threat due to moral and cultural depravity and incompatibility with the west, Asians today are also recognized as representatives of economic wealth and political power", and "also represent a threat to the national and global world order to an extent that other racialized minorities and non-western regions do not (p. 647).

The discourse of threat illustrates that the social identity of Chinese in North America has been discursively and consistently represented as one of a foreigner or invader, rather than as a "real" Canadian citizen, even though they have contributed to Canada's nation building and economic developments for over one hundred years. As discussed in the Chapter five, the social identity of threat and the discourse of invasion are also deployed by some schoolteachers in the classroom. Therefore, such connection and overlap in the different social and cultural domains not only demonstrates how racist discourse could be reproduced and consumed discursively and intersubjectively but it also indicates the difficulty of eradicating racist assumptions against Chinese since it has become a common sense understanding, a hegemonic ideology deeply embedded in the Canadian value and belief system.

More importantly, the social identity of Chinese as a threat was imposed on a new meaning by *Maclean's* "Too Asian" article. It argued that the large proportion of Asian students in specific Canadian universities such as the

University of British Columbia and University of Toronto deprived White Canadian students' of postsecondary educational opportunities. Therefore the authors of the article urge Canadian universities to take the issue of being "Too Asian" seriously by reexamining (as universities in the United States have done), their merit-based admission criteria. As the authors outline, "Ivy League schools have taken the issue of Asian prowess so seriously they've operated with secret quotas for decades to maintain their WASP credentials" (p. 81). More specifically, the article quotes a white mother who complains that the reason her son did not get a space in university is because Asian students and immigrants in Canada are occupying university spots. During the interview, participants criticized the "Too Asian" representation of Chinese students as competitors that grab the postsecondary educational opportunities from their White peers. For example, M19 argued that such representation did not reflect the reality that many first generation Chinese students were actually the disadvantaged ones due to language barriers during the competition for post-secondary access. As he noted:

> One thing they gotta keep in mind is that a lot of Chinese people, before they come to Canada, they didn't even know a word in English, ok. Like me, when I first came, I was standing in front of McDonald's, and I was trying to order something, and I look at the picture and I didn't know a word in English. How did I make it to university at the same time? Because I spent triple amount of time in studying, in looking through the dictionary, until this got ripped. I spent triple amount of time learning a language that I'm not even familiar with. And I got into university and got

> a higher mark than you…And you guys, ok, English is your first language. How come you don't get in, got a lower mark? you know, they are denying your effort.

Similarly, F16 did not agree with the "Too Asian?" article's attempts to interpret entrance into post-secondary institutions along racial lines. As he said: "It's just racist. Um, I think Asian students do work hard, like the majority of the people I know they work hard. But I also have Caucasian friends who also work really, really hard. And so I think it's a fair game, it doesn't matter if you're White or not White."

By constructing Chinese students as competitors, as a threat to the well-being of the White Canadians, media discourses reinforce the dichotomy of Us/Them. Racialized and ethnic minorities are therefore consistently "Othered" and excluded from the "imagined community" of real Canadians (Anderson, 1983). Such division and exclusion based on the racial lines also denies many other factors that contribute to unequal access to educational opportunities, such as gender, class, and language barriers.

The Implication of Media Representation for Identification and Sense of Belonging

What are the implications of media representation for Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging? Based on the interview data, I made three observations. First, the negative media presentation of China or Chinese immigrant drives some youth away from identification with their parents' ethnic origin. The Canadian media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympics is such a case

in point. The achievements of Chinese athletics were explained by Canadian media with bitter sarcasm as a result of pathological and unethical training, which in turn affects some youth's opinion about China. As shown in F3's remarks:

> I don't think I really like the Chinese in terms of their strong emphasis on being the best on top of the world and you know in Olympics they choose the best athletes. They start training them from six or four years old or something, stuff like that or for example that half pipe snowboarder yesterday, the first one to run, he was 16 or something and he only goes in it because he had gymnastics or martial arts training and he's just been trained to do well in the Olympics. I have a feeling that those kinds of values, being wanted to be seen as number one for example and then well obviously there's nothing wrong with that but going to the extent of taking…stripping away a child's childhood and making them learn skills that they may or may not actually personally enjoy as much and then making them represent the country, I don't think those are good values to bring up your children on.

When asked where she learned this, F3 replied: "the news on the Olympic channel, they'll tell you the background of most of the athletes. I know from gymnastics, a lot of them are really, really young." Not surprisingly, F3 noted that she did not like to be identified as Chinese and that she has been trying to distance herself from that identity. Similarly, F6 revealed negative media representation of China and Chinese made herself feel ashamed of being Chinese: "Well, it made me want to not to be associated with it."

Second, racial stereotypes in the media contributed to the development of a racial consciousness among Chinese youth and consequently constrained their social behaviours in the public space and mobilized their desires as well as identity construction accordingly. By exaggerating and making fun of their physical features such as slanted eyes, short, skinny figures and English accent, Chinese youth became aware of how they were aberrant from the "norms" and physically and culturally deficit. Rather than feeling confident and comfortable with who they were, they desired to change into what an ideal Canadian looks like based on media constructions in order to fit into the "norm." Therefore, they want to be "taller" and "bigger and stronger." They go to gyms with the desire to be different from the stereotypes. As well, as mentioned in the school chapter, F11 described how racial stereotypes (e.g. that they study a lot, that they are nerds, and that they are "cheap" in their spending habits) framed her social behaviors in the public. As she said:

> I try to stay away from them… I will try not to prejudge that aspect for me in front of public, like if I spend more money than I should, or, I'll try not to read or study in front of people, or people will think I'm a nerd.

Different from the first group I discussed in this section who simply "hate" to be Chinese or to be identified as such, this group tries to prove they are not the stereotyped Chinese. Particularly for the second group, they have a partial understanding that media representation did not always reflect the truth or the reality but sometimes are do misleading and biased. However, their resistance against racial stereotypes is still based on their partial acceptance of what the

"norm" is, rather than interrogating the constructed norm itself. In other words, they believe racial stereotypes may apply to some Chinese but not to themselves. On some occasions, they still used the racialized, gendered, and classed identities to frame their identity construction in terms of what they are or are not.

Third, under-representation and mis-presentation of Chinese in the media made some Chinese youth realize that they do not belong to the Canadian "imagined community" (Anderson, 1983). No matter how they perceive themselves, they are consistently considered by the mainstream society as racialized and ethnic minorities, foreigners and a threat to the well-being of the dominant White Canadians. Under-representation meant that their voices were not represented and that potential role models of Chinese origin absent. As well, the media's negative representation and stereotypes strengthened their sense of being different, inferior, and excluded. For some, it contributed to the development of a resistant Chinese identity. M19 revealed that the social identity of Chinese students as being threat and as competitors constructed in the "Too Asian" article made him feel upset and created a sense of unfairness within him, while it increased his awareness of his connection with the Chinese identity.

Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the role of media in affecting the identification and sense of belonging among Chinese youth. Particularly, I examined four themes of media representation about Chinese that were identified by my participants, including the theme of under-representation of Chinese people, as well as the racialized, gendered, and classed identities based on stereotypes.

Although I discussed each of these identities separately, they are clearly interconnected and interrelated with one another in the sense that the identity label of Chinese is more than a racialized identity, but one that is also gendered and classed. They were rooted in the historical discourses about Chinese and discursively reproduced a more complicated and heterogeneous Chinese identity in contemporary society. Further, I also discussed the implication of media representations for Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging by making three arguments. First, the negative media presentation of China or Chinese immigrant drives some youth away from identification with their parents' ethnic origin. Second, racial stereotypes in the media increase the racial consciousness of Chinese, constrain their social behaviours and mobilize their desires and identity construction. More specifically, I argue that Chinese youth use media stereotypes as a frame of reference in constructing who they are or they are not. Third, under-representation and mis-presentation of Chinese in the media decreased Chinese youth's sense of belonging to Canada and increased the possibility that they would develop a resistant Chinese identity.

In the next two chapters, I discuss two substantive identity models constructed in this study. Each of these models respectively addresses the research questions raised at the beginning of this research: First, *How do Chinese Canadian youth construct identities and negotiate belonging within a Canadian multicultural state?* And second, *What are the factors that contribute to their identification and sense of belonging?*

Chapter 7 Identity Model I: Points of References that Chinese Youth Draw on in Their Identification and Sense of Belonging

In this chapter, I discuss the first research question, that is, *How do Chinese Canadian youth construct identities and negotiate belonging within a Canadian multicultural state?* To address this question, I construct an identity model that explains the different points of references that Chinese youth draw on in negotiating their identification and sense of belonging.

The Identity Model I

Identity as an umbrella term reflects a numbers of aspects of an individual's lived experiences based on race, ethnicity, gender, class and sexual orientation etc. My study primarily focuses on how Chinese youth construct racial and ethnic identities and negotiate belonging in a Canadian multicultural state. Interview data show that Chinese youth have different understandings of what "Canadian" or "Chinese" means. As Hall (2011) argues: "the boundaries of difference are continually repositioned in relation to different points of reference" and different questions at different time and space (p. 227). In this sense, I developed an Identity Model: "The Points of References that Chinese Youth Draw on in their Identification" (Figure 1) in an attempt to address the "how" question. In this chart, I highlight ten points of reference that Chinese youth employed in negotiating their racial and ethnic identities. Some of these points of reference have been discussed in the three data chapters, others require more explanation. For these latter points of reference, I will provide more data to substantiate my arguments.

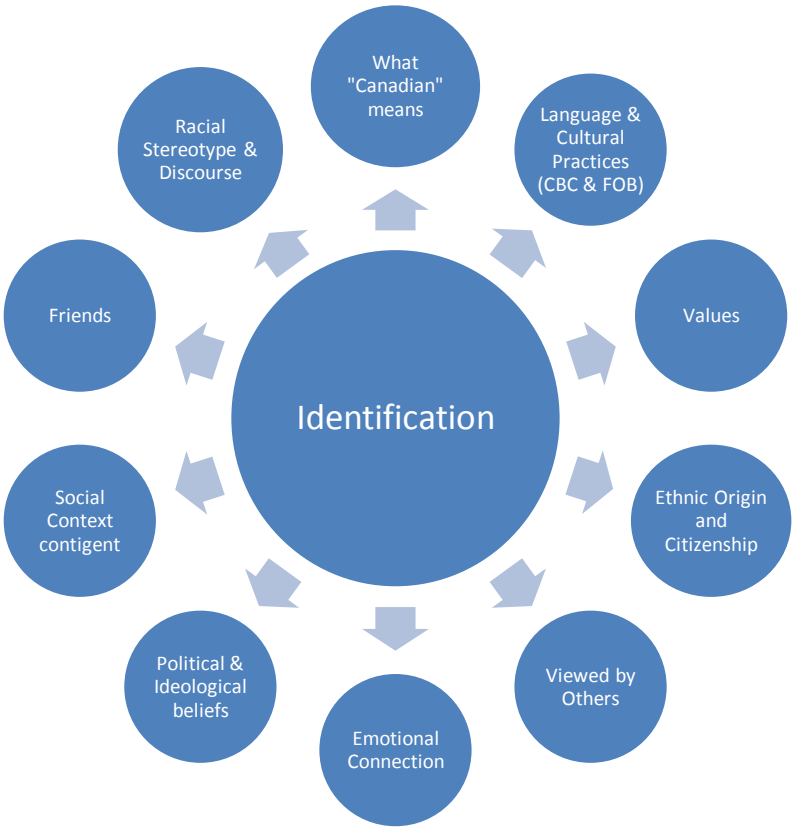

Figure 1The Identity Model I: The Points of References that Chinese Youth Draw on in their Identification

First, whether Chinese youth are self-identified as Canadian or not is based on their different understandings of what "Canadian" means. For some, Canadian implicitly refers to White people, while for others, everyone is Canadian, an assumption based on multicultural ideology and discourse. For example, M3 argues that:

> I still think I'm Chinese. It's basically the inability to assimilate…because Canadian you think of White people and so when Chinese is Canadian, you have Chinese Canadian, it's not just saying Canadian so the extra

> description in a way it segregates from everybody becoming one type of Canadian

By contrast, M9 noted:

> I'm a foreigner. I'm an immigrant; even Caucasian people are immigrants because this land was originally owned by Aboriginals. I like how Canada is a multicultural country. It really makes it different from other countries in the sense that we are somewhat more accepting of foreign culture rather than what's exactly Canadian because there isn't really something that's truly Canadian...Ya Canadian identity is just a mixed…

Second, as discussed in the data chapters, one's language and cultural practices were often viewed as important markers among Chinese youth in constructing boundaries between those who were culturally and linguistically assimilated and those were not. For those who self-identified as "Canadian", particularly the second generation "CBCs" (Canadian born Chinese), they often use the culturally based identity label of "FOB" (Fresh off the boat) to refer to those newcomers who did not have a good command of English and who were not familiar with the dominant cultural terms and norms. The identity of "FOB" usually has a derogatory meaning, suggesting a lower status in the social hierarchy.

Third, even though some Chinese youth identify themselves as Canadian, they still feel that they are different from their White Canadian peers, and even from their more "whitewashed" siblings, in terms of certain values they perceive

as “Chinese”, such as attitudes towards education and consumption habits. In addition to the relevant data discussed in the section of “Youth perception of cultural values” in the family chapter, I will highlight another two examples here. The first example shows the subtle identification difference among siblings within the same family, even though they were all Canadian born and self-identify as Canadian. For example, M7, a CBC, distinguished himself from his more “whitewashed” younger sister, who he described as more self-centered, more wasteful, and having less concern for his parents than he did.

> I grew up being more Asian because when I was a child, my family wasn’t as well off. There were things a lot I couldn’t have and I had to think of my parents more, be more obedient and not waste time, not go party as much with my friends. Whereas my sister, she’s always grown up being a little better off. She’s pretty much had everything she wants. She gets to go out watch movies with her friends more often…before going to watch a movie was a big deal. It’s $8, $9 to watch a movie. Even if my parents said it was okay to go, I’d feel guilty because we could just watch a movie at home. Just borrow a movie for $4 and watch it at home. So I feel bad. And then my sister every couple weeks, I’m going to watch a movie and nowadays it’s like $12 to watch a movie. She’ll just go without thinking. As a kid, I always really liked granola bars. I felt it was a really good snack, it was cool to have granola bars. They are so expensive because they are just little things and they are $4 for a box, I can never have that. My sister, she’s always had that. She doesn’t think about it, it’s just a

> granola bar it's $0.99. That's different in terms of what we've had and so then my sister, she's always…*I grew up being a little more Chinese than she is. She's grown up a little more White, a little more well off, a little more spoiled than I was* (emphasized by the author).

M7 reflected on his mediating role between his younger sister and his parents:

> A lot of the time…She just thinks about herself. I have to think about my parents too. So in a lot of ways, I can kind of show her how mom or dad are thinking, why they think a certain way, it's because they are Chinese and I can kind of see both sides whereas her, she mostly just sees her White side. When my parents try to explain the Chinese side, she doesn't really get it.

Similarly, M15 also noted the different values he and younger sister held towards consumption:

> Like just looking at my sister and myself, my sister is a lot more indoctrinated in Western trends and stuff. As soon as the iPod touch came out she said I want one, I want one…for me when I was brought up, we didn't really have that disposable income so I would kind of make my own toys and stuff. I didn't really have the compulsive desire to get stuff because I'd be like that's nice but I really can't afford it and stuff like that. Didn't have that desire.

Further, even though M7 believed he was more Chinese than his younger sister, he tried to distinguish himself from those Chinese newcomers who are more classed advantaged in terms of their different values towards education. More

specifically, M7 distinguished two Chinese communities in Edmonton: one is the group of professional immigrants who came to Canada based on their knowledge and skills while the other because of their financial capital. As he put it:

> It's really hard for me to relate with some of the FOBs nowadays. Like for me I'm here in Canada because my parents worked hard and came here they want me to work hard. That's how a lot of my Chinese friends are because they are the same age as me. But nowadays a lot of FOBs they come to Canada not because their parents are really smart, it's because they are rich and they have money to come out. Some of them they are just so spoiled. They come out here, they don't study properly. They pay for class. They don't show up for class, they just go shopping, they just play and stuff and they waste their parents' money but it's okay because they are rich. So on that level it's kind of hard to connect. It's just like they are rich kids who are here to party. I'm a kid who is here from a Chinese background too *but I have different values and beliefs than they do* (emphasized by the author).

The two kinds of examples above illustrate how racial and ethnic identification among Chinese youth also interacts with one's socioeconomic backgrounds. The specific values youth interpreted as Chinese or Canadian are also classed values and may be gendered as well (e.g. the perceived value difference between brothers and their younger sisters). No matter what the nature of the values themselves, the interview data show that participants use values as a point of reference in making subtle distinctions in their identity constructions.

Fourth, some participants view their identification in a more fixed and practical way. For them, it is an objective fact in terms of one's ethnic origin and citizenship status, over which they had no choice. It is also based on the social context where they live, the food they eat, and what they do. They note that they are more concerned with some practical issues in daily life rather than the questions of being Canadian or Chinese. As M9 noted:

> I like to think of it in a more practical sense. I mean I'm a Canadian citizen, I'm living in Canada so I have to live in a way that any other Canadian does and I'm taking food resources, stuff from Canada, I'm living here whereas I don't have any physical association with China… my family friends are Chinese and all of that and a lot of my friends now are Chinese but I don't participate in any major Chinese events that go on in Canada. I'm still admittedly a Chinese by origin but by citizenship I'm Canadian. I don't have citizenship in China so there's no clear cut way to identify myself.

He noted that identity issues are no longer a matter of his concern. "I don't really have a preference or anything but depending on who looks at me, they would either think of me either as Canadian or Chinese Canadian or even Chinese."

Similarly, M17 who came to Canada in grade 4, argued that he cared more about "practical and meaningful" things in his life--not the issue of identity. He preferred to take a more objective attitude towards it: "I'm Chinese on the inside, but I hold the Canadian passport," he noted. For him, there were no conflicts between these two, it is "just that easy", he emphasized.

Fifth, the relatively "fixed" and objective dimension of identification is also manifested in participants' argument that one's identity is not based on how one perceives oneself but how one is viewed by others. As M7 argued:

> I don't think I'm Canadian either because I think that appearance is really, really important. No matter what, if a White person sees me and I don't speak, they wouldn't be able to tell if I'm CBC or a person who just came from China. If I look at a Chinese person, I can say that person is a fob. He probably just came from China. This person is probably a CBC, the way we act and the way we dress and stuff like that. But to a Western person like a real Canadian, they see us, they can't tell. I think that contributes to the fact that I can't consider myself fully Canadian either.

Sixth, participants also used their emotional connection with China and/or Canada as a point of reference in their negotiation of identities and sense of belonging. The Olympics games were most often mentioned and employed in such connections. As M7 described:

> When I watched the opening ceremonies for the Beijing Olympics, my parents were like crying because they were so proud of their country. I don't feel the same way. I don't know. It's nice, oh China's good. I feel connected…also in the Olympics…when the women's volleyball team won, my parents started crying I was just like I was really happy for them too but I don't feel emotionally attached.

By comparison, he found the 2010 Winter Olympics held in Vancouver initiated for the first time his emotional connection with Canada. As a result, he believed he identified more as a Canadian than Chinese.

> One was the opening ceremonies in the Olympics in Vancouver. I think that starting with the Olympics I started to feel Canadian pride for the first time. I felt like I will cheer for the Canadian team. I felt emotionally very happy whereas before with the Chinese team I would feel nice China got another medal but I would never feel attached to them on an emotional level. But now, even though I still consider myself Chinese a lot more traditional Chinese than a lot of my other friends, I still think like watching the Olympics, watching Canada win, it gives me kind of an emotional attachment. So I guess I would probably say I'm more Canadian a little bit now.

For M15, he preferred to identify himself as a global citizen, because he could not find an emotional connection with either country.

> I guess pretty much a global citizen. I don't feel a true Canadian or true Chinese. I remember when we went to China and my uncle was all gung ho on the Olympics are in China. He sounded all prideful and everything being Chinese but I didn't really feel anything. Good for that. I don't really feel Canadian either in a sense… Say in the winter Olympics, Canada won a lot of medals, I'm like yay I guess…In my opinion, Canadian culture is just a mix of everything so I don't really feel Canadian per se.

Seventh, different political and ideological perspectives further distinguished people even with the same general identification such as Canadian or Chinese Canadian. For example, although M2 emphasized that he was Canadian, he revealed he held different political views towards China compared with his White colleagues. Therefore, he self-identified as "a Canadian but with a different perspective."

> When I hear news that portrays China unfavorably I feel pretty bad because I feel the culture…I don't know the news outlets they just want to sell the news, create a sense of urgency and whatnot. Sometimes China becomes the target unlucky just in a bad place. I still feel that way and obviously none of my friends really share that but through my efforts I can come to terms with some of that too and they realize that some of the news outlets maybe have their own agenda too. I feel bad for China every time that happens.

When media discussed the rise of China in international society, he still felt proud of being a person of Chinese origin whereas his colleagues just felt threatened. As he put it, "I like to think of me as a Canadian but with a different perspective because I had half my life so far in China."

M13, who came from Taiwan at the age of seven, provides another example. He described that if someone asked him: "Are you Chinese?" He would respond differently depending on who asked him. If a White person asked him this question, he would say "yes" whereas if the person looked Chinese, or Taiwanese,

or Korean, he would say, "I came from Taiwan." He would like to identify himself as a Canadian Taiwanese, rather than Canadian Chinese. Such identification is based on the fact that he held different political perspectives in terms of Taiwan's sovereignty. For him, they are two countries with different ideologies.

> Taiwan is totally different from Mainland China. Mainland China is still a communist country whereas Taiwan is democratic one. Their difference is just like South Korea and North Korea. Or the United States and Canada, although in both countries people speak English. But they are two different countries.

Eighth, how Chinese youth identify themselves is not fixed but contingent on specific social contexts. Many youth indicated that in Canada, they would like to emphasize their Chinese origin whereas when they go abroad, they would like to say "I am Canadian." As M7 noted,

> When I go back [to China], I find it a little bit awkward because here in Canada, I considered myself to be Chinese. People say, what are you? I don't say in Canada I don't say I'm Canadian. I say I'm Chinese. But if I go to China they say oh where are you from? I won't say XXX [his father's hometown] I'll say I'm from Canada. It's kind of like when you're in Canada, you say you're Chinese. When you're in China you say you're Canadian so that's kind of an identity thing for Asian Canadians it's kind of hard.

Ninth, many participants based their identity negotiation on which friendship groups they are involved with. For example, M9 noted that in junior high where his friends were mainly Whites, he once "hated" himself for being different from other people. However, after being accepted into Old Scona which has a predominantly "Asian" student population, his group of friends and his identification changed accordingly. As he put it:

> Because I had more Caucasian friends, I would say I used to identify myself as purely Canadian but I've had different types of friends throughout life so now I don't really know.

Finally, participants revealed that their identity construction was based on whether they thought they are similar or different from racial stereotypes about Chinese. For M12, it is the different lifestyles that distinguish him from a "typical" Chinese. He reflected on a scenario in his part-time job where a bunch of customers asked him of his identity.

> …before when they asked me that question I said Chinese just because I have a Chinese background and now when they ask me that question, I think about it a lot more deeply. What I do in my spare time, what I do, what I think, what I believe in and like basically the lifestyle you live.

He further explained why he identified himself as Canadian based on such lifestyle difference, particularly the type of exercises he chose in the gym (e.g. running).

> Well there isn't too big of a difference: sleep, wake up, eat breakfast, go to class and then one small thing is maybe going to the gym. When you go to the gym sometimes, there aren't many Chinese people and just say the Butterdome, usually if you see Chinese people there, they are playing basketball or playing badminton. There aren't that many people just running…I think different choices of sports sometimes too. That's a really small difference. Other than that too that's about it.

Obviously, for M12, running is not a typical sport for "Asians." It is rather a "Canadian" one. By engaging in the "Canadian" sport, he felt his lifestyle was different from the racial stereotypes about Chinese (e.g. Chinese usually play basketball or badminton), and thus, so was his identity. In a similar vein, F3 noted that it was hard for her to identify as Chinese because a "typical" Chinese student usually chooses science as a specialization whereas she did not. Being annoyed at people's assumption that she is majoring in science, she refused to identify with her Chinese origin but instead emphasized that she was Canadian.

Discussion and Implications of the Identity Model I

The identity model that I present above has significant theoretical and policy implications. Literature reviews demonstrate that existing approaches (Isajiw, 1990; Driedger, 1996) tend to study ethnic and national identity in a simplistic, quantitative way, in that researchers are interested in finding out how many racialized and ethnic minority children are self-identified as Canadian or otherwise. They then use those findings to evaluate children's attachment and loyalty to Canada. Particularly, claims of Canadian identity among participants

were interpreted as being a strong indicator of their social belonging to Canada, whereas participants' ethnic identification were superficially understood as a link to and maintenance of their ethnic culture. Although a number of researchers argue that youth's ethno-cultural identifications do not undercut or diminish their national identity and attachment to Canada (Jedwab 2008; Wilkinson 2008; Jurva and Jaya 2008), what remained unchallenged are two incorrect assumptions. One is that participants share a homogenous definition of what national and ethnic identity mean. Interview data from Chinese Canadian youth revealed that although participants may self-identify as Canadian or Chinese, they have divergent assumptions of what it means to be Canadian or Chinese, thereby drawing on different reference points in negotiating their identities and sense of belonging. The other misconception held by many researchers is that one's Canadian identity claims are equivalent to one's sense of belonging to Canada (Jedwab, 2003, 2008; Kalbach & Kalbach, 1999; Wilkinson, 2008). In other words, one's national identity and sense of belonging are regarded as the same thing, regardless of one's ethnic identity claim. However, my interview data reveal that participants may interpret one's identity simply as a matter of ethnic origin or citizenship which has nothing to do with emotional attachment. This is particular true in M14's argument:

> Like if anybody stepped up to me now and asked me oh what ethic background are you from? It's unlikely I would say Canadian because you kind of assume that being in Canada that you'd be Canadian so I say Chinese but I mean when somebody asks you your ethnic background or

> whatever, I don't really do a lot of Chinese things and the customs have kind of dropped off through the generations … but [my connection with China], I think it's more symbolic. I don't really associate with China. I don't go and check everything. Like when something happens in the news and you hear it's related to China, it does kind of pique my interest because I'm Chinese right? but I don't feel there's a super strong connection. I don't associate all the time with it … I'd say like I would tell people I'm Chinese Canadian but I would feel more strongly for Canada.

Therefore, it is essential to examine the points of references that Chinese youth use in their identity claims.

Further, the interview data show that the identities Chinese youth construct are not fixed entities. Rather, they are subject to change and are contingent upon context. In this sense, it is a matter of becoming rather than being (Hall, 1990, 1996). However, it is not in the sense of a "movable feast" as argued by Hall (1990, p. 277), because participants have a clear understanding that no matter how they perceive themselves, whether Canadian or not, others, may still regard them as "Chinese" based on their physical features. And as the interview data indicate, the term "Chinese" is more than a neutral identity label but rather imbued with various stereotypes and racial meanings. In this sense, Chinese youth's identity construction reflects and at the same time is framed by the unequal power relations between the dominant group and the racialized and ethnic minorities. This unequal power relation acts as a pulling force that moves Chinese youth towards linguistic and cultural assimilation into the dominant group. It also acts as

a dividing force within the Chinese youth community that makes distinctions between those who are assimilated and those who are not, as manifested by the identity label of "FOB." Not surprisingly, "FOB" indicates an inferior social status within the Chinese youth group. As Hall (1990) argues, "the past [historical racism] continues to speak to us" (p. 225).

It is interesting to note that the second generation seems to have a sharper awareness of the racial meanings associated with the identity label of "Chinese" than the first generation. What I found through the interview data is a general trend showing that it is more likely for first generation Chinese youth to identify as Chinese and the second generation as Canadian when they first respond to an identity question. However, when being probed further, many of the second generation changed their answers and indicate they fall in between (Chinese Canadian or Canadian Chinese). This is because for first generation newcomers, race is relatively a new concept for them. In China they are not viewed as racialized and ethnic minorities, and they therefore did not develop a strong racial consciousness. For many of them, they have a strong sense of pride of being Chinese as a consequence of their education and socialization in China. Thus, first generation Chinese are more likely to self-identify as Chinese rather than Canadian. By comparison, for second generation youth who have been exposed to various racial stereotypes and discourses since childhood, they developed a much deeper understanding of the racial meaning behind the identity label of "Chinese", and are therefore more cautious in assuming that identity during interviews. Many participants first claimed they were Canadian, then acknowledged later they were

also Chinese Canadian or Canadian with a different perspective based on their values, the friends they made, their political beliefs, and so on.

More importantly, my interview data reveal the blurred boundaries between racial and ethnic identity in the case of Chinese youth. In examining identity formation of second generation immigrants from the Caribbean, Waters (1996, 2006) found that 42 percent chose a racial identity as Black American while 30 percent adopted a very strong ethnic identity which reflected their parents' national origins such as Jamaican, or Haitian, or Trinidadian. The remaining 28 percent identified as immigrants, a category that does not resonate with American racial and ethnic categories. Particularly, for the second group, they devised various ways to consciously accentuate their ethnic identity in order to distinguish themselves from Black Americans. Water's research draws attention to the subtle identity differences within a racialized group, usually viewed as just Black Americans. For the Chinese Canadian youth in my research, none of them self-identified as "Asian," although many of them do use this term to describe the student population in the school they attended. However, there were also few of them that self-identified as "Chinese." Rather, they preferred to label themselves as "Canadian," "Chinese Canadian," or "CBC" (Canadian born Chinese). This is mainly because the ethnic identity of "Chinese" is not a neutral term, regarded purely in an ethnic sense as "French" or "British" is. It is associated with various racial stereotypes and meanings. In this sense, the label of "Chinese" is both a racialized and ethnic identity. Notably, when the boundary between ethnic and racial identities is blurred, a new identity label of "FOB" has

been widely used to make further distinctions within the Chinese youth group. This finding indicates that these 'distinctions within' are a common phenomenon across racialized and ethnic groups, which is consciously maintained by its group members to signify different social statuses. However, its exact content and form varies among different groups. Regarding Chinese youth, such distinctions within the group can be viewed as an internalized form of the external social influences that unconsciously and hegemonically regulate the thoughts and behaviors of racialized and ethnic groups based on the norms and standards of the dominant group.

In the next chapter, I address the second research question and focus my discussion on the Identity Model II that explains the factors that contribute to Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging.

Chapter 8: Identity Model II: Factors that Contribute to Chinese Youth's Identification and Sense of Belonging

In this chapter, I discuss the second research question, *What are the factors that contribute to Chinese Youth's identification and sense of belonging?* Based on the three data chapters (Chapter 4-6), I constructed Identity Model II which consists of two figures (Figure 2 & 3) as shown in this chapter. One figure provides a structural picture of the factors that contribute to Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging (i.e. Figure 2) and the other highlights in detail those influential factors within family, school and media (i.e. Figure 3).

The Identity Model II: A Structural Picture

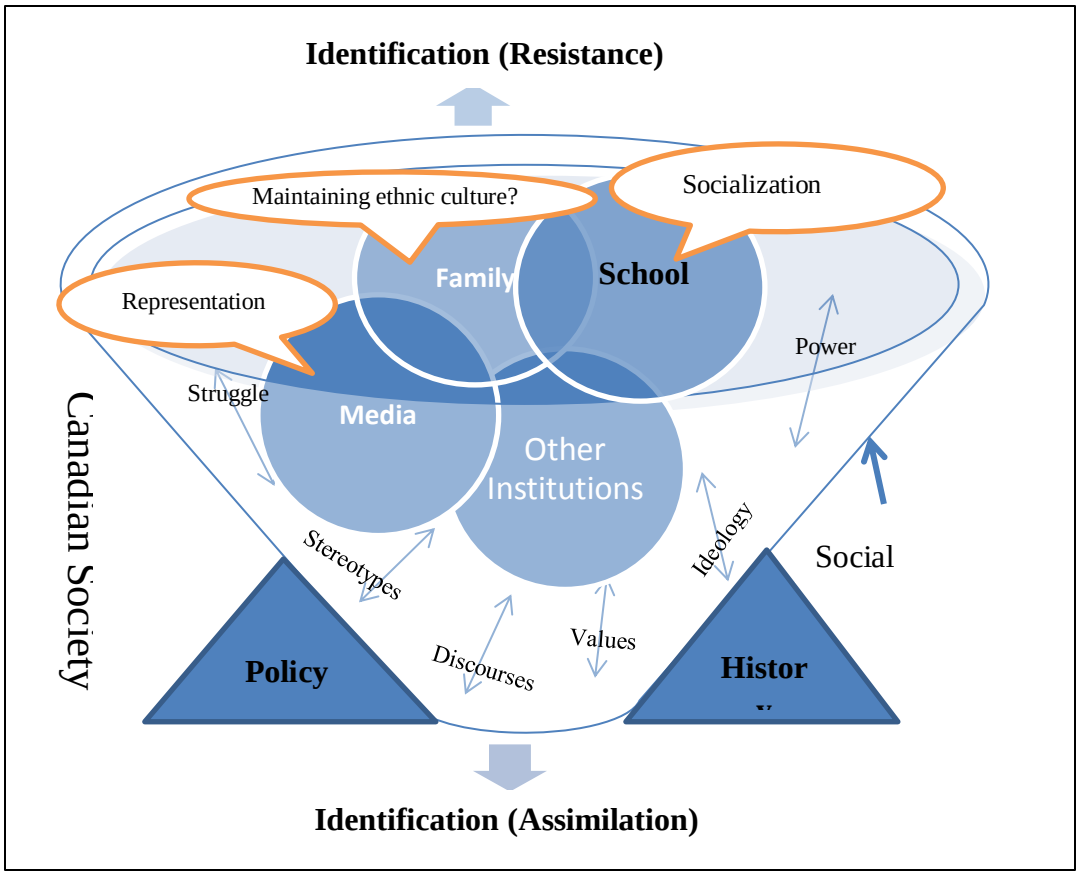

Figure 2 A Structural Picture of the Factors that Contribute to Chinese Youth's Identification and Sense of Belonging

Figure 2, as shown above, provides a structural picture of the factors that affect Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging at societal and institutional levels. Chinese youth's identity construction cannot be understood in individual terms, but rather is affected by the social context of the Canadian state. As discussed in Chapter One, historically, Canada is a racial state where Chinese immigrants were economically exploited as cheap labourers, were politically disenfranchised and deprived of various citizenship rights and culturally viewed as undesirable and inferior based on Eurocentric cultural standards. Through policies and laws such as the Chinese Immigration Act of 1885 and Chinese Immigration Act of 1923, the Canadian government sanctioned and gave legitimacy to their subordinated position in the social hierarchy, which in turn affected how the Chinese were viewed in the collective consciousness of the Canadian imaginary. Since then, the social identity of "Chinese" has been by no means a neutral ethnic label, but rather one that is imbued with various racial stereotypes and racial meanings. Despite the implementation of Canadian multiculturalism policy in the 1970s, racist discourses did not disappear but have been discursively reproduced and distributed in major social institutions such as school and media. In other words, the identity label of "Chinese" still assumes a racial meaning, and thus has not received equal social status with White Canadians. Further, Canadian multiculturalism policy has been widely critiqued for not changing the subordinated position of racialized and ethnic groups but instead only granting a symbolic recognition of different cultures in an

essentialized and reified sense. More importantly, by separating language rights from cultural rights, multiculturalism legitimates the official status of English and French language which renders the maintenance of ethnic heritage a difficult and unrealistic task. My research shows that Chinese youth are under strong linguistic and cultural pressures to assimilate through the socialization processes in Canada. It is therefore difficult for them to maintain so-called Chinese language and culture under the multiculturalism policy within a bilingual framework. In this sense, history and policy are two major factors or forces that buttress the funnel of assimilation in terms of the identification of Chinese youth. Further, through school socialization, media representation and so-called ethnic heritage maintenance within the family, Chinese youth are subjected to various discourses, values, ideologies, and stereotypes; therefore their identification formation and belonging negotiation are characteristic of power struggles, conflicts, and contradictions. Power dynamics such as domination and subordination, assimilation and resistance are embedded in each domain of socialization (e.g. school, family, and media) and manifested discursively in discourses, ideologies, values etc. In other words, racial stereotype may push Chinese youth to identify with the dominant group as Canadian and refuse their Chinese identity, or on the contrary, it may strengthen their Chinese identity as a result of exclusion from the dominant group. Therefore, I use double sided arrow to emphasize the kind of contradiction, struggle and power dynamics in the discursive dimension of Chinese youth's identification. In this sense, power struggles may lead to at least two major trends of identification, that is, the assimilated oriented identification

and the one based on resistance. Briefly speaking, this chart highlights the major societal and institutional factors that influence Chinese youth's identification and belonging, rather than a comprehensive one that can address all the complexities of one's identification. In the following section, I will elaborate on the factors associated with school, family and media as shown in Figure 3.

The Identity Model II: Factors within Family, School and Media

Figure 3 provides a detailed explanation of the factors that affect Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging within family, school and media, as shown below:

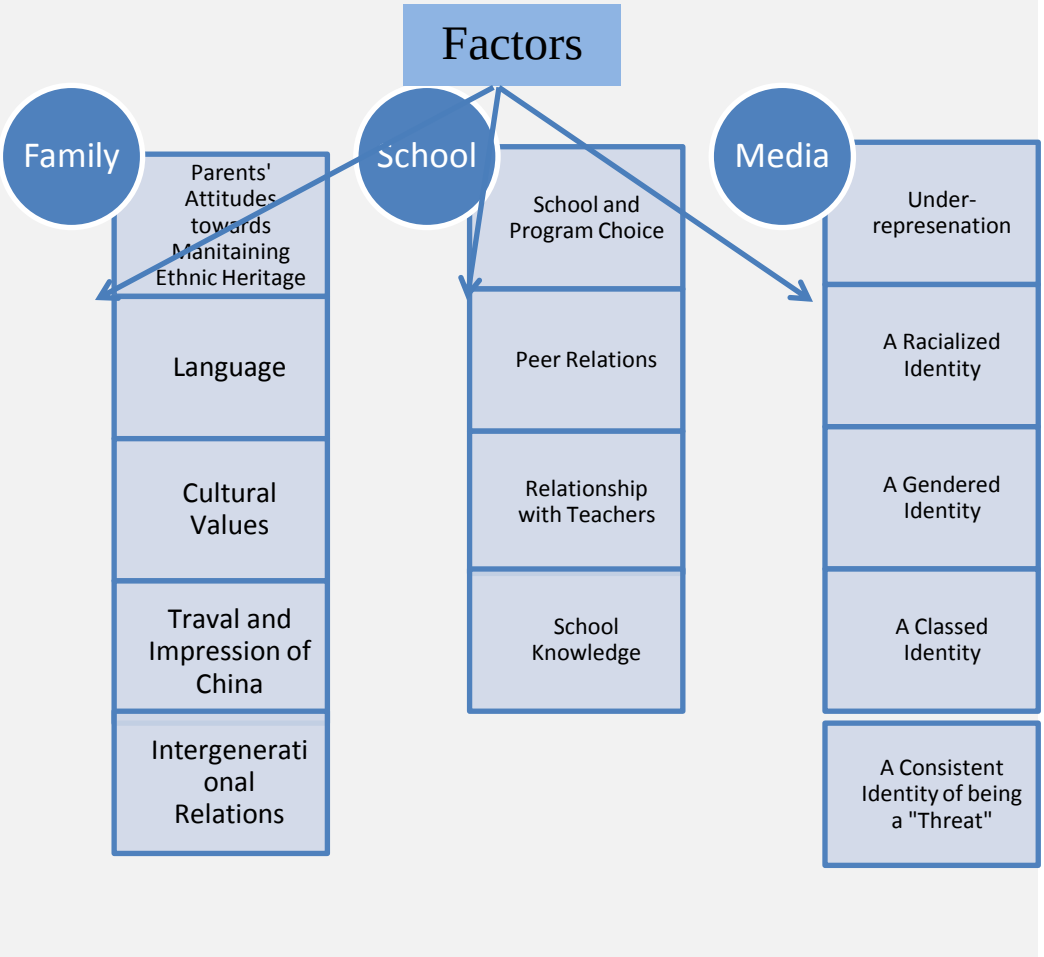

Figure 3: Factors that Affect Chinese Youth's Identification and Sense of Belonging within Family, School and Media

First, my study identified five salient factors within the family: 1) parents' attitudes towards ethnic heritage maintenance; 2) Chinese language maintenance; 3) Chinese youth's perception of cultural values; 4) youth's travel and impression of China; and 5) intergenerational relations. More specifically, my study revealed that many Chinese families did not put specific emphasis on so-called ethnic heritage maintenance as assumed by multiculturalism policy. Rather, many Chinese parents expect their children to integrate into mainstream society under the wrong assumption that ethnic cultural maintenance will deter their children's integration. As a result, their children did not see the necessity of maintaining a Chinese identity but rather strove to become Canadian through linguistic and cultural assimilation. What really happened within many Chinese families was the creation of communication barriers between immigrant parents and their children. Each side did not have a good command of the language that the other side used. A majority of participants indicated that English is the primary language they use in both public and private spaces. Even though they have been sent to learn Chinese at an earlier age, they had no interest in learning this language as it was not perceived as relevant to their actual daily life in an English world. Even though they have to communicate with parents in Chinese at home, they are simply functional speakers. This creates an increasing emotional distance between children and parents and to some extent decreases the authority role of parents in the minds of their children. Participants identified Chinese language fluency in terms of speaking, reading and writing as the key factor in affecting their

identification. Without Chinese proficiency, it is impossible for them to access and understand various information sources and resources such as websites, TV programs, music etc., which are produced in Chinese. For many second generation Chinese youth, China is viewed as a community of imagination, having no real connection with or far from their actual daily life.

More importantly, language is more than a communication tool; it is also something associated with unequal social status. Participants indicated that their parents' poor English in front of their teachers or friends made them feel embarrassed. What parents lost was not only due respect and authority over their children but also their children's willingness to learn to speak Chinese and to identify with their Chinese origin. The same went for so-called Chinese cultural practices. Some youth tried to stay away from these cultural practices that are different from the Eurocentric norms. Even though some do engage with them at home, this activity is not generally based on their personal choices but rather the actual needs of daily life. For example, they watch Chinese drama at the dinner table due to their parents' preference and lack of English proficiency. The traditional research approach is to study one's ethnic identity in terms of various dimensions of ethnic cultural practices that one is engaged with, such as one's access to ethnic media, whether or not one eats ethnic food, etc. My findings challenge such an approach which assumes there is simplistic causal relationship between one's ethnic identity maintenance and one's ethnic cultural practices. For example, although many participants do eat Chinese food at home, this is not based on their own preference but rather depends on what is cooked and favoured

by their parents. More importantly, they do not think which food they eat determines how they identify themselves. Even though some of them do speak Chinese at home with their parents, they do so primarily based on practical needs of their daily life, because their family members know little English. In this sense, the traditional approach as represented by Isajiw (1990) and Driedger (1996) is not appropriate for examining the identification and sense of belonging of Chinese youth. Further, participants point out cultural values, their impression of China through travel, as well as their relationship with parents are another three major factors that affect their identification and sense of belonging. Although they self-identify as Canadian, they reveal that they are different kind of Canadian as they still hold certain values called "Chinese" based on comparisons with White peers in certain social contexts (e.g. their attitudes towards education, work ethics, respect for teachers and parents, consumption habits, etc). An important question raised in my study is that rather than simply dismiss participants' reflection as essentializing cultural values, we need to rethink why they feel what is not acceptable at home is actually viewed as normal at school, and why they chose to identify with the values taught at home rather than those in school and broader society. Interview data also show that it is difficult for Chinese youth to have an emotional connection with China as they seldom have a chance to travel back. Even though they do go back once or twice, they may not have a positive impression of China after the trip. Especially for those who have been educated and socialized in Canada, they view China from a dominant perspective and ideology that focuses on the pollution, crowdedness, etc. However, there are

exceptions. Some participants revealed that they became very interested in learning to become Chinese through travel, as travel increased their understanding of their family members and relatives. No matter whether it resulted in positive or negative impressions of China or Chinese people, travel was identified as one of the factors that affected Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging. Finally, regarding intergenerational relations, existing literature tends to overwhelmingly focus on parents-children conflicts in many immigrant families. My study however shows that the relationship between Chinese parents and their children are not always characterized by conflicts. I argue that a good parents-children relationship increases the possibility that children identify with their parents' ethnic origin and vice versa. To sum up, based on interview data, I propose another four arguments that explain the factors related to family in influencing Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging. More specifically, I argue that 1) the less emphasis on ethnic heritage maintenance and more on integration by immigrant parents, the more likely their descendants will identify themselves as "Canadian." 2) If Chinese youth do not have a good knowledge of Chinese language, it is very likely that they will choose not to identify themselves as "Chinese." 3) Even if some Chinese youth identify themselves as "Canadian," they may still believe that they are different from their White Canadian peers in terms of certain "Chinese" cultural values. 4) The more positive impression that Chinese youth held towards China, the more likely they were to actively construct Chinese identities.

Second, school plays a major role in affecting Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging through its socialization process. More specifically, four factors related to school are identified, which include 1) school and program choice; 2) friends and peers pressure; 3) student-teacher relationship; and 4) school knowledge. School and program choice itself is a complicated issue that is determined by many factors such as one's socio-economic background other than simple individual preference. There is little existing literature that discusses the relationship between school/program choice and one's identification. My findings show that a high concentration of Chinese youth in an academically-focused school or program (e.g. IB, AC program) or Chinese bilingual program results in a relatively close-knit social network that acts as a buffer against the racial discrimination imposed by other ethnic groups (e.g. the dominant group) from outside. Certain racial stereotypes such as "nerd" take on a new meaning, free of negative connotations. In other words, when Chinese youth identify with their peers within this social network, they feel safe to construct an academically-based Chinese identity. By comparison, for those in the schools of small towns and rural areas for which a closely-knit social network is not available, it is more likely for them to experience isolation and marginalization from the dominant group, and consequently, construct a resistant Chinese identity. More importantly, my data illustrate the contemporary patterns of racialization within the racialized community through the identity label of "FOB." Those who are labeled as "FOB" are often laughed at, marginalized and discriminated by their more culturally and linguistically assimilated Chinese peers. "FOBs" are under great peer pressure to

speak, act and dress like a "real Canadian." This is not to say assimilation in this way is not good, after all, it does push them to pick up English and become familiar with dominant cultural norms, which in turn provide more life opportunities in Canadian society. What is problematic with the term "FOB", however, is that it assumes an either-or approach, or reinforces a dichotomy in one's identification (e.g. Chinese vs. Canadian) and views anything (e.g. the way of dressing, talking etc.) related to China as negative, inferior and as deviations from "Canadian" norms. As a consequence, it becomes an invisible assimilating and controlling force, a manifestation of internalized racism, and an irresistible dividing force within the Chinese community. In this sense, the nature of this culturally based identity is a new form of racism in contemporary society. Youth's identity formation is also based on social interactions with peers and teachers as well as the symbolic aspects of schooling such as language, knowledge and curriculum. For example, C. H. Cooley proposes a concept of "the looking-glass self," which describes the process of how an individual develops a self-concept through interpretation or awareness of others' reaction to or evaluation of him/her (Wotherspoon, 2009). My interview data show that among those who self-identify as Canadian and try to hang out and fit in the dominant group, a racialized Canadian identity is developed as a result of awareness of their inferior and racialized status during their interaction with White peers. Racial stereotypes and discourses which are deeply embedded in the value system are not only restricted to some individual students but are also reflected and discursively reproduced by some well-educated teachers. It is expressed and delivered in a more subtle and

implicit way, such as an ignoring at teacher-parent meetings, a slipped-in comment, a low expectation of Chinese students' performance in English and Phys-Ed class, and in negative comments about China--all of which demonstrate the concept of the "hidden curriculum." As Henry, Tator, Mattis, & Rees (2006) point out, "one of the most difficult aspects of racism to isolate and identify is the hidden curriculum" (p. 204). My interview data provide empirical evidence of the hidden curriculum in relation to contemporary forms of racism in the school context. More importantly, school knowledge includes not only what is written in the textbook but also how the teachers interpret the textbook to students. Given the relative authoritive role of school knowledge, it is difficult for young people to challenge what they are taught (e.g. teachers' negative comments on China) in class. Since young people are the future of Canadian society, what they learn in today's class will affect how they interact with people from other racialized and ethnic groups in the future. If the government does not address these issues in a timely way, racist discourse will be continually and discursively reproduced and distributed into future generations of Canadian society. In this sense, my study has significant policy implications.

Third, media representation is another important factor that affects Chinese youth's identification. Participants identified the problems of under-representation and misrepresentations of Chinese in Canadian media. For the latter, it focuses on four specific racial stereotypes of a Chinese identity that is racialized, gendered, classed and being consistently viewed as a "threat." Representation, according to Hall (1997) is "the production of meaning of the

concepts in our minds through language" (p.17). Grossberg (1996) notes that cultural representation frames and structures "the way we live and experience reality" (p. 159). In other words, stereotypes in the media, as one form of representation, produce stigmatized images of racialized minorities and naturalize negative images about them as "common sense" knowledge. The impact of such media representation on Chinese youth's identification varies. For some, the negative messages they receive from media enhance their unfavorable view about China and Chinese people in Canada, thereby pushing them away from the Chinese community whereas for others, it stimulated their critical thinking and reflection as well as resistance to media racism. In this sense, the hegemonic function of media discourse is both successful and limited to an extent in affecting Chinese youth's identity construction and sense of belonging. More importantly, by examining the media discourse, my research reveals that Chinese are continually regarded as foreigners, competitors, and threats to Western society. Historically, Chinese were attacked for threatening the public health and morality, whereas nowadays they are blamed for their use of limited social resources, such as employment and post-secondary educational opportunities, thereby taking these opportunities away from the White dominant group. In an age of mediatization, where people increasingly depend on various media such as the internet to acquire information, the role of media in producing, reproducing and distributing racist discourse and in manipulating public consent in a hegemonic way cannot be underestimated. If the government does not take measures and develop relevant policies to address media racism, social justice and equity will never be achieved,

given the fact media has been continuing to arouse social dispute and conflicts along racial line. At the same time, it also becomes an urgent task for school teachers and educators to cultivate critical thinking skills among students particularly in terms of identifying and addressing various discourses of media racism.

Conclusion

In this study, I examined how Chinese youth construct identities and negotiate belonging with a particular focus on identifying the factors in three major social institutions including school, family, and media. As the study of second generation Chinese youth is a relatively new research topic and little relevant literature is available to address their identification and sense of belonging, I draw on a grounded theory approach to develop two theoretical models. Although I discuss my data in separate chapters, they are in fact interrelated and interconnected in many ways. Also, despite my primary focus on Chinese youths' racialized and ethnic identity formation, the interview data also shows an intersection among race, gender, and class in terms of their identification. Some common factors such as racial discrimination overlap across all three different domains (e.g. family, school, and media). This demonstrates the significant theoretical insights of Omi and Winant (1993) who argue that "our central work [today] is to focus attention on the continuing significance and changing meaning of race" (p. 3). In other words, race is still an important concept to understand contemporary Canadian society and the lived experiences of racialized and ethnic minorities. My study not only provides two substantive

theoretical models to understand Chinese youth's identification and sense of belonging, more importantly, it provides empirical evidence for the continuing significance of race. Based on empirical data, I argue that despite multiculturalism policy and discourse, Chinese youth are under great pressure of linguistic and cultural assimilation and subject to various subtle forms of racism in Canadian society.

In terms of future research, I would suggest that as second generation Chinese youth have come of age in the twenty-first century, it is important to have as much knowledge as possible regarding how they fare in Canadian society. Further research on their identification and sense of belonging needs to expand to other geographic areas such as Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal, (the metropolitan cities with the largest Chinese populations), as well as small towns and rural areas. In identifying the factors that affect their identification and sense of belonging, more information is needed in terms of the opinions and perspectives of parents and teachers. Regarding the formation of a racialized identity among Chinese youth and racism in schools, a detailed exploration of school textbooks and curriculum could provide some much needed knowledge in this aspect. Further, it is also important to know the influential factors concerning identification in other social institutions beyond family, school and media, for example, the role of workplace. And a longitudinal study may be needed to address the identity change among Chinese descendants in their different stages of life, for example, from university to workplace, from youth to married adults.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Letter (English Version)

Dear Student,

Are you a first or second generation Chinese Canadian youth in Alberta? In other words, did you emigrate with your parents from Mainland China, Hong Kong or Taiwan to Canada? Or were you born in Canada with at least one parent born in the above regions?

And are you between the age of 15-25?
If you meet the above two criteria, you are warmly invited to participate in a 1-1.5 hour interview!

I am a doctoral student in the Department of Educational Policy Studies. I am currently conducting a research project on the lived experiences of the first and second generation of Chinese Canadian youth in Alberta. I am interested in finding out what are your lived experiences in high school, family, and community affect your identity formation.

Your participation in the interview is voluntary. You can withdraw at any time before, during or after the interview. Your anonymity will be protected and all the information from this interview will be kept confidential.

Please also help me send this message to your friends. All are welcome.
If you are interested, or have any question or concern about the interview, please feel free to contact me at (780) 885-6585 or at dcui@ualber.ca.

Appendix A: Recruitment Letter (Chinese Version)

诚邀参加加籍华人青年研究项目

各位同学，及华人社区的朋友，

你是现居住在阿尔伯塔省的第一代，或第二代的加籍华人青年吗？

换言之，你是随父母从中国大陆，香港，台湾或其他地区移民加拿大？ 或者你出生在加国，父母双方至少有一人来自上述地区？

你的年龄是介于 15-25 周岁吗？

如果你（或者你的子女）符合上述两个条件，我诚挚的邀请你参加与我 1-1.5 小时的采访对话！

我是阿尔伯塔大学教育政策研究系的一名女博士生。我目前的课题是研究居住在阿尔伯塔省的第一代，和第二代的加籍华人青年的生活经历。我想了解你们在学校，家庭，工作中 和社会上的生活经历是怎样的？这些经历是如何影响你们自我身份的建立? 这个研究致力于让老师、家长、雇主、政策制定者和社会各界人士，关注华人青年的声音，加强对你们的理解，并为你们提供一个更友好，更包容的生活环境！

你对采访的参与是完全自愿的。你有权在采访前，采访中，或采访后随时退出。你可以选择匿名或化名的方式接受采访。并且所有有关这次采访的内容将绝对保密。为感谢你对这一研究的支持，我为每位参与者准备了一个小礼物($20 gift card)，作为一种象征性的感谢！

请帮我将这个消息告诉给你的朋友，我诚挚的欢迎所有华人青年的参与！
如果你对这个研究感兴趣，请与我联系，**Dan, (780) 885-6585,** dcui@ualberta.ca. 谢谢你！

Appendix B: Consent Form

Dear Student,

I am a Ph.D. student in the Department of Educational Policy Studies and I would like to invite you to participate in my research project on the identity formation and lived experiences of first and second generation of Chinese Canadian youth in Alberta. This research aims to identify those factors that affect identity formation of Chinese Canadian youth. It also seeks to understand how they negotiate a sense of belonging within Canadian society. To date very little research has been undertaken in Canada on this topic. Therefore, I hope your participation in this research would contribute to richer understanding of lived experiences of Chinese Canadian youth in Canada.

This research mainly includes three types of data collection, survey, semi-structured interview and focus group. I will first use a short survey questionnaire to collect your demographic information in terms of your age, age of arrival (if you are first generation Chinese Canadian), family background and etc. It may take you 5-10 minutes to finish the survey questions. After collecting your finished survey questionnaire, I will proceed to conduct a semi-structured interview which will take approximately 1-1.5 hours. The interview will focus on questions regarding your perceptions and experiences of identity formation and sense of belonging in Canada. You may also be asked to review newspaper articles on Chinese Canadians and to comment on how they relate to your experiences.

Some of you may be selected for a second time interview to discuss certain issues in depth and/or for a focus group either based on your demographic information (for example, if you are first generation, or if you are female) or the primary themes identified in our first interview. The focus group will take 1-2 hours.

I will audio record our interview(s) and focus group only with your permission. All information from this interview will be kept confidential. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the following rights:

- Not to participate
- To withdraw at any time or by a specified time without prejudice to pre-existing entitlements, and to continuing and meaningful opportunities for deciding whether or not to continue to participate;
- To opt out without penalty and to have any collected data withdrawn from the data base and not included in the study before I start to present and publish my

data; In the event of opting out, I will delete our interview files from all my personal electronic devices, such as digital recorder and laptop. And all the related hard copies will be completely shredded.

- To privacy, anonymity and confidentiality. Once our interviews are recorded, I will assign you an assumed name and your anonymity will be further protected by changing other identifying information in transcripts, field notes and any published materials.
- To safeguards for security of data. The data will be kept in a secure place, such as locked safe which I am the only person can access, for a minimum of 5 years following completion of research project. After that, they will be completely shredded and scrambled to ensure privacy and confidentiality.
- To disclosure of the presence of any apparent or actual conflict of interest on the part of the researcher(s).
- To a copy of a report of the research findings.

If you have any question or concern about the interview or the research project, please feel free to contact me at (780) 885-6585 or at dcui@ualberta.ca or my supervisor, Dr. Jennifer, Kelly at (780) 492-4229 or at jrkelly@ualberta.ca.

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by the Faculties of Education, Extension, Augustana and Campus Saint Jean Research Ethics Board (EEASJ REB) at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Chair of the EEASJ REB c/o (780) 492-2614.

If you are interested, then please circle the following options, sign the form and return it to me. Thank you very much!

- **I consent to participate in Ms. Dan Cui's research project as described above. I have a copy of this consent form for my own records.**
- **I give permission to be contacted for follow up research.**
- **I would like a transcript of interview sent to me for verification.**
- **I would like a copy of a report of research findings for me to review and provide input.**

Interviewee's name	Interviewee's signature	Date

Appendix C: Survey Questionnaire

Researcher's Use Only:	
Interview Place:	Interview Date:

1. Name: _____
2. Age: _____
3. I am (please *circle* one of the following choices)

- Born in Canada
- Immigrate with parents to Canada (If you choose this option, please specify:)
  Place of birth (city/province/country)_____
  Age of arrival in Canada _____
  Length of stay in Canada _____

4. Number of people in your household: _____

	Relationship to you	Where is he/she from?	Occupation before immigration to Canada	Occupation after immigration to Canada	Place of residence (city /country)
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

5. What is the highest level of education?
   a) Less than high school
   b) High school diploma
   c) Non-university certificate or diploma
   d) Bachelor's degree
   e) Master's degree
   f) Other (specify)

6. Where did you receive your education? (city/province/country)

Elementary school	
Junior high	
Senior high	
College or university	

7. Please circle one of the following choices:

- I am currently a student:
  School, college or university name: _____
  In which year are you in: _____
  Specialization: _____
- I am currently working so not attending school:
  Occupation: _____
  Full-time or part-time: _____

8. My contact information:
   Phone: _____
   Email: _____
   Address: _____
   _____

Appendix D: Interview Questions

1. School Experiences and Identity

Introductory question

- Tell me about your school experiences in Canada.
- Do you like or dislike high school?

Probes

- What do you think of your high school experiences (in terms of school choices, alternative programs, streaming, relationship with teachers and peers)?
- What are the difficulties that you experienced in high school? To what extent do these difficulties affect your identity formation (who you are) and sense of belonging to Canada? And how do you cope with that?
- Do you experience any discrimination in high school? In which form? What are the reasons for the discrimination you experienced? How do you respond to it? To what extent does the discrimination experience affect your life, your identity formation and sense of belonging to Canada?
- Have you ever been labeled as "model minority" by teachers and peers in high school? What other labels do they attach to you? How do these labels affect your school life and the perception of who you are?
- Do you usually hang around with friends of Chinese origins in high school? Why? Or why not?

2. Immigrant Parents and Identity

Introductory question

- Tell me about your relationship with parents.

Probes

- Do you think your parents made the right decision to come to Canada? Why? If it were up to you to make the decision, would you still like to come to Canada? And why?
- How do your parents' life experiences in Canada affect your perception of who you are and a sense of belonging to Canada?
- Do you often travel with your parents to China? What do you think of such travel? And what's your impression of China? Do you eat Chinese food, speak Chinese language and celebrate Chinese festivals at home?
- Do you struggle between two worlds of culture, that of your parents, and the Canadian way of life?
- How do you think of your connection with China, whether it is real or symbolic?
- Do you identify yourself as a visible minority, or a Chinese Canadian, or a Canadian? Or a Chinese?

3. Media and Identity

Introductory question

- Tell me about your experiences with Canadian media and or Chinese media

Probes:

- What do you think of the media representation of Chinese Canadian? Any examples? How does that representation affect your identity formation and sense of belonging?
- Do you often access any Chinese media via internet, film, TV and etc? Are you interested in such contact with China? Why?
- Tell me about how you like to dress?
- What kinds of music do you listen to?
- Do you use dress, hairstyle, and other cultural symbols (such as music) to distinguish you from others (white Canadian peer, or Asian or Chinese

Canadian peers)? What's your musical preference? Do you think you belong to a particular subculture group?

4. Other Influences or Sources for Identity and Belonging

Introductory question

- Tell me about any other lived experience or any event that may affect your self-identification of who you are.

Probes:

- To what extent do you identify yourself with the Chinese community in Alberta?
- What do you think of Canadian multiculturalism? Do you think it is helpful for your identity formation?
- Do you think the development and rise of China in international society affect your thinking of who you are?
- Is there any other factor, besides the school, family, media, Chinese community and etc that affect your identity formation and lived experiences in Alberta?
- Where do you think you belong to, Canada? China? World? Chinese community in Alberta? A particular subculture group? Or anything else?