



Title: A Multidimensional Inquiry into Chinese Outbound Tourism to Western Europe: The Visitation of Chinese Millennial Students to the Netherlands.

Name: ETHEL ROSE DE VRIEZE-MCBEAN

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**A Multidimensional Inquiry into Chinese Outbound Tourism to
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ETHEL ROSE DE VRIEZE-MCBEAN

June 26, 2019

UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE

**A Multidimensional Inquiry into Chinese Outbound Tourism to
Western Europe: The Visitation of Chinese Millennial Students
to the Netherlands.**

BY

ETHEL ROSE DE VRIEZE-MCBEAN

**A thesis submitted by the University of Bedfordshire in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

June, 2019

PERSONAL DEDICATION

In loving memories of my dear sister, Adie Deanna McBean, whom I am sure would have been so proud of me. She was my rock and shelter and it is a pity that she is not present to bask in the immense satisfaction that I have gained from this research journey.

I dedicate this thesis to her.

DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, **ETHEL ROSE DE VRIEZE-MCBEAN**, declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

Research title:

A MULTIDIMENSIONAL INQUIRY INTO CHINESE OUTBOUND TOURISM TO WESTERN EUROPE: THE VISITATION OF CHINESE MILLENNIAL STUDENTS TO THE NETHERLANDS

I confirm that:

- This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
- Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
- Where I have cited the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
- Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
- I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
- Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
- None of this work has been published before submission.

Name of candidate: **Ethel Rose De Vrieze-McBean**

Signature:

Date:

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I am extremely proud to have been given the opportunity to undertake this inquiry into the multidimensionality of Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe and particularly to the Netherlands. However, without the help of others, this would not have been possible. In this section of my thesis, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who has helped me on this humbling yet scholastic journey: one that, in my opinion, has only got me started on the quest for further knowledge on the emerging importance of tourism in the 21st century.

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Ethel Rose De Vrieze-McBean

ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the multidimensionality of Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe and particularly highlights the visitation of Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands. The contributions made to knowledge construction are first of all, to establish a propaedeutic research agenda for which this current research serves as a framework. Simultaneously, seven discernable dimensions have been identified as archetypal to the Chinese tourist, especially regarding their key interests and behaviour when visiting Western European destinations. These being competitive, demographic, economic, technological, cultural, natural and political. Within this construct, the researcher drew from Urry's *'The Tourist's Gaze'*, and Pearce et al., reconstruction of this, in their article in *Tourism Recreation Research* on "Puzzles in Understanding Chinese Tourist Behaviour: Towards a Triple-C Gaze", to create the Quadruple-C Gaze in depicting the Chinese millennial tourist's behaviour. (Quadruple-C is in reference to *Confucianism, Capitalism, Communism, and Consumerism*). The latter is a proposition for the establishment of a propaedeutic research agenda, which is derived from this study.

In exercising an interpretative research methodology, the researcher attempted to gain a comprehensive understanding of the key interests of Chinese millennial tourists to the Netherlands and juxtapose them to Chinese millennial students as tourists to the Netherlands. At the same time, an investigation was carried out into the implications of these visits for the Dutch tourism industry as well as the Dutch higher education board. Semi-structured interviews were conducted among experts from the Dutch tourism industry as well as from the Dutch higher education board and experts from Dutch universities. Likewise, focus groups meetings were held among five different groups of Chinese millennial students from universities in the Netherlands as well as students from a university in China. Data was also generated from discourse analysis. The outcome of the thematic analysis performed resulted in seven pronounced themes, which are: the cultural values of Chinese millennial travellers; their motivations for visiting the Netherlands; the Netherlands and its higher educational institutes; Chinese millennial students in the Netherlands; the travel interests and behaviours of Chinese millennial students in/through Europe; the Chinese millennial students and their surroundings; and the implications of Chinese millennial students on their exhibited behaviour and on the Netherlands.

A future propaedeutic research agenda is therefore proposed that examines "The Quadruple-C Gaze of Chinese outbound tourism and its relevance in defining the key interests and behaviour of the Chinese millennial tourists from second-and-third-tier

cities in China". In carrying out such a study, three relatively innovative methodologies are suggested: Complexity Theory, which is a set of concepts that attempts to explain a complex phenomenon not explainable by traditional or mechanic theories. The second is via Visual Analysis, which applies graphic prompts to assess the motivational considerations that guide visitors from different cultural backgrounds to select their travel destination(s). And thirdly, by way of Netnography - a current research method that uses online conversations as data. By applying one or more of the above-mentioned methodologies, a fresh insight will be gained into the quadruple-C gaze of Chinese millennial tourists from second and third-tier cities from Mainland China.

Finally, when approaching China as a prospective source market for Chinese millennial tourists/students, both Dutch tourism providers and the Dutch higher education need to adopt a holistic approach to understanding the multi-dimensions postulated in this inquiry.

Keywords: Chinese outbound tourism, Chinese millennial travellers, Chinese millennial students, study in the Netherlands.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CITS	China International Travel Service
CKGSB	The Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business
CLSA	Credit Lyonnais Securities Asia
CM	Chinese Millennial
CMS	Chinese Millennial Student
CNTA	China National Tourism Administration – this organisation was dissolved in March 2018 (see MTC: Ministry of Tourism and Culture)
COT	China Outbound Tourism/Tourist
COTRI	Chinese Outbound Tourism Research Institute
CTS	China Travel Service
DW	Deutsche Welle (German World Media Channel – English-spoken)
DTI	Dutch Tourism Industry
EC	European Commission
EEAS	European Union External Action Services
EMA	Expectation Motivation and Attitude (Model)
ETC	European Travel Commission
ETOA	European Tourism Organisation Association
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GCP	Global Career Path
HERA	Higher Education and Research Act
ILAS	International Institute for Asian Studies
LARC	Leiden Asia Research Centre
MTC	Ministry of Tourism and Culture
NBTC	Netherlands Bureau of Tourism and Conventions
NESO	Netherlands Education Support Office
NHTV	Breda University of Applied Sciences
NUFFIC	Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PRC	People's Republic of China
QDA	Qualitative Data Analysis
RMB	The official currency in China (RMB or CNY)
SU	Stenden University of Applied Sciences
THE	Times Higher Education
TPB	Theory of Planned Behaviour
UAS	University of Applied Science (Netherlands)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
USA	United States of America
VFR	Visiting Friends and Relatives
VOC	The Dutch East India Company
WTO	World Tourism Organisation
WYSE	World Youth Student Education
ZU	Zhejiang University

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1.1	Chinese arrivals as reported by EU destinations, 2014 (%) First entry point.....	11
TABLE 1.2	The types of Chinese travellers to Europe.....	15
TABLE 1.3	Anticipated difficulties / weaknesses of this study.....	50
TABLE 2.1	High-context versus Low-context communication.....	62
TABLE 2.2	Comparison of low-context cultures and high-context cultures.....	64
TABLE 2.3	Representation of national composition of Netherlands and China.....	66
TABLE 3.1	Guba's comparison of prevailing paradigms – basic philosophical assumptions regarding paradigms.....	98
TABLE 3.2	Common ontological difficulties in tourism studies indicators for the interpretation of meaning for / about China: a translation of Hollinshead's (2004) work in this study.....	109
TABLE 3.3	Illustration of a comparison between the positivist and the interpretivist paradigms.....	113
TABLE 3.4	Example of a sampling structure with dimensions given in advance of data collection.....	120
TABLE 3.5	The data considered for the next stage of this study vis-à-vis their 'envisaged contribution' and 'possible application'.....	122
TABLE 3.6	The relationship between the study problem (and its component sub-problems) and the study methods, population choices, and sampling approaches being considered.....	124
TABLE 3.7	Ethical concerns and the proposed application in this study.....	127
TABLE 3.8	The principal reasoning behind the chosen methods and the proposed application of each of these.....	138
TABLE 5.1	Evaluation of the thematic analysis of data generated for this study: explaining the seven main themes, the strengths and weaknesses of the study.....	218
TABLE 5.2	An illustration of the research (sub) problem(s) and their relations to the research findings.....	219
TABLE 6.1	Tribes of Chinese travelling to Europe – shared values and sense of boundaries towards each group (UNWTO, 2012).....	231
TABLE 6.2	Implications for Dutch higher education board and Dutch tourism management.....	267
TABLE 6.3	Recommendations for the Dutch higher education board and the Dutch tourism industry / management.....	271

LIST OF BOXES (reflexive reports on chapters 3 to 7)

BOX 1	A reflexive report on the initial phases of this emergent study of Chinese outbound tourism to the Netherlands.....	54
BOX 2	Reflexivity on my choice for a purposive sampling.....	125
BOX 3	Definition of triangulation according to Flick (2014).....	150
BOX 4*	A reflexive report on the Methodology of the study.....	297
BOX 5*	A reflexive report on the exercise of methods.....	298
BOX 6*	A reflexive report on the findings of the study.....	299
BOX 7*	A reflexive report on the multidimensionality of Chinese outbound tourism.....	300
BOX 8*	A reflexive report on a setting up propaedeutical agenda on Chinese outbound tourism.....	301
BOX 9*	Autobiographical reflection on the study.....	302
BOX 10*	Videos and most relevant websites used in the study.....	303

APPENDICES (1-11): TRANSCRIPTS AND ANALYSIS OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS (See separate document: "Appendices").

* Please note that boxes 4 – 10 have been placed towards the end of the manuscript due to word-count limitations.

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 5.1 Represents a segmentation of the Chinese millennial travellers.....181

Table of Contents

PERSONAL DEDICATION	III
DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP	IV
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	V
ABSTRACT	VII
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	IX
LIST OF TABLES	X
LIST OF BOXES AND APPENDICES (REFLEXIVE REPORTS ON CHAPTERS 3 TO 7)	XI
LIST OF FIGURES	XII
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	4
1.0 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER ONE.....	4
1.1 THE CHINESE PEOPLE AND THEIR HISTORIES.....	5
1.1.2 CHINESE OUTBOUND TOURISM'S ECONOMIC IMPACT ON TOURISM DESTINATIONS.....	11
1.1.3 CHINESE OUTBOUND TOURISM TO EUROPE	12
1.1.4 PROFILING THE CHINESE VISITOR TO EUROPE	14
1.1.5 POLITICAL ASPECTS OF CHINESE OUTBOUND TOURISM: SOFT POWER IN TOURISM.....	18
1.1.6 THE CHINESE TOURISTS: HOW THEY ARE TRANSFORMING VISITED DESTINATIONS	21
1.1.7 CHINESE OUTBOUND TOURISTS AND CHINESE MILLENNIAL STUDENTS TO THE NETHERLANDS.....	22
1.1.8 THE CHINESE MILLENNIAL TOURISTS: A CONTEMPORARY STREAM OF INDEPENDENT TRAVELLERS ...	23
1.1.9 THE CHINESE MILLENNIALS AND THEIR BEHAVIOUR.....	24
1.1.10 THE NETHERLANDS: THE NATION AND ITS PEOPLE	26
1.1.11 CHINESE MILLENNIAL STUDENTS IN THE NETHERLANDS.....	27
1.2 TOURISM BETWEEN CHINA AND THE NETHERLANDS	29
1.2.1 TRADE BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND CHINA	29
1.3 THE TRAVEL INTERESTS OF CHINESE TOURISTS TO THE NETHERLANDS	32
1.4 THE STUDY PROBLEM AND SUB-PROBLEMS	34
1.4.1 STUDY PROBLEM #1.....	35
1.4.2 STUDY PROBLEM #2.....	36
1.4.3 STUDY PROBLEM #3.....	36
1.4.4 STUDY PROBLEM #4.....	36
1.4.5 STUDY PROBLEM #5.....	37
1.5. ANTICIPATED CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE TO BE MADE BY THIS STUDY.....	37
1.6 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY.....	38
1.6.1 Background information into the rationale for selecting Chinese millennial students	39
1.6.2 Identification of gaps in the existing literature.....	43
1.6.3 Significance of tackling the gaps in existing literature.....	45
1.6.4 Relation of study sub-problems and the concepts under investigation.....	46
1.7 DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATION OF THE THREE PHASES OF THE STUDY.....	51
LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS.....	56
1.9 SPECIFIC AREAS OF INTERESTS.....	60
1.10 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER ONE.....	63
1.11 CONCLUSIONS TO CHAPTER ONE	64
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	66
2.0 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER TWO.....	66
2.1 AREAS OF INTERESTS EXAMINED WITHIN THE LITERATURE REVIEW.....	67
2.2 CROSS-CULTURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE NETHERLANDS AND CHINA.....	71
2.2.1 Youth Culture in China.....	77
2.3 A REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON CHINESE OUTBOUND TOURISM.....	80
2.3.1 Confucianism and the Chinese tourists.....	80
2.3.2 Communism and international tourism	81
2.3.3 Capitalism and International Tourism.....	82
2.4 THE GROWTH OF LITERATURE ON CHINESE OUTBOUND TOURISM.....	90
2.5 MAJOR THEORISTS ON CHINESE OUTBOUND TOURISM	92

2.6	IMPORTANT LITERATURE REGARDING CHINESE OUTBOUND TOURISM.....	94
2.7	SOME OF THE LITERATURE INSPECTED.....	96
2.8	SUMMARY OF CHAPTER TWO.....	99
2.9	CONCLUSIONS TO CHAPTER TWO.....	100
CHAPTER THREE: THE METHODOLOGY GUIDING THIS MULTIDIMENSIONAL INQUIRY INTO CHINESE MILLENNIAL STUDENTS TO THE NETHERLANDS.....		102
3.0	INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER THREE.....	102
3.1	THE TRANSDISCIPLINARY CHARACTER OF THE STUDY FROM ITS BASE IN TOURISM STUDIES.....	103
3.2	GUIDING PARADIGMATIC CONSIDERATIONS DIRECTING THIS STUDY.....	107
3.2.1	<i>Issues Relating to Ontological Matters.....</i>	<i>111</i>
3.2.2	<i>Epistemological Issues Within Tourism Studies.....</i>	<i>112</i>
3.2.3	<i>Axiological Issues Within Tourism Studies.....</i>	<i>114</i>
3.2.4	<i>Methodological Issues Within Tourism Studies.....</i>	<i>115</i>
3.2.5	<i>Defining the Qualitative Research Methodology.....</i>	<i>116</i>
3.3	A FURTHER DESESCRIPTION OF THE EMERGENT RESEARCH DESIGN.....	117
3.4	MATTERS OF TRUSTWORTHINESS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH.....	121
3.4.1	<i>Trustworthiness of Qualitative Research.....</i>	<i>121</i>
3.5	DESCRIPTION OF POPULATION AND JUSTIFICATION FOR METHODS USED.....	122
3.6	MATTERS OF ETHICS AND THE PROPOSED APPLICATION IN THE STUDY.....	134
3.7	DISCUSSION OF THE METHODS.....	137
3.7.1	<i>A Detailed Description of the Chosen Methods.....</i>	<i>136</i>
3.8	THE RATIONALE FOR SELECTING AFOREMENTIONED METHODS.....	148
3.9	TRIANGULATION IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH.....	150
3.10	SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THREE.....	152
3.11	CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER THREE.....	153
CHAPTER FOUR: EXERCISE OF METHODS AND DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS.....		154
4.0	INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER FOUR.....	154
4.1	A DETAILED STEP OF THE DATA GATHERING PROCESS.....	154
4.2	DATA ANALYSIS.....	157
4.3	AN EXPLANATION OF THE THEMATIC ANALYSIS APPLIED IN THIS STUDY.....	158
4.3.1	<i>The Data Analysis Process.....</i>	<i>160</i>
4.4	SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FOUR.....	161
4.5	CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER FOUR.....	162
CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS FROM THE DATA.....		164
5.0	INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER FIVE.....	164
5.1	THE CULTURES AND VALUES OF CHINESE MILLENNIAL STUDENTS AS TOURISTS.....	165
5.1.1	<i>The Culture of the Chinese Millennial Traveller.....</i>	<i>166</i>
5.1.2	<i>The Values of the Chinese Millennial Traveller.....</i>	<i>170</i>
5.2	TRAVEL MOTIVATIONS FOR CHINESE MILLENNIAL STUDENTS AS TOURISTS TO THE NETHERLANDS.....	174
5.2.1	<i>Principal Travel Motivations.....</i>	<i>174</i>
5.3	THE NETHERLANDS AND ITS HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES; REASONS WHY CHINESE MILLENNIALS CHOOSE TO STUDY IN THE NETHERLANDS.....	176
5.3.1	<i>The Netherlands Otherwise called "Holland".....</i>	<i>176</i>
5.3.2	<i>Higher Education in the Netherlands.....</i>	<i>178</i>
5.3.3	<i>The Reasons why Chinese Millennials Choose to Study in The Netherlands.....</i>	<i>179</i>
5.4	CHINESE MILLENNIAL STUDENTS IN THE NETHERLANDS.....	184
5.5	THE TRAVEL INTERESTS AND BEHAVIOURS OF CHINESE MILLENNIAL STUDENTS IN / THROUGH THE NETHERLANDS/EUROPE.....	189
5.5.1	<i>The Travel Interests of Chinese Millennial Traveller in/Through Europe.....</i>	<i>189</i>
5.5.2	<i>The Travel Behaviours of Chinese Millennial Students in/Throush Europe.....</i>	<i>195</i>
5.6	THE CHINESE MILLENNIAL STUDENTS AND THEIR SURROUNDINGS.....	202
5.6.1	<i>The Chinese Millennial Students on Campus in the Netherlands.....</i>	<i>203</i>
5.6.2	<i>Chinese Millennial Students and the Local Communities.....</i>	<i>207</i>
5.7	THE RELEVANCE OF CHINESE MILLENNIAL STUDENTS FOR THE NETHERLANDS.....	212
5.7.1	<i>The Significance of Chinese Millennial Students' Presence on the Dutch Population.....</i>	<i>212</i>
5.7.2	<i>The Consequences of Chinese Millennial Students to the Dutch Tourism Industry.....</i>	<i>213</i>

5.7.3	<i>The Influence of Chinese Millennial Students on Dutch Higher Education System</i>	214
5.7.4	<i>The Impact of Chinese Millennial Students' Studying in the Netherlands on Their Personal Development and Their Direct Environs on Their Return Home</i>	217
5.8	SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FIVE	230
5.9	CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER FIVE.....	233
CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSIONS OF THE MULTI-DIMENSIONS OF CHINESE OUTBOUND TOURISM.....		235
6.0	INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER SIX.....	235
6.1	THE COMPETITIVE DIMENSION	236
6.1.1	<i>Presence in China</i>	236
6.1.2	<i>Destination Marketing</i>	237
6.2	THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIMENSION.....	238
6.2.1	<i>Market Subdivision</i>	240
6.2.2	<i>The One-Child Policy</i>	242
6.3	THE ECONOMIC DIMENSION.....	243
6.3.1	<i>Large Potential Market</i>	243
6.3.2	<i>High Trade Surplus</i>	244
6.4	THE TECHNOLOGICAL DIMENSION	245
6.4.1	<i>Distribution of Travel Products By The Internet</i>	245
6.4.2	<i>The Internet And The Free Independent Traveller (FIT)</i>	246
6.5	THE CULTURAL DIMENSION.....	246
6.5.1	<i>Traditional Values</i>	247
6.5.2	<i>Contemporary Values</i>	247
6.5.3	<i>Romanticism of Travel</i>	248
6.6	THE NATURAL DIMENSION	249
6.7	THE POLITICAL DIMENSION	250
6.7.1	<i>Tourism as a Product of Capitalism</i>	251
6.7.2	<i>Tourism as a Product of Confucianism</i>	253
6.7.3	<i>Tourism as a Product of Communism</i>	254
6.7.4	<i>Tourism as a Product of Consumerism</i>	258
6.8	NEW DEVELOPMENTS (IN CHINA): CNTA BECOMES MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND TOURISM; AND PASSPORT APPLICATION FACILITATION.....	261
6.9	THE MAJOR FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY	262
6.9.1	<i>Sub-Problem One:</i>	262
6.9.2	<i>Sub-Problem Two:</i>	264
6.9.3	<i>Sub-Problem Three:</i>	265
6.9.4	<i>Sub-problem Four:</i>	266
6.9.5	<i>Sub-Problem Five:</i>	268
6.10	DEDUCTIONS FROM THE MAJOR FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY.....	275
6.11	THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE DUTCH HIGHER EDUCATION BOARD AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT / OPERATIONAL ACTION	276
6.12	THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DUTCH HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE DUTCH TOURISM INDUSTRY/MANAGEMENT	278
6.13	SUMMARY OF CHAPTER SIX.....	280
6.14	CONCLUSIONS TO CHAPTER SIX	280
6.15	FURTHER RESEARCH EMANATING FROM THIS STUDY.....	281
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....		287
	BOX 4: A REFLEXIVE REPORT ON THE METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY	297
	BOX 5: A REFLEXIVE REPORT ON THE EXERCISE OF METHODS.....	298
	BOX 6: A REFLEXIVE REPORT ON THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY.....	299
	BOX 7: A REFLEXIVE REPORT ON THE CONDUCTED STUDY	300
	BOX 8: A REFLEXIVE REPORT ON SETTING UP A PROPAEDEUTIC AGENDA	301
	BOX 9: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL REFLECTION ON THE STUDY	302
	BOX 10 VIDEOS AND MOST RELEVANT WEBSITES USED IN THE STUDY.....	303

Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 Introduction to Chapter One

International tourism has been one of the fastest growing industries of the 21st century and destinations worldwide received 369 million international overnight visitors in the first four months of 2017, which is 21 million more than in the same period in the previous year, according to the *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer*. This represents an increase of over 6% in visitor-numbers to Europe, reflecting a rebound after mixed results of one year before, and mirroring a return of confidence to some destinations that were affected by several recent security occurrences (UNWTO, 2017). One of the key drivers of this apparent extraordinary performance stems from visitors from the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Chinese outbound tourism has emerged as one of the most profound phenomena of the early 21st century, not only in Western Europe but also throughout the entire globe. The number of visitors, especially from Mainland China, has increased significantly in the past decades and according to Arlt (2006) this is merely a tip of the iceberg. One segment of these visitors is Chinese millennials. Moreover, there are Chinese millennials who choose not only to visit Europe but also to study there. Consequently, The Netherlands has become one of the preferred countries where these students have chosen to study. This has implications for both the generic Dutch tourism industry as well as the Dutch Higher Education Board. In chapter one of this study an outline is provided which gives an overview of the sections of the chapter.

Hence, chapter one discusses the dawn of Chinese outbound tourism and the economic impact this has on destinations. First of all, it is important to offer some historical facts about the people and their pasts, in order to understand their evolution. Subsequently, the emergence of Chinese outbound tourism to Europe, the political aspects of Chinese outbound tourism and the underlying notion of soft power (in tourism) are elucidated.

It is important, therefore, to consider the consequences of the advent of Chinese outbound tourism on host destinations, and so this is also examined in chapter one. Additionally, an increasing number of these Chinese visitors are millennials (born after 1980), who are mostly free independent travellers, some of which are students who have elected to study in the Netherlands. Their key interests and behaviour are reviewed and the activities they participate in while in the Netherlands are also evaluated. The study problem and sub-problems are devised and substantiated by a rationale for the investigation. Finally, anticipated contributions to knowledge construction and a description of the three phases of the study are specified. Having supplied an introductory note into this chapter, the researcher now offers some essential historic details regarding the Chinese people.

1.1 The Chinese People and Their Histories

The history of the People's Republic of China (PRC) is said to have been established in 1949, when Chairman Mao Zedong proclaimed its founding on the 1st of October that year. The Chinese people have a long and beleaguered past which saw several major wars and conflicts that have helped in creating the contemporary Chinese (Akbar, 2010). Numerous brutalities resulted in millions of deaths under Chairman Mao, and this was further exacerbated by the notorious campaign, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which was launched in 1966 by the Party leader, and terminated on his death ten years later. The Cultural Revolution was a decade-long period of political and social chaos which had its roots in Mao Zedong's bid to use the Chinese masses to reassert his control over the Communist Party. This was deepened by the trepidations of the Soviet Union, that led to a major cataclysm in the Chinese society (Fairbank, 1991; MacFaquhar and Schoenhals, 2008).

Ironically, the Cultural Revolution did not produce the desired results that the Party leader had envisaged, on the contrary. On the emergence of Deng Xiaoping who out-

powered Mao's designated successor, Chairman Hua Guofeng, to become the next Party Leadership Chair, China experienced significant economic reforms. Being a first-rate leader, he led the Communist Party and subsequently loosened governmental control over the personal lives of the Chinese citizens and the established communes were demolished, constructing land-leases for every citizen (Meisner, 1986). This action stimulated enticements and an increase in agronomic production, signifying the shift from a planned economy to a mixed economy with an increasingly open-market setting: a system interpreted by Meisner in the early 1980s as the...

“...unleashing of market forces as an expedient to serve the nationalist and modernizing aims of the Chinese Communist state, a bureaucratic monolith that seemed to stand as an impregnable barrier to both socialism and capitalism” (Meisner, p. xii, 1986).

According to him, the shaping of the history of contemporary China is mirrored in the appropriating of Western Imperialist ideologies to meet Chinese revolutionary objectives (p.3). Imperialism was revolutionary in matters of social and economic sense, but also culturally and intellectually. Simultaneously, it served to undermine the traditional Confucian order, hence, necessitating and facilitating the revolution. One of the consequences of the revolution was the materialization of novel ideas and ideologies transforming the modern Chinese crusade against ancient traditions and institutions (p.4). Ultimately, these fresh ideas and future visions averted both a Confucian-based social order and a Western-dominated China. However, this is not to say that Confucianism is not an important pillar in the culture of the Chinese people. It seems very much part and parcel of the modern Chinese individual.

In fact, it defines the contemporary Chinese individual who fervently, though somewhat intuitively, maintains Confucian values. Confucian is depicted as a system of social and moral philosophy rather than a religion (Yang, 1961). This belief system, which was founded on an ancient 'religious' establishment to create the social values of institutions, is at the heart of the Chinese society. Actually, these institutions were not perse separate

clerical entities, but were what the sociologist, Robert Bellah referred to as a “civil religion”: one that depicted a notion of religious distinctiveness and shared ethical tolerance based on a society’s central institutions. Yet, these institutions were not those implied in usual clerical terms, but were used to refer to society, family, school, and state. Its ‘priests’ were not the usual liturgical specialists, but parents, teachers, and officials. The supreme ideals of traditional Chinese society, was what Bellah (1975) described as a “civil religion”. Thus, Confucianism was part of the Chinese social constitution and generic fabric: to Confucians, ordinary life was grounded on this belief system.

Conversely, since the Cultural Revolution (see section 1.1) the public ideology of the People’s Republic had somewhat abandoned traditional Confucian teachings, though material well-being was zealously upheld. This led to an ethical void which the government considered a threat to China’s rapid development, so it encouraged the restoration of China’s most revered political tradition: Confucianism. However, like most ideologies, “Confucianism can be a double-edged sword” (Bell, 2010, p. 23). Firstly, the affirmation of harmony is meant to reflect the ruling party’s concern for all classes, but this does not extend to the entire population of China. According to Bell (p. 24): there is a joke in China, that “development benefits everyone except farmers, workers, and women”. Secondly, the call for harmony – one of the most vital Confucian values - is an implicit recognition that things are not so harmonious after all, but there was a need for a peaceful resolution rather than through vicious class wars. Nevertheless, the importance of material well-being, echoes within deeper Confucian roots.

To provide us with an understanding of the emergence of a Modern China and the effect of this belief system on the Chinese people, Bell (2010) helps us in his book *China’s New Confucianism*, to gain a better understanding of China’s rapid economic development into what it has become today. The role of Capitalism is, likewise, not to be

underestimated, as China's Communist Party leader, Deng Xiaoping, defended the brutal capitalism in China when he is alleged to have said: 'To get rich is glorious' (p. 18).

Another Confucian value which is still widely practiced in contemporary Chinese lifestyles is filial piety: a law which obliges adult children to take care of their elderly parents. This practice is instilled in the child at a very young age and is propagated through various media channels and social settings (p.25). The Confucian value of filial piety also includes extended family members; thus, it is no wonder that when abroad, Chinese tourists bring back gifts for the entire family. Furthermore, outside the home, Chinese people interact differently from Westerners. When having a drink in bars and clubs, for instance, Westerners prefer an open-bar setting, while Chinese often favour the "family-like" atmosphere of private rooms where they can drink and talk with intimate friends (p. 25-26). As an advocate of New Confucianism, Bell (2010) seems convinced that this belief is being restored in order to educate today's Chinese millennials (born after 1980) in the contemporaneous inheritances of Confucius.

Further in his book, Bell (2010) offers an insider's interpretation of the Chinese culture while simultaneously demystifying an array of stereotypes. For example, he unexpectedly argues that Confucian's collective hierarchy could essentially contribute to economic egalitarianism throughout China. Deliberating on distinct yet debatable topics such as sex, the management of household personnel and sports, he reflects on the Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008 and even speculated on whether or not the Chinese's zealotry might have been alleviated by Confucian considerations. Additionally, he examines education in China, as he exposes the manner in which Confucianism has influenced his own personality as a diplomatic philosopher and educator (Bell, 2010).

Furthermore, Bell (2010), who lectures in politics at the Tsinghua University (Beijing), is well-positioned to comment on the evolving Chinese attitudes. He uncovers signs of a renaissance and exercise of pre-communist behaviors, whether in the lecture hall, on

the streets, or inside karaoke bars. The latter especially gains his attention. It is within such an establishment that the intimate characteristics of music, which is so embraced by Confucians, is evidenced. Should the hostesses proposition sex in combination with harmonious conversations, these too are in accordance to the Sage Master's wishes. "I never met anyone," he told his 5th-century BC students approvingly, "who values virtue more than physical beauty" (Bell, 2010).

In spite of the generic notion of the consequences of Confucianism on the behaviour and attitude of Chinese, particularly those from the Mainland, limited experiential studies have been executed to inspect the Chinese social, cultural and philosophical belief system from a tourism perspective (Kwek & Lee, 2010). In their exploratory study, which examined the power of Confucian values on Mainland Chinese corporate travellers at leisure on the Gold Coast of Australia, they illustrated that the notion of harmony is one of the key values of Confucianism. Harmony is significant in highlighting the Chinese tourists' behaviour. This view of harmony also implicitly relates to themes such as respect for authority, relationship building or *Guanxi*, conformity and appropriate behaviour (p.2).

For many years, the People's Republic of China (PRC) had been considered a walled reinforcement, an arranged locale where the gate to communication was vigorously secured. Within this era of the China's past, its peoples were allowed to dwell inside the fortifications of this stronghold, and in return, they were likely to devote their lives to the Homeland (Resonance Report, 2016). One of the rewards of existing in such a controlled place is that one is able to enjoy the fruits of one's labor, that is, to work, obtain some form of payment, enjoy the culture and history of the Republic, participate in festivals and ceremonies, binge on large bottles of beer at lunch, and finally to fly off to some 'exotic' destination(s) or other, a privilege only for the wealthy few (p.4).

However, for over three decades massive transformations have transpired, predominantly among the ordinary Chinese populace. It is inconceivable for largely Westerners to envisage what life in China was like five decades ago, and primarily during the Cultural Revolution (1966) - an operation sprung by China's Communist leader Mao Zedong, who attempted to reaffirm control over the Chinese government (History.com). According to him, "the current Communist leaders were steering the party, and China itself in the wrong direction". Therefore, he ordered the nation's young people to expunge the "impure" elements of the Chinese society and restore the revolutionary vibes that had steered it to victory in the civil war twenty years earlier (History.com).

The generations preceding the Cultural Revolution also lived through the bloodshed and mayhem of the Warlord Era, the Japanese invasion and the Chinese Civil War. These Chinese, born in the 1950s and 1960s, were raised in the movement of the Great Leap Forward - which triggered what was perhaps the worst famine in human history (Dikötter, 2016). He adds that, during the Cultural Revolution, when a period of chaos and political instability ensued, many of today's middle-aged Chinese were engrossed by revolutionary fervor and joined the Red Guards, who sought to "smash the four olds" - Old Customs, Old Culture, Old Habits, and Old Ideas (especially religion). Yet, in 1976, as the Cultural Revolution met with the same demise as its creator, its fearful and vicious legacy would resonate within Chinese politics and societies for decades to come (Dikötter, 2016).

In the words of the exemplary statesman of India, Jawaharlal Nehru (1942), who wrote in *Glimpses of World History* (the series of letters written to his daughter Indira Gandhi from jail between 1930 - 1933) that; while admitting nationalism "is good in its place," there should be caution when considering the recent history of India, "lest we cast all the blame for our misfortunes on the British." While China hardly appears to have had

such a reassuring figure as Nehru, it did have a Mao Zedong who, unlike his fellow Communist predecessors dismissed nationalism as a camouflaging metaphor for class-founded injustices. What he did, in fact, succeed in doing was to conjure up the jingoistic wisdom of his party by unifying the Chinese populace against colonial fight in order to achieve political advancement (Dikötter, 2016).

Although the inheritances of Communism are still evident in contemporary Chinese government, and particularly noticeable in the organisation of the Party-State, it is fair to say the country has evolved from the Mao era (Winterbottom, 2014). However, it is still under the protectorate of its nationalistic hegemony. This is manifested in its administrative power which the regime readily utilizes and employs for its own benefits. The Communist Party's declaration of having united China in 1949 and preserving the state ever since, is a vital spring of its validity, together with its advance in economic growth. Hence, the traditions of communism have helped to shape contemporary China, including the Chinese tourists' visitations to destinations abroad.

1.1.2 Chinese Outbound Tourism's Economic Impact on Tourism Destinations

There have been significant improvements since these conflicts though, thanks to rising disposable incomes, increasing direct flight routes, and a prolonged period of the appreciation of the Chinese Renminbi, RMB (the legal tender of China), the Chinese have become the world's most liberal travelers (Resonance Consultancy Report, 2016). In fact, China outperformed the United States for most outbound travelers and the most global travel expenditure in the world with a record of \$164.8 billion spent (Floracruz, 2015). Besides, in 2015 Chinese travelers made approximately 133 million trips abroad (Arlt, 2016) spending more than US\$200 billion on tourism-related undertakings (Zhou, 2015). Despite an impending weakening of China's economy, this amount is expected to extend to an astronomical US\$422 billion by 2020 – that is equivalent to the gross domestic products of advanced countries like Portugal and Ireland together. What is

more, despite China's abating economy, these approximations are projected to endure (Burkitt, 2015). Likewise, the leading equity broker and investment group, CLSA Limited, Asia's leading and longest-running autonomous brokerage and investment group, remains 'bullish on the Chinese tourist theme and maintains its long-standing forecast of 200 million Chinese overseas trips by 2020' (CLSA, 2016).

Oxford Economics, a research-based firm specializing in economic research and providing research on key economies and emerging markets, commodities and other global services, predicts that an extra 61 million Chinese families are anticipated to participate in international travel by 2023 (Oxford Economics, 2014). In the coming years, with many Chinese cities projected to surpass famous Western metropolises' GDP, expanding Chinese cities are inclined to become major source markets of international travelers (Oxford Economics, 2014). However, the Republic of China is not a democratic nation and is heavily controlled by the Communist Party, which has a say, not only in deciding what its citizens do at home, but also what they do abroad. This is why Chinese outbound tourism is regulated by the Chinese government. One way through which this is visible is within the notion of soft power (Tse, 2015, p.1-18).

1.1.3 Chinese Outbound Tourism to Europe

An estimate of twelve million visitors from Mainland China travelled to a destination in Europe in 2015, according to the European Commission (2018). As Europe's second largest travel market from outside the region, the Chinese travellers that year, stayed roughly forty million nights and spent one to three nights in each country visited. The majority of these tourists originated mainly from key urban metropolises in China, but the demand from minor cities and municipalities is growing. Eighty percent of the Chinese visitors go to destinations within Europe. This is illustrated in Table 1.1 below

Table 1.1 Chinese Arrivals as Reported by EU Destinations, 2014 (%) First Entry Point:

Country	Percentage	Country	Percentage
France (FR)	23.5%	Denmark (DK)	0.7%
Italy (IT)	23.0%	Poland (PL)	0.6%
Germany (DE)	15.5%	Luxemburg (LU)	0.6%
Spain (ES)	9.1%	Slovenia (SL)	0.4%
Austria (AT)	7.5%	Bulgaria (BG)	0.2%
Czech Republic (CZ)	3.2%	Slovakia (SK)	0.2%
Netherlands (NL)	3.1%	Estonia (EE)	0.2%
United Kingdom (UK)	2.6%	Latvia (LV)	0.2%
Belgium (BE)	2%	Romania (RO)	0.1%
Greece (EL)	1.8%	Letland (LT)	0.1%
Portugal (PT)	1.6%	Malta (MT)	0.0%
Finland (FI)	1.6%	Cyprus (CY)	0.0%
Sweden (SE)	1.2%	Ireland (IE)	-
Croatia (HR)	0.9%	Hungary (HU)	-

Source: (Croce, 2016) Tourism in Focus - The Chinese Outbound Travel Market ecty2018.org.

Moreover, these travellers not only make extensive use of digital technology during their travels, but also twenty-percent of them book their holidays online, as explained by the report from the European Travel Commission (2016 p. 5). Arts and culture play a significant role in creating emotional connections with Chinese travellers, and Europe is famous for its historical and cultural heritage as well as for its more recent cultural references such as movies and documentaries (European Travel Commission –ETC & United Nations World Tourism Organisation - UNWTO, 2012).

For the Chinese traveller to Europe, safety is paramount and these days, on their trips they expect to find a safe environment, clean air and blue sky. Particularly the older generation tends to stick to traditional Chinese food, whereas the younger generation occasionally likes to try out local dishes. The majority of Chinese visitors to Europe are fascinated by anything ‘Chinese’ during their European trip (ETC & UNWTO, 2012). Travelling through Europe though, requires the Chinese tourist to acquire a Schengen visa, which provides the visitor with access to twenty-five European countries with one single visa, hence this expedites travel convenience throughout the entire region. Having provided a description of the Chinese outbound tourism market to Europe, the ensuing section supplies a profile of the Chinese visitors to Europe.

1.1.4 Profiling the Chinese Visitor to Europe

As stated in the previous, most outbound travel from China to Europe originate from the large urban metropolises of Mainland China (ETC, 2016). The traveller tends to be between 35-60, spending approximately €1,500 and €3,000 on a single trip. A third of their travel budget is apportioned to shopping, and so the Chinese tourist is considered the leading spender on the market (p. 6). Package tour remains the most attractive form of travel to first-time travellers alleviating challenges like cultural difficulties, costs and language. A package tour comprising of a well-defined itinerary, assists Chinese visitors who want to visit multiple destinations in Europe on their first trip. In this way, they

can travel with fellow compatriots, reducing costs and ultimately leaving more financial room to participate in their favourite past-time: shopping (ETC & UNWTO, 2012 p.6.).

In this propaedeutic study: that is one that serves as a preparatory instruction, or as an introduction to further study, of European destinations in particular, it has been revealed that an increased sense of standing is achieved among the Chinese about travels to Europe. However, tourists who travel frequently to Europe, often consider package tours inferior when compared to independently organised European visits. Seeing the division of the Chinese outbound travel market it is important to recognise that due to the size of this source market, even niche segments include a fairly substantial volume of the demand (ETC, 2015 p. 7).

The profile of the Chinese travellers to Europe was outlined by the School of Oriental and African Studies (part of the School of London). According to monthly surveys conducted by the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA), Chinese outbound travellers tend to be well educated, wealthy and from the country's major cities or eastern coast. Eighty-five percent of tourists are under the age of 45 and forty percent work in the education, information technology, computer and software, finance and scientific research fields (CNTA, 2011). A trip to Europe is thus seen as a status, an affirmation of identification with the Chinese traveller to Europe.

The appeal of Europe stems from its history and diversity in attractions. Hence it is considered a prestigious place to visit, according to Euromonitor (2011), and so a trip to the region is regarded as enhancing one's status. Many Chinese travellers to Europe will therefore try to visit as many countries as possible, which further serves to increase this prestigious status. Such visits usually last between one and two weeks, though it is not unusual for these visitors to squeeze in ten countries in ten days. However, in recent times, there has been a reduction of the amount of countries visited on a single trip, as especially the Chinese millennials prefer to stay longer at one specific destination.

Despite its appeal, though, the high costs of European travel and language barriers are two significant obstacles for such a travel.

The types of Chinese travellers to Europe can be summarised in five main categories, as is evident in table 1.2 below:

Table 1.2: The Types of Chinese Travellers to Europe

No.	Mode of travel	Typology / features of travel
1	Large tour groups (majority of Chinese travellers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - easier to obtain visa; - all-inclusive packages; - low cost of package tour; - inexpensive accommodation / coach travel - includes Mandarin-speaking guide
2	Individual travellers (growing niche: educated middle-class)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - good English-speaking skills - Chinese students studying in Europe; - Chinese expatriates living in Europe; couples with living abroad experience; adventurous young professionals and wealthy retirees. <p>Lack of Chinese signage (negative aspect)</p>
3	Students and their families	<p>Approx. 130,000 Chinese students are currently studying in Europe: majority in the UK.</p> <p>Students tend to travel, but family and friends also visit and travel around Europe with/to see them.</p>
4	Business travellers	<p>A growing number of Chinese visit Europe on business; significant growth in Chinese exports to the European (20%); Business travellers stay at premium/luxury hotels; More particular about quality and services.</p>
5	Family groups	<p>Nuclear family groups visit Europe and sometimes one or both sets of grandparents will accompany them.</p>

Source: *Euromonitor International* (2011)

These travellers are profoundly being driven by connectivity. One leading form of mobility for Chinese outbound tourism to Europe is air transportation. In its effort to transform China into a strong global power, the Chinese government 2010 aviation strategy has established three pillars for achieving this goal: Internationalisation, mass air travel and safety. These include the extension of routes to Europe which has seen a surge in the number of flights to the Continent, according to ETC & UNWTO (2015), and Boeing (2015). Other political aspects of Chinese outbound tourism are described in the ensuing paragraphs.

1.1.5 Political Aspects of Chinese Outbound Tourism: Soft Power in Tourism

The Chinese Government appears to be vigorously supporting outbound tourism, as is demonstrated by two focal proposals submitted in 2013 (UNWTO, 2013). First of all, it accepted the China National Tourism Law, making it illegal to sell tours below cost and to engage in the practice of “forced shopping”. Secondly, Chinese outbound tourism, like many forms of social events in China, is susceptible to administrative interference from the Chinese State and this is apparent in China’s use of tourism as a foreign policy tool both in Asia and other foreign countries (Chen & Duggan, 2016). This is accomplished by means of soft power, which, – as defined by Joseph Nye, is ‘the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment’ (Nye, 2004, p. x). Nye’s definition includes “culture, values and foreign policies” (p. 11). In an essay written in *“Foreign Affairs”* by David Shambaugh, he talked about ‘China’s Soft Power Rush’ and its search for respect. As China’s dominance flourishes, Beijing is learning that its image is vital on the international stage (Shambaugh, 2015). Despite its economic and military muscle, the country is experiencing a severe deficiency in soft power (p.1), and so in an attempt to improve perceptions the nation has launched a major public relations’ campaign in recent years, by financing billions of dollars in projects around the world in diverse efforts to augment its image (Shambaugh, 2015). By focusing on the maturation

of knowledge on soft power and Chinese outbound tourism, the researcher hopes to investigate the effect of soft power on the Chinese culture to see if there is a correlation to the Chinese (millennials') interests and activities when in the Netherlands.

Furthermore, in 2014, The Chinese leader, Xi Jinping announced that, 'We should increase China's soft power, give a good Chinese narrative, and better communicate China's messages to the world'. Due to this statement from the Chinese leader, numerous new initiatives have been announced. All these propositions are meticulously geared at improving China's image abroad. The three fundamental propositions which are considered most relevant for this study include:

- "The Chinese Dream": 'the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation' (Xi, 2012). The Chinese Dream incorporates both national and individual objectives, with two fundamental goals, namely, regaining national pride and attaining personal well-being. It necessitates continued financial advancement, prolonged egalitarianism and an amalgamation of cultural values to balance materialism.
- "The Asian-Pacific Dream": At the APEC Summit in Beijing, 2014, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced that "We have the responsibility to create and realise an Asia-Pacific dream for the people of the region." According to him, "... Such a dream, was "based on a shared destiny of all of the Asia-Pacific" and incorporated peace, development and mutual benefits. He went on to say that China would focus on "managing its own affairs well" while looking to "bring more benefits to the Asia-Pacific and the world with its own development", Xi stated in the South China Morning Post [SCMP] (2014).
- "The Silk Road Economic Belt": "The Silk Road Economic Belt (Chinese: 丝绸之路经济带) is the land-based component that together with the oceanic Maritime Silk Road forms: One Belt, One Road, a Chinese

government economic development framework for primarily integrating trade and investment in Eurasia” (Ghiasi and Zhou, 2017).

Likewise, China’s diplomatic and development structures form just one fragment of a much wider program intended at enriching its soft power in media, the arts, publishing, sports and education, just to name a few. Although it is unclear how much China devotes to the dissemination of soft power world-wide, it undoubtedly surpasses the budgets of any other country on the globe. And it is being done in the form of monetary disbursements (Shambaugh, 2015 p.5).

Though above-mentioned proposals will not be explicitly discussed in this study, the researcher thought it pertinent to mention them to illustrate their (soft power) relevance to her investigations. Understanding the government’s application of soft power, can also be foundational to comprehending the emics and etics of the Chinese traveller, especially with regard to their interests and behaviour when abroad.

In order to grasp China’s outbound tourism industry, it is equally vital to know the consumers’ wants and needs as well as the policies and politics involved in the management of the market. Despite China’s significant transformation from a country that used to discourage its citizens from traveling to one that encourages travel (Arlt, 2015), it still has a political hand in deciding many issues regarding travels. The instigated policies and politics very often pose difficulties and impediments for those destinations that aim at targeting the Chinese market. Chinese tourism to Europe, for example, has seen major growth in the past decade. Though these travellers visit particularly urban destinations, there is a current trend for some to also favour rural areas. Notwithstanding the type of travel undertaken, the Chinese visitors, in some way or other, are certainly altering the destinations they visit. In this process, they too are being transformed, as they experience the culture and values of the places visited. The next paragraphs explain how the Chinese tourists are changing the places they visit.

1.1.6 The Chinese Tourists: How they are Transforming Visited Destinations

Statista (2018) reported that the latest explosion in Chinese tourism has generated a tsunami across the international travel industry. Reasons for this is rapid urbanization, higher disposable incomes and reduced travel constraints, facilitating a sharp growth in Chinese tourists discovering not only their own country venturing further ashore as well. In fact, expenditure on international destinations has swelled considerably over the past decade, that China has now surpassed the United States in total spending. This dramatic upsurge has not gone unobserved for tourism officials in Europe.

Consequently, in 2018 a collaboration between the European Commission and the European Travel Commission saw the launch of the 2018 EU-China Tourism Year, in order to promote EU-destinations and improve the tourism experience. That is why the number of Schengen visa issued reached 2.4 million in 2017 (UNWTO, 2017). Besides, it has been upgraded to allow Chinese nationals to travel within the 26 European member states (*Statista*, 2018).

As a result, international destinations are struggling to re-design and re-brand their (tourism) businesses to take advantage of this lucrative emerging Chinese market (Arlt, 2017). *The Resonance Consultancy Report* (2016)- a report written for the firm Resonance Consultancy - has identified three ways in which some destinations are attempting to attract these tourists: According to them:

- The United States has begun facilitating Chinese visa-applications by creating online possibilities;
- France is customizing language, products and services to suit the Chinese market;
- Other destinations are labelling products / offers “authentic”, “limited editions”, or “VIP” as the Chinese always seem fascinated by these options. Furthermore, the Chinese are said to fancy a ‘good romantic tale’. Social media channels

frequented by the Chinese (millennial) tourist / student, is also a very important means of enticing these visitors (p.5).

It would be particularly interesting for the Dutch tourism industry to gather insights into this lucrative market by gaining information on how to cater to the interests of these Chinese millennial tourists. The researcher of this study, therefore, hopes to provide said industry with an in-depth investigation into these tourists: who they are; what their interests are; and how to facilitate their stay in the Netherlands. Seeing the volume of the population of Chinese tourists travelling abroad, it is impossible to focus on the entire market. This is why the researcher has elected to primarily focus on the Chinese millennial student as tourists.

1.1.7 Chinese Outbound Tourists and Chinese Millennial Students to the Netherlands.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) has been changed, from a country that once discouraged tourism as a useless middle-class pursuit, into one of the major source markets for international tourism (Arlt, 2006). China's millennials in particular are now seen as the main drivers in world travel growth, thus helping to redesign national economies globally. According to Phocuswright Inc. (2017), 'As China's travel market takes off, all eyes should be on the country's roughly 400 million millennials, who will drive spending on airfare, hotels, theme-parks, casinos and cruises.' Chinese tourists are travelling to the far reaches of the globe to experience leisure activities and since the turn of the century, Chinese Outbound Tourism (COT) to developed destinations has advanced exponentially. In addition to this, Chinese millennial students are travelling en-masse to particularly destinations to pursue a higher education. One of the countries that they are visiting is the Netherlands. According to the Dutch Bureau of Tourism and Conventions (NBTC) there was a twenty-one percent increase in Chinese visitors to the

Netherlands in 2015, and in 2016 there were approximately 10,000 Chinese millennials pursuing a university degree in the Netherlands (Xinhua Online Newsletter, 2016).

1.1.8 The Chinese Millennial Tourists: A Contemporary Stream of Independent Travellers

A new breed of Chinese tourists is altering the Chinese outbound tourism world. These are the so-called independent travellers. As is illustrated in an article in FreeNewsPos.com (2014).

‘WENG ZHONG is doing what his parents could only dream of: taking a two-week tour of Europe. The 28-year-old from Shanghai has already been to France (‘very beautiful’) and the Netherlands (“very good English”). He is now flying from Schiphol airport in Amsterdam to his final stop, Finland, where he hopes to see the Northern Lights (“very exclusive”).’

Instead of traveling as his parents: a “20-cities-in-ten-days” bus tour, Weng Zhong is one of what is currently known as the New Wave or millennials (born after 1980), wealthy and roaming (mostly) independently (FreeNewsPos.com, 2014). Although tours of this nature still hold true to most Chinese tourists on their first trip outside of Hong Kong, Macau or Taiwan, roughly a third of Chinese millennials are now organising their own travel, spending more and staying longer at a destination. They are said to be more individualistic with regard to communication, wealth, culture and attitude. “Our generation focuses more on concepts like individuality and freedom”, according to Alan Meng, a Chinese millennial, post-graduate student studying in the UK. This notion is also shared by Lu Xiaoming, a 30-year-old web magazine editor for a live music promotions enterprise in Shanghai, who said...

‘With my generation, as we are mostly the single child in the family, kids are used to a materially sufficient life, but the downside to that is you don’t really find a lot of peers to play with. That’s why my generation can be individualistic sometimes, and also, since you already grew up in a materially sufficient life, you tend to chase the adventure and thrill of life a bit more as well.’

The Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business (CKGSB), New York, maintains that though this notion of individuality is not quite the same as Western conceptuality of

individualism: (Confucian) traditions and philosophies of social responsibility such as filial piety and collectivism are still held in high regard among Chinese millennials (CKGSB Knowledge, 2016). Thus, no study of Chinese outbound tourism would be considered comprehensive without an examination of (Neo) Confucianism and its underlining values.

1.1.9 The Chinese Millennials and their Behaviour

The emergence of the Chinese as international travelers is creating some significant changes in their travel behaviour. For example, Chinese, especially the older generation, often travel in large groups seeing that this facilitates visa acquisition. Similarly, the Chinese love to travel by bus and do not mind travelling long distances on a bus (Sun, 2016). However, these days Chinese travelers are branching out in surprising ways – led by the young: the millennials. According to Brendan O’Reilly of the online newspaper: *China Outlook*, it is striking that in Chinese media, the Chinese millennials are two separate groups. One is the *balinghou* (八零后, “After 1980”) cohort, born between 1980 and 1989. The other group is *jiulinghou* (九零后), covering all Chinese born in the 1990s. Whether they were born in the 80s or the 90s, China’s millennials live in a milieu that was inconceivably unlike the world of their parents and grandparents (China Outlook, 2016).

A professor of anthropology at Amherst College, Massachusetts, Vanessa Fong, provides the following explanation of the fundamental discrepancies between Chinese youth and the older generations. According to Professor Fong:

‘...the generation gap is smaller for Western millennials, who were born into a world only somewhat different from the world their parents grew up in, than for Chinese millennials, who were born into a world that is vastly different from the world their parents grew up in... China experienced a massive and abrupt change of direction in the 1980s, shifting from a planned economy to a market economy, from high fertility to very low fertility, from autarky to globalization, and from reserving secondary and tertiary education for a small minority to

expanding adult education programs that made secondary and tertiary education available to most who want it.’

Therefore, to cognize the exact physiognomies, ambitions, and uncertainties of Chinese millennials – or China’s Generation Y – *China Outlook* has investigated Chinese-language sources, conferred with professionals in both academia and industry, and, naturally, spoken to the Chinese millennials themselves (Resonance Consultancy, 2015). They are considered to be a generation entirely dissimilar to their precursors. For example, they have very high expectations and are vocal in their grievances at various levels of society. Should these high expectancies be met, and their progressively outspoken complaints tackled, then their technological, communicative, and collective faculties could pronounce a novel era of both Chinese and international affluence. Conversely, they could be the initiators of considerable instability if their ambitions are foiled (Resonance Consultancy, 2015).

One of the ambitions of this rather complex demographics is travel. Chinese millennials are traveling more than previous generations. Maryann Simson of *The Chinese Millennial Traveller*, claims that by 2034, one in every five air traveller worldwide will be flying to, from or within China, the bulk of them millennials. This is impressive both in spending power and number. Chinese millennial tourists will play a key role in shaping not only the future of the airline passenger experience but also tourism destinations worldwide. The reasons for this are manifold: the Chinese millennials are financially independent, educated, technologically savvy, socially united – and, according to Fish (2015) the “want” generation: “they want everything and they want it now.” In a report issued by Goldman Sachs in 2015, in ‘the Chinese tourists’ explosion’, it is estimated that the majority of Chinese tourists will be millennials. As stated in the report, ‘Over the next decade, 74 million millennials at Chinese universities are set to graduate.’ Furthermore, it contends that ‘... they will look to travel overseas in large numbers, given they are well informed and do not consider language barriers to be prohibitive’ (Goldman Sachs

Report, 2015). Despite these facts, little is known about these visitors and their interests while abroad.

1.1.10 The Netherlands: The Nation and Its People

One nation currently experiencing a tremendous growth in Chinese visitors is the Netherlands. With its estimated 17 million in populace and a density of 488 people per square kilometer, the Netherlands, famously known as Holland, is the most densely populated country not only of the European Union but also in the entire world. Though Amsterdam is its capital, the government resides in the city of The Hague. Other main cities of the Netherlands are, Rotterdam and Utrecht, together these form the 'Randstad': a name for the agglomeration of these cities (Holland.com, 2014). The official language spoken in the Netherlands is Dutch, but many Dutch nationals speak at least three languages: English, German and French (Holland.com, 2014).

Additionally, the Dutch landscape is dominated by water from the three big European rivers (Rhine, Meuse and Scheldt), and these reach the ocean via the Netherlands, creating an important delta. What is true, is that more than 50% of the Netherlands is situated below sea-level (in *Marketplace*, 2017) and so during the centuries-long fight against the waters, the Dutch constructed a water-system consisting of dykes, polders and dams. Passengers arriving at Amsterdam Schiphol airport might be shocked to realize that they are touching down on a runway that would have been – if nature took its course – 13 feet underwater (Beard, 2017). The fact that the runway is dry and the passengers can disembark without getting their feet wet is ascribed to more than a hundred years of water-management. Consequently, the Netherlands is seen by many as the 'waterland', and the Dutch are so effective in managing the waters that they have become experts in their field and are even exporting their water-management expertise (Beard, 2017). From Wuhan in China to Sao Paulo in Brazil and other coastal cities

around the world, Dutch companies are constantly being hired to combat rising sea-levels.

Besides, the Dutch people are creative, open-minded and pragmatic and are particularly characterized by their directness and honesty, especially when dealing with others. They are also known for their hospitality and tolerance towards sensitive issues. Dutch people are passionate sportspeople: with popular sports in the Netherlands being; football, hockey, tennis, cycling, golf, volleyball, swimming and ice-skating; of which football takes the lead (Holland.com, 2014).

Finally, according to the Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation (NUFFIC), the Netherlands is known as a politically stable country with a comprehensive education system (NUFFIC, 2016). Its universities are among the best in the world (Times Higher Education -THE, 2016). Moreover, studying in the Netherlands is relatively inexpensive and all universities facilitate English-taught programmes. That is why the past decades have seen a sharp increase in the number of international student population to Dutch universities (THE, 2016).

1.1.11 Chinese Millennial Students in the Netherlands

The Netherlands is also one of the favoured destinations for students from China. It was the first non-English-speaking country to offer a wide range of English-taught programmes in tertiary education. In addition to this, it is relatively inexpensive to study in the Netherlands, which is one of the reasons why many Chinese millennials have chosen this country to study (Leiden Asia Centre.nl, 2015).

Moreover, all thirteen universities in The Netherlands (two top universities of the Netherlands are located in Amsterdam) rank within the top 200 universities worldwide, according to the Times Higher Education World University Rankings (THE) 2016-2017 which lists all 980 universities in the world (THE, 2016). This is one of the main reasons why in 2014 the number of Chinese students studying in the Netherlands reached about

4,638, representing ten percent of the international student population in the Netherlands (Leiden Asia Centre (LAC), 2015). Additionally, Chinese millennials are choosing to study in the Netherlands as this country is considered one of the most English-friendly of all non-English-speaking countries. Finally, when comparing the Netherlands to other universities in Europe, the costs of studying for Chinese millennials are relatively modest. Thus, Chinese students often choose to study in the Netherlands as a second-best choice for an international tertiary education and as the second largest group of international students in the Netherlands, it has a positive impact not only on the Dutch higher education system but also on the entire Dutch economy (LAC.nl, 2015).

In a recent study conducted by the Central Agency for Statistics (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, CBS, 2012) it was revealed that the net-inflow of international students to the Netherlands has a positive influence on the Gross Domestic Product (CBS, 2012).

While foreign students cause extra government expenditure during their studies, these expenses are remunerated by the tax revenues generated by the students who remain to work on the Dutch labour market. These international students are potentially a vital source of high-skilled labour. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report contend that, in 2025 the Netherlands will have a shortage of highly-skilled workers. International students who stay after graduation could alleviate this labour shortage (Leiden Asia Centre.nl, 2015).

There are additional benefits to be gained from Chinese millennial students: the economic development of China and its growing importance as a global power, and the potential of more international students in the coming years, make Chinese students a highly interesting group for Dutch education institutions. However, despite the significant number of Chinese students in the Netherlands and the associated economic benefits, little is known about the interests, expectations and experiences of this segment. In order to learn more about these aspects, it is imperative to delineate the

relationship between China and the Netherlands, especially with regards to tourism. Moreover, there are further issues that are often overlooked with regards to the current mobility of the Chinese populace whether these are students or other Chinese visitors. One key topic of consideration is the relationship between China and the Netherlands and the afore-mentioned aspects of the imminent growth in visitors from China. (Leiden Asia Centre.nl, 2015).

1.2 Tourism Between China and The Netherlands

With the European – China (EC) agreement on trade and economic cooperation, China and Europe officially sealed their relationship in 1985 regarding economic collaboration (*European Union External Action Service - EEAS, 2015*). In 2012, with the formation of the EU-China High Level People-to-people Dialogue, these two pillars of the EU-China relationship were further consolidated. The past four years have seen even further dialogues and cooperation agreements being instituted or re-activated, to cover other issues, such as mobility, the environment and tourism (*EEAS, 2015*). In fact, tourism, according to the World Tourism Organisation UNWTO (2014) is the fastest growing economic sector in the world. This growth co-occurs with an increasing diversification and competition among both developing and developed destinations. Tourism is also a very useful tool for building relations. According to the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, tourism...

‘..... is the people’s building block for global peace and cultural understanding. By bringing ordinary men and women from around the world into contact with one another, it helps dispel the myths, stereotypes and caricatures that often hold sway from a distance.’

(UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, 2007)

1.2.1 Trade Between The European Union and China

The EU and China are the two largest traders in the world and China has become the EU’s second trading partner merely trailing the United States, and the EU is China’s

principal partner (European Trade Commission 2016). Trading is said to exceed over €1 billion daily whereas bilateral trade in services amounts to only one-tenth of the total trade in goods which is partly due to market access barriers in China (European Trade Commission, 2016). Meanwhile, China's services sector trade is particularly driven by the tourism industry, as its deficit, which hit a record high of €81 billion in the first six months of 2015, was twice that of 2014, according to the European Trade Commission.

The reason for this is two-fold: first of all, it was effectuated by the growing desire of the Chinese for travel, compounded by the increasing travel simplifications instigated by destinations. For example, the United Kingdom concocted campaigns to extend tourist visas for Chinese nationals from six months to two years with additional policies to initiate 10-year visas in the immediate future, meanwhile President Xi's state visit to the United States proclaimed a declaration of the "US-China Tourism Year" at the commencement of 2016 (Croce, 2016).

Concurrently, tourism assists in building and strengthening existing relations. For example, the relations between China and the Netherlands have been a long-standing one, that commenced in the 17th century when merchants merged to form the VOC (Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie)– The Dutch East India Company, which prospered and survived for two centuries. It was a combination of commercial organisations in various cities in the Netherlands, trading in both Asia and between Asia and Europe (European-heritage.org, 2017). This alliance was solidified in a diplomatic agreement in 1972 and a warm and convivial relationship has since emerged.

This relationship between the Netherlands and China has been propitious both at bilateral and at EU level. According to the Organisation for Economic Corporation and Development (OECD), these relations have been instituted on trade promotion, cooperation and on preservation of International Laws (OECD, 2016). Political relations, for instance, are sociable and accessible, as both countries continue to work to bolster

ties between the Chinese and Dutch societies in academic and cultural sectors (OECD, 2016). Consequently, China's existing prominence at the centre of the international, political and economic stage is also leading to even closer ties with the Netherlands, and financial associations between the Netherlands and China are becoming extensive and diverse.

The government of the Netherlands (2014) contend that while the Chinese investments in the Netherlands has been somewhat limited, both nations complement each other. At the same time, there is broad scope for further development as all Dutch multinationals have established offices in China (Government of Netherlands, 2014). In fact, at an international level, the Netherlands is China's tenth most important trading partner, and its third largest trade investment partner in Europe, with an annual trade volume amounting to 70 billion US dollars (Xinhuanet, 2016). Additionally, there are more than 3,000 Dutch investment products in China but merely 500 Chinese companies in the Netherlands. Nonetheless, the European Union as a whole is China's most important trading partner: The Netherlands is a close second behind Germany, according to the Government of the Netherlands (2014).

Consequently, this favourable relation between the Netherlands and China has rekindled a fresh fire to the Dutch tourism industry. In 2014 the Central Bureau for Statistics reported that Chinese tourism arrivals increased by 33 percent compared to the 2013 figures. Furthermore, 2015 saw a similar increase on the 2014 figures, according to the latest figures from the CBS - the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS, 2016). *'We have around fifty direct flights weekly between the two countries. 300,000 tourists from China came to the Netherlands and nearly 10,000 Chinese students currently study in the Netherlands'*, according to Jos Vranken, director of the Netherlands Board of Tourism and Conventions (NBTC). In 2015, The Netherlands was host to a mass company outing involving 4,500 Chinese workers from a large company from Mainland

China. The group was transported around the country in a fleet of 90 busses and stayed in major Dutch cities (DutchNews.nl., 2015).

With this astounding growth to the Dutch tourism industry, the researcher is anxious to know; firstly, the reason for this increased interest in the Netherlands among Chinese tourists. Secondly, who these Chinese tourists are and finally what their main travel interests and behaviour are while in the Netherlands. Subsequently, the main interests and behaviour of Chinese millennial students/tourists will be explored. Why have these students decided to study in the Netherlands? What activities do they undertake during their spare time, and what are the effects of their presence on the Dutch tourism industry, the Dutch higher education and the Dutch population in general?

1.3 The Travel Interests of Chinese Tourists to the Netherlands

As a result of China's growing prosperity among its middle class, a large number of Chinese have more to spend on holidays. In order to sustain or increase the number of Chinese visitors to the Netherlands, it is vital to consider the travel interests, motivations and behaviours of these tourists. Though numerous researchers have examined the economic and political background of China's outbound tourism, more emphasis ought to be placed on the subjects themselves: the Chinese tourists (Arlt, 2006 p.80). Additionally, Pizam and Sussman (1995) noted the following:

'Nationality is only one variable that should be considered in predicting variation in tourist behaviour and should never be used as a *sole* explanatory variable. Certainly, not all tourists of the same nationality, regardless of demographic category, motivation, and life-style, behave the same.'

(Pizam and Sussman 1995: 917)

Historical and cultural backgrounds should, therefore, be included in any analysis of tourists' behaviour, especially if tourism is seen as an instrument to construct national individualities in domestic travels (Palmer, 1998) and to refine the awareness of cultural differences in overseas destinations (Jameson, 1993; Robinson, 1998; Robinson,

2001). With regard to Chinese outbound tourism there are very limited number of historical instances or role models to inform modern tourism, but the ‘cultural distance’ (Williams, 1998; Bowden, 2003) is clearly felt in most encounters between Chinese and non-Chinese actors in the arena of international tourism. It is, therefore, virtually impossible to study the Chinese tourist without embarking on one of the most fundamental pillars of the Chinese culture: Confucianism.

Therefore, in this proposed interpretive investigation, one that is founded on the belief that to understand the world of meaning construction one must interpret it (Schwandt, 1994), the topic of Confucianism and its influence on the Chinese culture will be fundamental to my knowledge construction. Hence, without explicitly underlining the Confucian concepts, it is impossible to understand the Chinese people and their interests / preferences. Essential values such as hierarchy, authority, respect, loyalty and harmony are deeply embedded in the Chinese (Warner & Zhu, 2002; Zhang, 1999) culture, and these has an effect on their interests and activities when they travel abroad.

Likewise, Chinese tourists are drawn to destinations by means of *Worldmaking* - a political and creative way of normalizing, naturalizing promotions of one destination / people / place above the other (Hollinshead, 2009). Destinations sometimes create stories: making this specific place idyllic, unique and mystical in order to attract tourists. Giethoorn, in the North of the Netherlands, for example, is one such destination. In an interview conducted by Thijs Jacobs with Gabriella Essenbrugge (2016 blog), who single-handedly placed Giethoorn on the map with Chinese tourists, she explained the notion behind the promotion of Giethoorn: “... we target a certain market. That is, the highly educated Chinese 25 – 45-year-olds who do not travel in large groups. Large groups are not suitable for our region” (Essenbrugge, 2016). By creating a “world” and adapting promotions to attract the desired audience, worldmaking is an attractive concept that could positively add to the dimension of a tourism destination.

In sum, in order to gain an understanding of the motivation for Chinese millennial tourists to visit Europe and for Chinese millennials to choose to study in the Netherlands, and consequently, to learn about the implications of these visits on both the Dutch tourism industry and the Dutch Higher Education, a number of propaedeutical issues were raised. First of all, Chinese outbound tourism is seen as the main driver of the world's tourism growth and the advent of this phenomenon is having a significant impact on tourism destinations worldwide. Secondly, it was vital to examine the Chinese people and their past by describing the crucial role of Confucianism, Communism, Capitalism and Consumerism on the constitution of the Chinese people.

This also include a brief look into political function of soft power in tourism and China's application of this tool on tourism destinations. Thirdly, the Chinese millennial tourists who are seemingly very different from their parents with regard to international travels compound the emergence of Chinese outbound tourism and its role in transforming the destinations visited. The millennials are seen to shun large group travels in favour of small groups or travelling independently. Additionally, the Netherlands as a state within Europe was examined.

The relationship between the Netherlands and China was evaluated, with a focus on the higher education system in the Netherlands and its attraction for Chinese millennial students. Finally, the behaviour and travel interests of these millennial students were highlighted. Consequently, the researcher aims to gain in-depth understanding of the main interests of Chinese millennial tourists/students to the Netherlands. She likewise seeks to learn what the implications of these visits are for the Dutch tourism industry and the Dutch higher education board. Grounded on these issues, the following research problem has been formulated:

1.4 The Study Problem and Sub-problems

The governing study problem reads:

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY IS TO EXAMINE THE KEY INTERESTS OF CHINESE MILLENNIAL STUDENTS AS TOURISTS TO THE NETHERLANDS, AND TO INVESTIGATE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THEIR PARTICULAR VISITATION FOR BOTH THE DUTCH TOURISM INDUSTRY AND THE DUTCH HIGHER EDUCATION BOARD.

The researcher seeks to investigate what the key interests are of Chinese millennial students who very often travel throughout the Netherlands as tourists during their study time. In addition to this, she might amongst other actions, inspect the visitation profile of the Chinese students vis-à-vis other Chinese tourists. Simultaneously, an investigation is done into the consequences of these visits for both the Dutch tourism industry and the Dutch higher education board. Hence the study problem constitutes an analysis of what the key interests of Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands are, as such visitations could have implications for the Dutch tourism industry as well as the Dutch higher education board. Established on this study problem, the following sub-problems have been framed:

1.4.1 SUB-PROBLEM #1

Why do Chinese millennial students choose to visit the Netherlands?

Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe has risen considerably in the past decade. A significant number of these Chinese visitors travel to the Netherlands and a growing number of them belong to the cohort referred to as millennials as they were born after 1980. These tourists appear to have different reasons for visiting this destination than their parents. I would like to know what their motivations are and interests in choosing the Netherlands above other European destinations.

1.4.2 SUB-PROBLEM #2

Why do Chinese millennial students decide to study in the Netherlands?

The Chinese millennial students make up a substantial amount of the current international student body at universities throughout the Netherlands. There are numerous higher educational institutes in Western Europe where these students could possibly choose to study. The researcher wants to know why Chinese millennial students elect to carry out their studies in the Netherlands.

1.4.3 SUB-PROBLEM #3

What activities do Chinese millennial students participate in during their study-time in the Netherlands?

It is assumed that during their study-time in the Netherlands, Chinese millennial students take part in various activities. These activities are presumed to be different from those of other Chinese visitors. These students are said to form their own communities while in the Netherlands, and participate in leisure activities with their peers. The researcher is, therefore, anxious to learn what these activities involve.

1.4.4 SUB-PROBLEM #4

What are the consequences of Chinese millennial students' stay in the Netherlands on their own exhibited interests and behaviours?

During their stay in the Netherlands Chinese millennial students are in close contact not only with the Dutch students but also with other international students. The things they are interested in, and the way they behave are somewhat different than when they are in China. They are also involved with a

somewhat different society than that of their homeland. The researcher would, therefore, like to learn what the consequences of their stay in the Netherlands are on their own personal interests and behaviours.

1.4.5 SUB-PROBLEM #5

What are the consequences of the presence of Chinese millennial students for the Dutch tourism board and for the Dutch population in general?

Chinese millennial students very often host visiting friends and relatives, who sometimes stay at nearby accommodations, or with the students themselves. It is essential that the Dutch tourism board keep a record of these visits, particularly if these visitors are staying with the (hosting) student. Besides, the fact that these students live in the Netherlands has implications for the Dutch society in general. That is why the researcher would like to know what the consequences of Chinese millennial students' presence are for the Dutch tourism board and the diverse peoples of the Netherlands.

1.5. Anticipated Contributions to Knowledge to be Made by This Study

In order to contribute to knowledge construction, three notions will be explored during this investigation. These are *Bricoleurship*; *Worldmaking*; and *East-West understanding*, respectively.

1.5.1 *Bricoleurship*: The bricolage involves multiple approaches of inspection, distinct academic and theoretical views of diverse issues faced during research practice (Kincheloe, 2001). Levi-Strauss (1972: 72-73) claims that bricoleurs are 'practical subjects who tinker and experiment with already existent stories and symbols to create mythopoeic images of the world.' Many travelers claim that films and various literary texts played the largest role in informing their images, perceptions and expectations of attractions (Howard, 2017, p.73).

1.5.2 *Ways of Worldmaking*: application of Goodman's touch of "Relativism" to tourism ideas, destinations and settings (Hollinshead 2009, see p.14).

'Worldmaking, as we know it, always starts from worlds already on hand; the making is remaking' (Goodman 1978:6).

1.5.3 East-West understanding: are the 'continental' sensitivities assumed concerning the backgrounds and behaviors of the East and those assumed about the West in the global community ... in terms of the opposing positions currently held, both separately and figuratively, by way of interpretations and negotiations of tourism (and its related / collaborative / inscriptive industries) (Jamal & Robinson, 2009).

1.6 Rationale for the Study

In this section, the rationale for this study is provided. This outlines the justification for embarking on this proposed multidimensional inquiry into Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe and examines the visitation of Chinese millennial students as tourists to the Netherlands. **The study primarily focuses on the Chinese millennial students** to the Netherlands, because they are presumed to favour travelling through the Netherlands and/or Europe during their study-time. These travels could have impacts on the students themselves, the Dutch tourism industry, the Dutch higher education board and the Dutch population. Hence, this rationale offers **reasons for choosing the Chinese millennial students as the object of this study.**

First of all, the generic conception adopted here is that in order to create a broader understanding of the ways in which tourism plays an active role in 'connecting' the past and the present is through cultural exchanges and awareness. In such an exploratory study, Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicate that social phenomena are investigated with minimal of a priori expectations in order to develop justifications of and about a phenomenon. Therefore, in this rationale, three main topics will be explored. First, some background information will be provided about what has been written on the development of Chinese outbound tourism to Europe and the emergence of Chinese millennial students from China. This is followed by an identification of what is missing,

or gaps (with)in existing literature on this topic. Finally, the significance of tackling these gaps are addressed.

1.6.1 Background Information into the Rationale for Selecting Chinese Millennial Students

The past decade has shown a sharp increase in the number of Chinese students that follow a parttime/full-time degree programme in the Netherlands. In fact, this amount equals the second (Germany being the first) largest group of international students, accounting for ten percent of the international student population in the Netherlands (Leiden Asia Research Centre, 2015). Universities all over the globe are attempting to lure students from China into pursuing a study at their institutes. Although the first language in the Netherlands is Dutch, the country has proven to be successful in attracting non-Dutch speaking students. The main reason for their success is that almost all Dutch universities offer a wide range of study programmes in English (p. 1). In addition to this, it is relatively inexpensive to study in the Netherlands. Thus, despite the fact that competition for students from China is very strong (losing out to countries such as the U.S and Canada), Chinese students often come to the Netherlands as a second-best choice (Leiden Asia Research Centre, 2015).

In a study conducted by The Leiden Asia Centre (LAC) into Dutch higher education and Chinese students in the Netherlands, researchers wanted answers to three core questions:

- What is the impact of Chinese students on the higher education sector?
- How could the higher education sector better facilitate the migratory experiences of Chinese students?
- What are the staying intentions and prospects of Chinese students?

It established that international students to a particular destination generically have a status and are therefore, expected to exhibit certain behaviours and interests in/to this

destination. When in the Netherlands, Chinese millennial students travel around the country in the weekends, visiting not only urban areas but also the country-side; seeking out new experiences, trying local cuisine and searching for authentic events / activities. During this time their status changes from 'student' to 'tourist', as they 'tour' other regions than their place of study. Thus, Chinese millennial students spend much of their leisure time touring the Netherlands during their study-time in the country. What is more, they often entertain visiting friends and family, and take them to places they themselves consider places of interests for these visiting friends and family members. In this capacity, Chinese millennial students could be of importance to both the Dutch tourism industry as well as the Dutch higher education board, in that they could serve to promote the Netherlands to the visiting friends and relatives.

Having said that, the present stream of Chinese students to the Netherlands is not an independent manifestation, and so other factors ought to be considered. One such factor is the international society. Within this context, Khorsandi (2014) claims that the *internationalization* of higher education in practice is "the process of commercializing research and post-secondary education, and international competition for the recruitment of foreign students from wealthy and privileged countries in order to generate revenue, secure national profile, and build international reputation (Khorsandi, 2014)." Knight (2003), on the other hand, provides an update of *internationalization* when she claims that theoretically speaking, *internationalization* is "the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education" (Knight, 2003). Consequently, many higher educational institutes in the Netherlands are attempting to entice Chinese millennial students in particular to their establishment based on the internationalization of education and the benefits that can be derived from this phenomenon.

Another factor, namely migration is a consequential influence allowing universities to compete on a global scale. Despite the sharp increase in the higher educational sector in China, many Chinese millennial students are choosing for a study abroad, according to Times Higher Education university rankings (THE World University Rankings, 2018). In fact, China has emerged as one of the leading countries supplying international students. In the Netherlands, for example, Chinese students is second largest supplier of these students. The Leiden Asia Research Centre (2018), provides some key motivations for this:

- **Enriched experience:** develop a better understanding of other cultures, while gaining a global attitude;
- **Meet a diverse range of people:** construct new/diverse friendships - live and travel with new friends, form international network of life-long friends, create everlasting memories;
- **Future employment prospects:** enhance job outlooks and career development – some stay on after their studies to gain (international) work experience;
- **Development of language skills:** a study in an English-speaking country, enables students to learn and improve their language skills;
- **Avoidance of the Higher Education exam in China:** students evade the dreaded *Gaokao*, the higher education entrance exam in China, which is considered one of the most nerve-wracking phases for both Chinese students and parents;
- **Preparation for immigration and working abroad:** some students plan to move to a foreign country and in order to avoid the strict application process / eligibility, they elect to study abroad;
- **Influenced by friends:** a Chinese student is sometimes influenced to study abroad because of stimulation from friends;

- **Influence/advice from parents/family members:** parents have a major influence in their child's life and so the Chinese student can decide to study abroad based on their parents' advice (The Leiden Asia Research Centre, 2018).

A third factor is China's rapid modernization, a process which aims at increasing the nation's global power (p.5). Although this is not a novel occurrence, the current breed of Chinese students studying abroad illustrates a change in direction compared to the early phase of China's modernization process. These days, returning students are also playing a cumulative role in China's modernization in that they are disseminating new technologies, helping Chinese firms with globalisation, and introducing new management practices to China (Wang, 2010).

In addition to these three factors (international society, migration and modernization) scholars such as Gardiner et al. (2013) discuss Chinese outbound student-tourists: and how they have acquired a taste for independent travel. They argue that although most Chinese outbound travellers participate in group tours, many young Chinese are currently travelling abroad for educational purposes. These 'study tourists' travel independently around their study environment, very often accompanied by friends and relatives whom they are hosting. Understanding the physiognomies of such independent behaviours could provide insights into China's future outbound travel market (Gardiner et al., 2013). Their findings challenge established typologies of independent youth travellers and increase potential implications for marketers. Simultaneously, their approach incorporates academic and applied understandings of this important tourism market and explains how tourism industry leaders could explore these openings by taking initiatives such as adopting novel tourism marketing policies, developing new products and revising packaging strategies. However, the implications of Chinese millennial students' visitation on destinations and on the higher education board of that

specific destination have not been investigated. Likewise, the results of their studying in the Netherlands on their personal development have yet to be investigated.

Additionally, tourism marketers have attempted to target the international students' market due to the significant scale, development and impact of the study-abroad phenomenon (Glover, 2011; Weaver, 2002). Consequently, there is a growing body of research into student-related travel and leisure behaviours. Despite the apparent bright prospects, there is a lack of understanding concerning the development of tourism-related products in this area. Besides, the tourism industry seems unable to motivate prospective participants as there appears to be misconceptions of what international students desire from the industry. Gardiner et al. (2013) contend that marketing actions cease to work if industry merely transplants long-established approaches in leisure travels.

International students who travel while overseas are very much different from the generic leisure tourists in that they reside in the host destination for a certain time – to study and simultaneously explore the country before returning to their home/country (Gardiner et al., 2013). Chinese millennials students, for example, visit peers in other destinations and in so doing, they become tourists to these destinations. The activities they participate in are thus heavily determined by their peers, who have developed a 'local' perspective of that place. Thus, the experience provided is heavily influenced by the host's perception. The same is true for visiting friends and relatives of the Chinese millennial student, who are then exposed to local activities / events based on the advice/recommendations of their host. Hence, there are apparent gaps in current literature.

1.6.2 Identification of Gaps in the Existing Literature

Despite what has been previously written in existing literature, including what has been discussed above (*see* 1.6.1), there appears to be a lack of information about the recent

emergence of Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands and the impact of this on the Dutch higher educational institutes and the Dutch tourism industry. Furthermore, though various researchers have inspected the economic, social, cultural and political values of China's outbound tourism, more stress ought to be placed on the subjects themselves (Arlt, 2006 p.80). Hence gaps in the existing literature include:

- How has the experience of studying abroad impacted the Chinese millennial student's life (style)?
- How has the Chinese millennial student experienced living in the "West"?
- In what way has their living and studying in the Netherlands enhanced their life and job perspectives on their return home?
- How has the experience affected/influenced their relationships (family, friends, social networks)?

When Chinese students embark on a study in the Netherlands, they usually do research in advance of their arrival in the country. Though most of them seem to prefer to study in the United States, Canada and other English-speaking countries, they have discovered that there are countries such as the Netherlands, that not only offer English-taught programmes but have less-expensive tuition fees. Moreover, the Chinese value safety and security during their stay in a country. Increasingly, they are seeking for a clean environment and healthy lifestyles and therefore countries that offer these features are becoming more attractive for them.

Most importantly, though, is the fact that not only is Europe seen as a prestigious destination to visit, it also has a rich history (*see 1.1.4*) which is evident in the numerous museums and galleries throughout the Continent. The Netherlands, for example, is preferred for its famous Masters, its architecture, clean air, safe environment, tolerant and hospitable population.

During their study in the Netherlands, Chinese millennial students participate in various activities and events. They travel to other Dutch cities, as well as cities in Europe, sometimes visiting friends and relatives, but other times attending events and participating in various activities.

Questions that arose after literature study include:

- Why Chinese millennial tourists/students choose to visit/stay in the Netherlands;
- What are their main travel motivations and interests?
- What are the consequences of their stay in the Netherlands on their own exhibited interests and behaviours?
- What are the effects of their presence on the Netherlands and on the Dutch population in general?

For further discussions on these issues, *see* 1.4.1-1.4.5. Subsequently, it is important to address the significance of tackling these gaps in existing literature. This is done in the ensuing section.

1.6.3 Significance of Tackling the Gaps in Existing Literature

As is customary in studies such as this, it is important to challenge the existing gaps in literature. In order to tackle the gaps in existing literature on Chinese millennial students' impact on the Netherlands, comprehensive details on the travel interests and behaviour of these students on the Dutch population, the country itself, the Dutch higher education board and the Chinese millennial students themselves, will be explored. In so doing, the researcher aims to clearly examine the travel interests and behaviour of Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands in particular by carefully scrutinising their motivations for choosing for a study in this destination. Based on existing literature, there is a lack in understanding of the Chinese millennial students, as they are

generically classified among international students. Due to the fact that Chinese millennial students exhibit different characteristics from other international students, it is important, especially for the travel industry to develop specific products/services for this particular market. Additionally, having knowledge of Chinese millennial students has implications for the Dutch higher education board in that these students provide economic benefits not only to its education board, but also to the entire population. Therefore, understanding the Chinese millennial students' travel interests and behaviour could serve to increase the number of the international student population in the Netherlands. This understanding is vital for unleashing the potentials of this important and dynamic travel market as well as extending theoretical knowledge on travel constrictions. Findings of this study are relevant for both tourism academics and practitioners who seek a better understanding of the travel behaviours and interests of Chinese millennial students as tourists.

1.6.4 Relation of Study Sub-problems and Concepts Being Investigated

In this proposed interpretive study, meaning one that is founded on the belief that to understand the world of meaning construction, this world has to be interpreted (Schwandt, 1994), the topic of Confucianism and its influence on the Chinese culture will be fundamental to the researcher's knowledge construction. Without explicitly underlining the Confucian/ concepts, it is impossible to understand the Chinese people and their interests / preferences. This is directly linked to Sub-Problem One [*Why do Chinese (millennial) tourists choose to visit the Netherlands?*] in that the principal interests of Chinese tourists are deeply embedded in the Chinese culture and Confucianism plays a major role in this culture. It is very important to learn the reason why tourists visit a particular destination. This is, likewise, connected to Sub-Problem One. Additionally, the number of Chinese millennials choosing to study in the Netherlands is on the rise. This has consequences not only for the Dutch Higher Education Board (DHEB), but also for the Dutch Tourism Industry (DTI). Therefore, it is

of essence to investigate the reason for this development and examine the implications of this phenomenon on both the DHEB and the DTI. This is linked to Sub-Problem Two [*Why do Chinese millennial students decide to study in the Netherlands?*]

Moreover, during their study-time in the Netherlands, Chinese millennial students participate in various activities and events. They do not only travel through the Netherlands, but also throughout other European destinations. They visit friends and relatives, some of which are also studying in Europe. Likewise, they are visited by friends and relatives and in this capacity, they play host to these visitors. Hence, there is a relation to Sub-Problem Three [*What activities do Chinese millennial students participate in during their study-time in the Netherlands?*].

Subsequently, during their stay in the Netherlands, Chinese millennial students are influenced by their peers as well as by the surroundings in which they reside. They are required to adapt to the Dutch way of life and as a result, they display different interests and behaviours than those exhibited when in their homeland - China. This has an impact on the actions and ultimately their behaviour during their stay in the Netherlands. Accordingly, this is reflected in Sub-Problem Four [*What are the consequences of Chinese millennial students' stay in the Netherlands on their own exhibited interests and behaviours?*]

Finally, a sudden appearance of one community on another (community) can ultimately transform the dynamics of that community. The People's Republic of China adheres to a Communist system of governance whereas the Netherlands has a Democratic one. Chinese millennial students, most of whom have lived and studied in China, are rather different from the Dutch millennial students. Additionally, Chinese millennial students usually reside in communities, which are in the vicinity of their institute of study. The presence of these students has implications not only for these communities, but also for the entire Dutch population. Therefore, this is reflected in Sub-Problem Five [*What are*

the consequences of the presence of Chinese millennial students on the Netherlands and on the Dutch population in general?]

Hence, the transdisciplinary nature of this study is a required one, where the researcher seeks to draw (where demonstrably relevant), upon insights from several different academic disciplines and fields but also upon non-academic forms of understanding. Transdisciplinary in this context is defined by Tribe (1997) as “*the creation of knowledge outside existing disciplines by resorting to practical sources*”. To reflect the point, this obligation does not mean the study has to be situated deeply within a large number of different disciplines, it means it necessarily needs to draw from or acknowledge held insights from them. I will, therefore, endeavour to be sensitive to the way in which the heavily symbolic forms of ‘culture’ that are displayed in and through tourism are intertwined with matters of economics, politics, marketing, human communications and other such disciplines, as these will provide windows into the Chinese tourists and Chinese outbound tourism in general. Hence, these days, many studies of identity in Tourism Studies are transdisciplinary (Hollinshead, 2004 b).

Furthermore, the very nature of the Chinese tourist is based on the intrinsic culture of the Chinese people and Confucian principles play a major role in defining this culture. Little & Reed (1989) contend that the cultural disposition of Confucian values is centred around four unique but inter-related concepts: Goodwill (*Ren*): generosity and compassion to all humanity; Protocol (*Li*) the rules of proper conduct; Filial Piety (*Hsiao*) love one’s family first then extend this love to the whole society; and finally, the Doctrine of Mean (*Zhong Yong*) appreciation of core virtues – balance between extremes (Little & Reed, 1989).

Finally, despite numerous quantitative studies that attempt to chart the future of China’s outbound tourism, and a somewhat smaller number of qualitative studies on aforementioned topic, none has particularly examined the Chinese tourists themselves

and the impact their interests and visits has on destinations in developed countries like the Netherlands. Though Arlt (2006) has succinctly tackled this issue in his book *China's Outbound Tourism*, this information is somewhat outmoded. However, it provides some insights into the China outbound tourism phenomenon, particularly examining marketing-related, economic and political issues. Remarkably, various researchers on Chinese outbound tourism have, so far, failed to address important issues such as the Chinese millennials themselves and the vital role that social media play in the current Chinese outbound tourist experience. Xiao (2006) examined the discourses of power initiated by Mao's successor, Deng Xiaoping. However, Xiao's analysis focuses on tourism development in China and does not consider the ways in which individual tourists construe and convey their tourism bias.

Therefore, the researcher goes beyond contrived views of the cultural, social and economic values of Chinese tourists to investigate the many dimensions of Chinese outbound tourism on Western European countries such as The Netherlands, and simultaneously examines the interests of these tourists while at the destination. It demonstrates that a substantial number of these tourists belong to the millennial generation, and that these young people exhibit qualities that are unlike previous generations. A research conducted by Daxue Research Institute claims that Chinese millennials account for nearly one-third of the total population of China and consequently, they will make up more than 40% of the outbound tourism from China by 2020. Furthermore, I will examine the various dimensions of Chinese outbound tourism on the Netherlands and focus particularly on the Chinese millennial students as tourists.

I have therefore equipped myself with a mix of propaedeutic readings on representational systems and repertoires, which are grounded in, for example, cultural studies, social studies and political science. In other words, I have drawn from Kincheloe's (2001) *Bricoleurship*, (see 1.5.1) to examine Chinese outbound tourism to

Europe, and in particular to the Netherlands. For example, in this study the researcher recognises that:

- ...culture in social science refers to whatever is distinctive about the 'way of life' of a people, community, nation or social group (Hall, S. 1997). Alternatively, the word 'culture' can be used to describe the 'shared values' of a group or society- which is similar to the anthropological definition except that it carries a more sociological emphasis.
- 'Culture', as defined by Hofstede (2001) refers to the collective mental programming: it is that part of our conditioning that we share with other members of our nation, region, or group but not with members of other nations, regions, or groups". He summarised (five aspects) in his famous "Cultural dimensions" in an analysis of fifty-three countries and regions (Hofstede, 1980;1988). These are: power distance, collectivism vs individualism, femininity versus masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term versus short-term orientation, which are echoed in a society's cultural values and norms. Although his studies were conducted over two decades ago, they still postulate a sound foundation for deeper understanding of how the values and norms of a society influence its individuals' attitude on a cultural level.
- 'Cultural identity' according to S. Hall (1985), can be expressed in two distinct ways. The first is seen as one collective culture, mirroring typical historical experiences and "provide us as 'one people', with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning" (p. 393). The second view relies heavily on the individual's experience of their culture, which, unlike the first definition, presents an ever-changing perspective. "Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, nationhood and power" (Hall, S. p. 394).

- ... Chinese traditional forms of culture (and long-perceived forms of Chinese identity) is possibly waning, and needs “beefing up” (Renwei, 2003);
- tourism (and its symbolic / declarative reach) is a dynamic but under-examined source referred to as “the integration, institutionalization, and operationalization” of Confucian and other traditional cultural values in China (Hou, 2012; Hollinshead & Hou, 2012),

1.7 Description and Explanation of the Three Phases of the Study and the Emergent Nature of the Research.

First of all, it is important to define what the nature of an emergent research entails.

Schwandt (1997) explains an emergent design as one that acknowledges the anticipating of deviations in approaches, practices, methods of producing data, and so on. In this way, the researcher seeks to make her design receptive to the conditions of her studies. In other words, the emergent design is one that is defined by its responsive nature of planning and organising the investigation, hence flexibility and manageability are primary requirements. The word ‘emergent’ denotes ‘arising unexpectedly’ which could imply that such design materializes unexpectedly or that initially the researcher does not possess a plan at all. In fact, is even claimed by some that an emergent study is a complete laissez-faire attitude of seeing ‘what happens’. Although such an investigation has no careful plan in advance, there are clear understandings that the researcher initially seeks and therefore formulates a problem or issue to be studied (Schwandt, 1997). Chinese millennials students travel extensively during their studies in the Netherlands (*see* 1.1.11). When studying this population, it is therefore difficult to have a fixed plan of approach, hence anticipation of divergences in tactics, practices, data production, and so on, are typical of an emergent study. Hence, the researcher seeks to make her design sensitive to the settings of her studies.

After having provided a clear definition of the emergent nature of this study, the structure of this research will be delineated, followed by the reasoning for adopting an

emergent design to studying the Chinese millennial students' interests when visiting the Netherlands. Hence, a naturalistic inquiry – a method which seeks to describe behaviour, beliefs, and feelings of a specific group / people within a societal or cultural context – will be applied (Erlandson, et al., 1993). There are three distinct phases in this naturalistic inquiry. These (prior-ethnographic, pilot and ethnographic) will be elucidated in the ensuing paragraphs.

First of all, in the prior ethnographic phase, the site is visited and the researcher converses with possible respondents, observes, records and establishes if the chosen site 'fits' the objectives of the research. Lincoln and Guba (2005), proponents of the *Naturalistic Inquiry* approach state that:

‘Such prior ethnography not only helps to diminish the obtrusiveness of the investigator but also provides a baseline of cultural accommodation and informational orientation that will be invaluable in increasing both the effectiveness and the efficiency of the formal work. It prepares the inquirer's mind for what will come later and so serves to sensitize and hone the human instrument’ (p. 251).

In the prior ethnographic phase of this study, the researcher initially decided to focus on Chinese outbound tourism to France, as at the time, most Chinese millennials elected France as their preferred destination. After visiting the proposed site in order to observe and record the operations of the population to be studied: Chinese millennials in France and French tourism operators, it proved that due to linguistic challenges (the researcher's limited knowledge of the French language and the respondents' inability to speak English sufficiently) there would be major challenges to the study. Moreover, gaining access to the French stakeholders proved very difficult as there were not only linguistic barriers but also matters related to availability and willingness of the French key players to participate in the investigation. The researcher, consequently, was obliged to change the focus of her study to the Netherlands, as here was a higher probability of attaining a rich mix of data that could facilitate the research problem.

Nevertheless, the researcher was able to hold a focus group meeting with Chinese millennial students in the South of France. This prior ethnography provided significant insights into the Chinese millennial students: their culture, values, behaviour and travel preferences while studying in France.

In the second phase: the pilot phase, the researcher built on the information gathered from the prior ethnographic phase. Although the decision was made to make a shift in direction regarding the targeted population, vital data was gathered on the Chinese millennial students studying in France. With this information, it was possible to take a more discriminatory approach to selecting participants for potential focus group meetings, as well as informants for likely interviews. Additionally, it was also observed that careful venue selection for a focus group meeting is crucial to holding such a consultation. For example, due to the cultural disposition of the Chinese millennial student: linguistic challenges, timidity of the participants, recording sensitivities and so on, future focus groups of this nature needed to be organised with these considerations in mind.

Furthermore, in this phase, the researcher decided to focus on experts who had knowledge of the subjects themselves, the Dutch higher education system and the Dutch tourism industry. These informants were thought to be able to provide insights into the travel interests and behaviour of the Chinese millennial tourists as well as the Chinese millennial students while they are in the Netherlands and/or during their travels through Europe. They would also have knowledge of the international tourism inflows of Chinese tourists as well as historical information about the PRC. Besides, information from these participants could shed light on the behaviour, beliefs and feelings of the culture and values of the Chinese millennial students/tourists, which explains why the researcher has elected to embark on a naturalistic inquiry.

Box 1, therefore, provides a reflexive report on the researcher's initial phases of this emergent study of Chinese outbound tourism to the Netherlands:

BOX 1: A REFLEXIVE REPORT ON THE INITIAL PHASES OF THIS EMERGENT STUDY OF CHINESE OUTBOUND TOURISM TO THE NETHERLANDS.

During the initial phases of this emergent study, I wanted to see if the methods I had chosen to use would provide me with the required information to gain further insight into the research problems. Hence, preliminary data collection took place using the proposed methods (see Table 3.2), but with a very small sample, in order to examine the approach selected and identify any details that needed to be addressed before the main data collection started. Although I was vigilant not to read too much into the findings of the prior ethnographic phase, the insights gained were very useful as they provided valuable information about the approach and methods chosen.

Firstly, the change in focus turned out to be an effective one. Due to the fact I am Dutch (by naturalization) there were no linguistic challenges as with the French participants. In retrospect, I should have done this from the beginning, but I guess I could not have known that gaining access to the French tourism industry would have been so frustrating.

In the pilot phase, I focused on the main cities in the Netherlands. I have conducted a second focus group discussion with 13 PhD students from Zhejiang University in China. These students were visiting the Netherlands upon invitation from NHTV University. Besides the focus group discussion, I also had the opportunity of visiting attractions and places of interests with them in the Netherlands. This has supplied me with rich data regarding their interests in the Netherlands and I was pleased with some observations that I made.

The 2nd China-Meetup seminar that was held at the NHTV University was also very important for my study and I gained a wealth of knowledge about the Chinese millennial students and their attitude towards the Netherlands.

I attended a lecture by Professor Kloet from the University of Amsterdam. Professor Kloet spoke about Chinese Youth Culture. I was also able to speak personally with him about his visits and experiences in China.

I visited Amsterdam with a Chinese millennial student studying in France. We spent the weekend visiting interesting places and attractions of her choice in and around Amsterdam. This was another very rich source of information which has certainly opened up some interesting possibilities for further investigation.

I presented my studies – so far – at the 26th Nordic Symposium for Tourism and Hospitality Research which was held in Falun, Sweden, from October 4 – 6, 2017. Here I also spoke with fellow researchers. I attended one very interesting study by Klaes Eringa & Shenghan Zhou, who talked on “Leeuwarden in front of the Camera: Cultural differences in destination image photography”. It was interesting to see how they use photography to take a cross-cultural view of the image of the destination from both a Chinese and a Dutch perspective. This provides an insight into what Chinese visitors to the Netherlands are looking for at this destination. In this study, it became clear that Chinese tourists’ value clean environment, which is reflected in the number of pictures that the Chinese students took of clear blue skies and sunshine. They particular value this because it is an attribute that is not found in the major cities of China where they originate. They also took scenes of water and activities on the water. The Dutch are “Water Managers”, and this fascinates the Chinese, apparently. The pictures that Chinese students took of the city of Leeuwarden were compared with the pictures that the Dutch students took of the city. It was not surprising that, as ‘tourists’ both groups had a different image of the destination: Leeuwarden.

Finally, in the third phase: the intended ethnographic study, according to Geertz (1973) is often one in which researchers completely immerse themselves in the lives, culture, or situation they are studying. In fact, it is the methodical study of people and cultures designed to explore cultural phenomena in which the researcher observes a society from the viewpoint of the subject under study (Geertz, 1973 p.3-30). The resulting field study reflects the knowledge and the system of meanings in the lives of the studied cultural group (Philipsen, 1992). In studying the Chinese millennials, it is therefore vital to examine the people themselves, their cultural values and norms, as well as their systems of meanings within their world as well as the international community in which they co-exist as students or tourists. Particular focus will be on their travel interests and behaviour when in the Netherlands. Therefore, in this ethnographic phase of the study the researcher will incorporate the important issues dealt with in the prior ethnographic and the pilot phases of the study.

Due to the emergent nature of this study the researcher will disclose fresh understandings along the way, and therefore it is unlikely that conclusiveness on many issues will be attained during this process. Moreover, the nature of this topic is complex and fluid partly because of the international issues involved and also owing to the multidimensional nature of Chinese outbound tourism. That is why the researcher finds it pertinent to establish a propaedeutic research agenda at the culmination of this study in order to further direct not only current research efforts, but concurrently, to guide the determinations of the broader tourism field, into the uncovered issues/under-covered contexts / evolving importances.

1.8 Limitations and Delimitations

Due to a number of practicalities, the researcher will, therefore, not seek to provide a comprehensive report on the complete discussion on the representations of Chinese

millennials, but focus more on those from Mainland China, particularly from the urban areas. I will limit my examination to the Netherlands as a state within Europe, and at times will also look at Western Europe generically. Although 85% of Chinese international travel is to major city destinations Croce (2016), I will also focus on smaller cities within the Netherlands, as millennials are increasingly choosing to visit other regions than large cities.

Another limitation is the availability of recent academic documents on the Chinese outbound millennial tourists. Most of the available documents are related to pre-millennial tourists and these are somewhat different from their parents. However, by also analysing these pre-millennials I learn about the Dutch tourism industry as well as the Dutch education system with regards to Chinese millennial students. I will simultaneously have focus group meetings with Chinese millennial students to find out what their core interests are in the Netherlands as a place to study. When the study methods will themselves be exercised in this study, the researcher will initially target a number of players in the Dutch tourism industry itself.

Furthermore, the Chinese millennials are assumed to start learning English earlier than their parents, most of whom have very little knowledge of the English language. Students are taught English at a very early age and are given extra English language trainings even throughout their secondary education. Some even take extra lessons next to their regular classes. Nevertheless, when they come to study in the Netherlands, their level of English is very low. Should they be asked to take part in a focus group meeting, they are afraid to speak their mind, due to their fear of 'losing face' or of not being understood. Therefore, the information that they provide might not be what they really intend to give or might be misinterpreted.

Additionally, it might be difficult to find Chinese millennial tourists who are willing to be interviewed for this study. There are numerous possibilities to meet these tourists, but

they are often with a partner, and they might not be willing or able to take the time to be interviewed. They too, might not want to show that their English language skills are somewhat inadequate, and so it could be very difficult to reach these travellers.

Delimitations include the scope of the Dutch tourism industry and the vast amount of possibilities that are available regarding data collection. This, however, can be mitigated by carefully selecting those that will provide most distinct insights into my topic of investigation. Moreover, the Chinese outbound tourism phenomenon is very dynamic: there are new developments practically every week. It will be a challenge to incorporate all these in this study. That is why I will try to include only the most relevant ones rather than focusing on all these events.

Finally, I have elected to study the Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands as the primary focus of my study. In order to do this, I might amongst other actions, scrutinize the visitation profile of the Chinese students by way of other Chinese tourists. It appears that Chinese millennial tourists are increasingly displaying features similar to other millennial travellers in that they prefer to travel alone or with a partner rather than to travel in large groups. Contrastingly, the current Chinese millennial students are somewhat shifting to group-travels while in Europe. They organise bus-tours through Europe, and in this way, they meet fellow compatriots who are also studying in the Netherlands or Europe, or who are visiting friends and relatives. The issue of safety plays a significant role in this novel mode of travelling through Europe. Furthermore, Group-travel is relatively inexpensive for these students, and they are happy to be with their peers and share experiences of their studies as well as their life in Europe. In addition to this, Chinese millennial students are presumably immersed in the Dutch society and therefore their perspectives might be “tainted” in some way by this immersion.

Table 1.3 below provides an overview of (anticipated) weaknesses of this study.

Table 1.3: Anticipated Difficulties / Weaknesses of this Study

A.	<p><u>RESEARCHER'S ETHNICITY:</u> The researcher is doing a study on Chinese outbound tourists though she is not of Chinese ethnicity. Although English is being learnt all over China, the level of English of Chinese tourists in general is very low. Chinese millennial tourists do have a reasonable level of English but there might be difficulties in interpreting the data generated from these tourists. Communication among millennial students in the Netherlands might not be so difficult in some cases but there might also be cases in which miscommunication takes place.</p>
B.	<p><u>DUTCH MILLENNIAL STUDENTS AS HOST TO CHINESE (MILLENNIAL) TOURISTS:</u> The researcher is working with Chinese students studying in the Netherlands. These students might be less 'authentic' than Chinese millennial visitors. However, they might be able to provide some insights into the overall interests of Chinese millennial tourists visiting the Netherlands. It is also assumed that these Chinese millennial students are visited by their parents, friends or relatives and they sometimes play hosts to these visitors. They consequently take them to places that they themselves consider interesting places.</p>
C.	<p><u>AUTHENTICITY OF STUDY POPULATION</u> The researcher will need to select genuine Chinese millennial students studying in the Netherlands. During the prior ethnography, it was revealed that most of the Chinese students studying at universities in the Netherlands are Dutch Chinese – children of Chinese immigrants to the Netherlands. This could influence the results of the focus group planned for the later stages of this study. The researcher might therefore need to screen interviewees to ensure that only Chinese millennials from Mainland China are in the population to be inspected. The researcher will attempt to contact Chinese millennial tourists via Chinese millennial students</p>
D.	<p><u>CHALLENGES REGARDING ORGANISATIONS</u> Selecting study contexts and target institutions / organisations could be time-consuming, which could necessitate effective planning and organisation by the researcher.</p>
E.	<p><u>RESEARCHER'S TRAINING NEEDS AND DATA COLLECTION</u></p> <p>a. The researcher will need to attend training and seminars and do extensive reading in order to gain familiarity with academic journals and articles, particularly regarding Chinese (outbound) tourism. Seeing the quick pace at which this phenomenon is evolving, it might be difficult to keep abreast with this rapidity of evolution.</p> <p>b. The researcher is Dutch but of Jamaican heritage. Being from the Caribbean, will influence the outcome of this study somehow with regard to cultural identity. I am accustomed to living and working in a diverse community, though having lived in the Netherlands for more than three decades, has exposed me to a more global perspective of people in general. I also suspect that it might be time-consuming collecting data from Chinese millennials as they might not be "used to" talking with people from the Caribbean. Nevertheless, I suspect that this need might not be restricted am in contact with Dutch-Chinese millennials, who might provide some insights into the interests they have in the Netherlands. I might consider snowball-sampling, should the proposed data collection method proposed prove insufficient.</p> <p>c. I suspect the fact that I am a woman might be advantageous to this study, seeing that so far, most Chinese millennial students and visitors are female. There is also a great deal of literature available, which are written by women. However, the tourism world is still a predominantly masculine one.</p>

1.9 Specific Areas of Interests

My contextual interpretations of some of the key terms and conceptions on Chinese outbound tourists' interests in the Netherlands will now be provided:

Chinese Millennials: The term “Millennial” as defined by the Pew Research Center are those born after 1980 and who came of age in the new millennium. In China, this cohort represents 385 million people, or 28.5% of the population, according to the US Census International Database (in CKGSB, 2014). These are sub-divided into two distinct categories: post 80s (*balinghou*) and post 90s (*jiulinghou*).

Tourism: Tourism is travel for pleasure or business; also, the theory and practice of touring, the business of attracting, accommodating, and entertaining tourists, and the business of operating tours. Tourism may be international or within the traveller's country (Oxford English Dictionary, 3rd ed., 2016). The UNWTO offers a very broad definition of this conception. According to them, “*Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes*” (UNWTO, 2016).

Chinese Outbound Tourism Market: the determinants, characteristics, and trends of Chinese outbound tourism in general and to certain countries / areas in particular (UNWTO, 2008).

Tourist, Host and Tourism Culture: The culture that tourists bring to a destination / place. It explains the behaviour of the tourist. The host culture is the culture of the host country with which the tourists are in contact (Jafari, 1987). Pizam (1999) noted that tourists of various nationalities possess both ‘touristic cultures’ and ‘national cultures.’

Naturalistic Inquiry: as stated by Lincoln & Guba (1985), is an approach to understanding the social world in which the researcher observes, describes, and interprets the experiences and actions of specific people and groups in societal and cultural contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Neo Confucianism: is the name often used to refer to the revival of the various strands of Confucian philosophy and political culture that began in the middle of the 9th century and reached new levels of intellectual and social creativity in the 11th century in the Northern Song Dynasty (Metzger, 1977). The first phase of this revival of the Confucian tradition was completed by the great philosopher Zhu Xi (1130-1200) and became the yardstick for future Confucian intellectual discourse and social theory.

Bricolage/Bricoleur: In their handbook of Qualitative Research, Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln describe the multiple methodologies used in qualitative inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p.2). The qualitative inquirer as bricoleur, is one who is 'adept at performing at a large number of diverse tasks, ranging from interviewing to observing, to interpreting personal and historical documents, to intensive self-reflection and introspection... [and one who] reads widely and is knowledgeable about the many interpretive paradigms (feminism, Marxism, cultural studies, constructivism) that can be brought to any particular problem.'

Bricoleurship in tourism: means Jack of all trades/professional do-it-yourself (Levi-Strauss, 1972, pp. 16-36). The bricoleur produces a bricolage – a kind of pieced-together, yet structured solution to a problem. The interpretive bricoleur produces a bricolage – an assemblage of representations tailored to the specifics of an intricate phenomenon, hence constructing an embryonic creation that transforms, taking on novel forms as different (invented, pieced-together) tools,

methods and techniques of representation and interpretation are added to the construct (Huber, 2010).

Internationalisation: Knight (2003) supplies an updated definition of internationalization as follows: “...*the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions, and delivery of postsecondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society*” (Knight, 2003a).

International Students: The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) states that international students are those who have crossed borders for the purpose of study, while the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the OECD and EUROSTAT define international students as those who are not residents of their country of study or those who received their prior education in another country (OECD, 2013).

Worldmaking (Through Tourism): Hollinshead provides the following quote for the term worldmaking: “Worldmaking is the creative --- and often false (faux) imaginative processes and projective promotional activities --- which management agencies, other mediating, bodies, and individuals strategically and ordinarily engage in to purposely (or otherwise unconsciously) privilege particular dominant / favoured representations of people / places / pasts within a given or assumed region, area, or world, over and above other actual or potential representations of those subjects” (Hollinshead, 2009).

Propaedeutics: or Propedeutics - According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the word propaedeutic, which is derived from the Greek word *propaideuein*, means ‘to teach’ beforehand, from *pro-* before, plus *paideuein* to teach, from *paid-*, *pais* child. ‘*Paideia*’ and ‘*Paideuein*’ both spring from the root ‘paid’ (Merriam-

Webster Dictionary, 2018). Generally speaking, the word is used mostly in scholarly discussions of learning and education. As Dr. Elizabeth Minnich once wrote,

“I take thinking not to be a source of any moral code or set of ethical principles but a propaedeutic, a preparation for discernment and indeterminate judgment.”

Dr. Elizabeth Minnich, (n.d.)

In the Netherlands, however, *‘propedeuse’* is a propaedeutic diploma delivered upon successful completion of the first year of studies, and it is often referred to by students, research universities and universities of applied sciences, as “P”, even though these institutes are not obliged by law to issue this propaedeutic diploma. Although it is not a recognized degree and therefore grants no rights outside the Dutch educational system, it has remained in use after the introduction of the Bologna Process (ministerial meetings and agreements between EU countries to ensure comparability in the standards and value of higher education qualifications) and the international bachelor-master system in the Netherlands, according to the Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation (NUFFIC, 2018).

1.10 Summary of Chapter One

The researcher aimed at providing a deeper understanding of the key interests of Chinese millennial students as tourists to the Netherlands and to investigate the implications of their particular visitation for both the Dutch Tourism Industry and the Dutch higher education board. Chapter one provided an introduction into the study by supplying some vital background information. It revealed that the notion of Chinese outbound tourism and the socio-economic aspects of this, has impacts on the destinations visited. Without first providing some historical facts about the people and their pasts it would be impossible to grasp their advancement and current status regarding the contemporary Chinese tourism to Western Europe. Secondly, in outlining

the manifestation of the political aspects of Chinese outbound tourism and the underlying conception of soft power it was disclosed that the later concept is very much engrained in Chinese outbound tourism. Thirdly, a consideration of the significances of the onset of Chinese outbound tourism on host destinations were also inspected. Additionally, the chapter looked at the surging number of Chinese visitors who are the so-called millennials. These visitors being mostly free independent travellers, are often students who have elected to study in the Netherlands. Their main interests and behaviours were reviewed and the activities they participate in while in the Netherlands were briefly discussed. Subsequently, the study problem and sub-problems were formulated and substantiated by a justification for this investigation. The projected contributions to knowledge construction and a description of the three phases of the study were also elucidated, before finally highlighting the limitations / delimitations and the specific areas of interests being considered in this emergent study.

1.11 Conclusions to Chapter One

In concluding, Chapter One provided an introduction to the inquiry of Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe: a visitation of Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands. This conclusion section closes the chapter and the deductions from the topics discussed are presented below in bullet fashion:

- The Chinese people have a rich and colourful pasts and histories which may help to define their motivations for/ and behaviour when visiting destinations outside of their country, particularly Europe;
- Many Chinese who visit Europe are millennials, who come on a holiday with a friend or in a small group, or come to study;
- Millennials have different motivations and exhibit other behaviours when compared to other Chinese visitors. These influence their interests and activities while in Europe;

- Confucianism, Communism, Capitalism and Consumerism are defining features of the Chinese tourists, which could assist in helping to understand the Chinese millennial student as tourist;
- The presence of Chinese millennial students has implications both for the destinations visited as well as on the visitors themselves;
- The Netherlands and China have had a long and convivial relationship for centuries;
- The PRC uses soft power to boost its image in the form of its outbound tourism management.

Having said that, the ensuing chapter provides a review of the literature examined in this study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction to Chapter Two

In Chapter one, the guiding parameters of the study were explained in terms of the effort to gather insights into the multidimensionality of Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe, with a focus on the Chinese millennial student to the Netherlands. Subsequently, in Chapter two, the researcher sets out to review the relevant literature on China's traditional and contemporary representation through East and West understanding in terms of China and other countries. Additionally, she will look at what is already known about the Dutch tourism industry before focusing on the Dutch image abroad. The interests of Chinese tourists will be delineated as well as the assumed interests of the Chinese millennial tourists. Subsequently, information on the Chinese students studying in the Netherlands will be collected. This chapter provides a propaedeutic review of literature on Chinese outbound tourism by taking a systematic transdisciplinary approach.

Likewise, the researcher will:

- examine the growth of scholastic literature on Chinese outbound tourism and the major theories on tourism developments within Chinese tourism studies;
- evaluate the quality of the literature studied so far by critically assessing the studied works;
- outline the works still to be reviewed as well as identify the limitations of this literature review.

All this will be done in order to further my understandings of the impact of Chinese outbound tourism to the Netherlands and to investigate the many dimensions of Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe in general. At the same time, I will scrutinize the visitation of Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands and compare

their interests, behaviours and activities with other Chinese millennial visitors to said country.

2.1 Areas of Interests Examined Within the Literature Review

The following areas of interests being studied were stated in chapter One: Worldmaking through tourism, Chinese outbound tourism market, tourists, hosts and tourism culture and the key players in the Dutch tourism industry. Chapter two will expand on this list by adding further terms and concepts to be found in the literature review. A brief discussion on the various disciplines that tourism embraces will also be included in this section of the literature review. The list of 'immediate' additional terms, concepts and areas of concentration in Chapter Two is as follows:

Traditional Chinese values - The cultural values of a country have an impact on its national psychology and individuality. Zhang (2013) contends that citizens' values and public views are transferred to state leaders by way of the media and other information channels, both directly and indirectly influencing decisions on foreign policy. The traditional cultural values that influence the awareness of the Chinese people are harmony, benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, wisdom, honesty, loyalty, and filial piety (Zhang, 2013). However, according to a remark made by Koerts (2017), the government of China is attempting to communicate so-called *traditional values* to a population whose values have evolved since 1949. This has paved the way for what has been described as a kind of spiritual vacuum. Concurrently, the English notions of expressions such as "benevolence" or "honesty" seem to have quite different inferences in Chinese. These expressions are supposedly difficult to translate (interview with Koerts, 2017).

Confucianism: the term Confucianism is often depicted as a system of social and ethical philosophy rather than a religion. As a matter of fact, Confucianism is established on an ancient religious foundation to construct the social values, institutions, and supreme epitomes of traditional Chinese society. It can be compared to what Bellah (1975) called

a “civil religion,” as its institutions were those of society, family, school, and state. Furthermore, its priests were merely parents, teachers, and officials. Confucianism was a segment of the Chinese social constitution and a way of life; to Confucians, everyday life was a religious establishment, according to Yang, (1961, pp. 20-21).

Communism: (from Latin *communis*, “common, universal”) in political and social sciences, is the philosophical, social, political, and economic ideology and movement whose fundamental objective is the formation of a communist society, which is a socio-economic order structured upon the common ownership of the means of production and the absence of social classes, money, and the state (Engels & Marx, 1847; section 18). First developed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, it has been the principal ideology of the communist movement.

Capitalism: The Cambridge Dictionary defines Capitalism as “*An economic, political, and social system in which property, business, and industry are privately owned, directed towards making the greatest possible profits for successful organisation and people*” (Cambridge Dictionary.com, 2017). Private money-making in various forms preceded the development of the capitalist mode of production – is, according to Dumenli & Foley (2008), “the distinctive way of producing”, and could be demarcated in terms of how it is socially organised and what kinds of technologies and tools are used. The capitalist production method is founded on wage-labour, private ownership, and technology. Originating from the European Industrial Revolution, its rapid growth later extended globally (Dumenli & Foley, 2008).

Consumerism: This is a system which is often confused with capitalism. However, whereas the former is an unescapable *cultural* attitude, the latter is an established economic system (Trentmann, 2017). According to Trentmann, a professor of history at Birkbeck College, of the University of London, consumerism is the assumed need and prevalent request for a wide selection of various material items obtained from diverse

localities, and is supposedly a primary portion of life in the twenty-first century (Trentmann, 2017). The model, he claims, relies on stimulating consumer desire for goods far in excess of satisfying needs. Mechanisms to do so include promotion of luxury items, new technologies and new models of existing technologies (Trentmann, 2017).

Contemporary Chinese representation: Chinese citizens are becoming progressively mobile as migratory employees, tourists, and students. The country is caught between alleged benefits and threats posed by this movement, according to Nyiri (2010), and these are further problematized by the PRC's government own contradictory desires to encourage and discourage this migratory behaviour. Nyiri (2010) delineated this in an article titled, *Mobility and Cultural Authority in Contemporary China*, in which he demonstrates this complex balance through an in-depth look at patterns of migration and the response from the state (Nyiri, 2010).

East / West understanding: ... are the 'continental' perceptions assumed regarding the customs and traditions of the East and those assumed about the West in the international community ... in terms of the opposing positions currently held, both separately and figuratively, by way of interpretations and negotiations of tourism (and its related / collaborative inscriptive industries). Jamal and Robinson (2009 p. 3-5) have emphatically stressed the need for urgent work to be done on debates between 'Eastern' and 'Western' tolerances (and 'North' / 'South' understandings) in and through tourism (Jamal and Robinson, 2009).

Dutch Higher Education – are the institutes for higher education in the Netherlands which constitutes three types of institutions: Government funded institutions which receive funding from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science or the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation, and charge their students government-approved fees. These include thirty-six higher professional education institutions and fourteen research universities, including the Open University. Legal entities providing

higher education are covered by the terms of the Higher Education and Research Act (HERA) but are not funded by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (2017), and so they are free to decide their own policies. Private-sector educational institutes are not covered by the HERA. These include foreign universities and business schools to which Dutch government regulations do not apply. Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) institutes or '*Hogescholen*', general offer courses in professional fields / industry. These days, these institutes also offer degree courses at Master's level. Whereas the research universities focus on academic courses, the UASs provide more professional-level courses. However, they do not provide programmes at PhD-levels as is the case with research universities (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2017).

Image of the Netherlands - the Netherlands is, according to the 2011 UN Human Development Index (HDI), ranked third on the International Human Development Index 2011 rankings (HDI report, 2011). Besides, ten universities in the Netherlands make it into the Times Higher Education Supplement's top 200 institutions, providing higher education for over 81,000 international students. According to Leiden Asia Centre (2015) the Dutch society is seen as easy-going, tolerant, welcoming, and multilingual. Simultaneously, the Netherlands has enjoyed considerable and growing attention in China's media. However, many tourists from China still perceive the Netherlands to be a country of clogs, windmills, tulips and old masters: otherwise called the Holland Classics (Vranken, 2014).

Chinese tourists' travel interests: - Arlt of the China Outbound Tourism Research Institute (COTRI) identifies five reasons for Chinese tourists' visits to Europe. According to him, these are traditionally; sightseeing, shopping, romance, entertainment and gastronomy (Arlt, 2015).

Key interests of Chinese millennials: - Contemporary Chinese tourists are becoming more like international tourists: they like adventure, unique experience, authenticity,

luxury, and individual travels. China's growing population of wealthy millennials is driving luxury tourism trends, according to Wildau (2016) a reporter of the Financial Times.

2.2 Cross-Cultural Differences Between the Netherlands and China

In "*Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies*", Melanie Smith states that:

"Culture is not something fixed and frozen as the traditionalists would have us believe, but a process of constant struggle as cultures interact with each other and are affected by social economic, political factors."

Melanie K. Smith (2009)

Likewise, the theory of high and low context was introduced by anthropologist Edward T. Hall in his 1977 book "*Beyond Culture*". In it, he refers to the way cultures communicate. He contends that in high-context cultures, communication is largely implicit, meaning that context and relationships are more important than the actual words. Therefore, he argues that within such cultures very few words are necessary (Hall, 1977) to relay a message. In low-context cultures, the message is communicated almost entirely by the words and therefore needs to be explicit. High and Low context should be seen as an indefinite scale. For example, England would be a higher context than Denmark, while being lower context than Japan (Sorrels, 1998). Another example is China, which can be considered as having a high-context communication mode compared to the Netherlands, a nation with a low-context mode of communication.

In order to understand how this system works, it is important to understand how communication is processed and Hall (1977) explicates this concept as follows:

Table 2.1 High–Context Versus Low-Context Cultures

Theme	High-Context Cultures	Low-Context Cultures
Values	Place high value on tradition	Seemingly less value placed on tradition
Relationships	Promote long-term, deep relationships	Relationship is short-term, less shallow
Communication style	Rely on: non-verbal communication (tonal); facial expressions; body-language/actions etc.	Communication is explicit and lack additional context
Formality	Indirect; avoid confrontation; rejection construed as non-explicit communication	Direct and confrontational in communication
explanation	Minimum of explanation needed	Maximum explanation is needed
Identity	Collectivistic in nature; group-oriented; value harmony within group	Individualistic: independent of others; value own needs
Group orientation	Strong boundary within the group: one fits within a specific group	Detailed information within message; non-group orientated
Belief system	Belief: set in tradition; thus, slow to change	Mind/beliefs non-traditional / swift to change

Source: (Hall, 1977: 91)

Low-context cultures, such as the Netherlands, are individualistic, logical and task-oriented. They rely mostly on *explicit* and culturally-conscious knowledge through diverse, discrete and short-term relationships, while high context cultures such as China, are collectivistic, spontaneous and relationship-orientated. Most of their cultural knowledge are *implicit*, through numerous strictly associated long-term relationships. These High-context cultures rely on traditions, very deep personal relationships, and established hierarchies, and therefore it takes two to make meaning during the communication process. What this means, is that the main information in high-context cultures is either in “the physical context or it is internalised by the person. Low-context communication is just the opposite, i.e., the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code” (Hall, 1977:91). Additionally, Table 2.2 offers a clear comparison between the main characteristics of both the Dutch and the Chinese communication contexts as described by Hall (1977: 91).

Table 2.2: Comparison of Low-Context Cultures and High-Context Cultures: Netherlands versus China

Low-context cultures: e.g. Netherlands	High-context cultures: e.g. China
Tend to make many shallower short-term relationships: does not consider long-lasting relationships	Cherish long-lasting relationships: and goes through lengths to maintain these.
Require explicit communication since they lack additional context	Communication style is implicit as they do not need additional context for understanding.
Communication is more direct and confrontational.	Rely heavily on non-verbal signs such as tone of voice, facial expressions, body language etc.
Are more individualistic.	Tend to be non-confrontational and more indirect. Rejection is to be interpreted from non-explicit communication. Tend to be more 'group-oriented'. Have stronger boundaries, that is to say, one belongs with a certain group.
Identity lies with the individual;	Tend to prefer the 'collectivistic'
Value individual needs.	Are more collectivistic. Identity lies with the group. Values group harmony.
Require all the information in the message.	Not all information necessary for the information to be understood.
Can change mind quickly.	Are slow to change: once a decision has been taken, hardly likely that the individual will change her/his mind.
<i>Monochronic</i> perception of time, i.e., see time as tangible and sequential – saved, spent etc. They make and adhere to strict deadlines and are single-tasked focused.	Uses a <i>polychronic</i> perception of time, i.e. time is considered fluid: punctuality and structure do not seem not as important; hence deadlines are aims not things to be met. Multitasking is 'inherent' to their culture.

Source: Adapted from E. T. Hall (1977:91)

Although Table 2.2 is not a perfect representation of the cross-cultural differences among international communities, it does provide a general conception of these contextual differences. For example, Chinese millennial students who are said to be from a high-context culture might appear to be unclear, reserved, and exhibit inability to stick to plans or might even be considered inept because of a lack of ability to work independently. A Dutch student, in contrast, could behave in a way that is seen by the Chinese as ignorant, rude, or incompetent. The Dutch student, for instance, might ask questions hence implying that she or he does not understand the meaning without asking these questions. She or he might act in a direct and confrontational way, not knowing how to fit into the group's dynamic, seeing that she or he is incapable of multitasking.

One critique to this theory, however, is insinuated by Smith (2009), who claims that as a consequence of post-modern theories and more democratic policies in many Western countries, dissimilarities between high and low cultures are being annihilated, and instead prominence is increasingly being given to popular or mass culture, such as the diverse youth cultures popping up in contemporary China. Another example of this is the heritage and museum industries in which representation is gaining important grounds, and the chronicles of formerly indigenous groups are now being acknowledged. In fact, the refutation of the professed "grand narratives" has meant that the discourses of the working classes, women and ethnic groups are now being noticed (Smith, 2009). Another critique to this theory is that it could be considered as outdated as Chinese millennials have only become of age in the 21st century. Such a fairly new phenomenon needs novel theories to provide a window into this notion of contextuality. Particularly with the advent of social media, communication is carried out differently than in the previous century. The following is a representation of the national composition of both countries and examines the Dutch and Chinese populations.

Table 2.3: Representation of the National Composition of the Netherlands and China

Features	The Netherlands	China
Population	Total:17, 083,039: Male: (49.6% = 8,481,524; female = 50.4% = 8,601,515)	1,395,193,586: Male: 51.9% = 724,359,718 Female: 48.1% =670,833,895
Surface area	41,540 km ²	9,598,089 km ²
Population density	497 people / km ²	145.4 per km
Official languages	Dutch, Frisian (in Friesland)	Chinese: Mandarin; Cantonese
Religion	45% no religion, 27% Roman Catholic, 17% Protestant, 6% Muslim, 1% Hindu, 1% Buddhist.	No official religion, govt. recognises beliefs: Confucianism, Buddhism (11-16%), Taoism. Christians (3-4%), Muslim (1%)
Government types	Constitutional Monarchy	One-Party state (Communism)

Source: Countrymeters.info/en/china & Countrymeters.info/en/Netherlands.

As is clear from Table 2.3, there are little similarities between both countries. The reason for including this, however, is merely to illustrate the differences, particularly in the size of the populations.

Therefore, in this literature review, the researcher will attempt to examine previous works on cultural, sociological, economic, political concepts among others, in order to provide a theoretical framework for this study.

2.2.1 Youth Culture in China

In their book, *Youth Cultures in China*, de Kloet & Fung (2016) contend that youth culture in contemporary China is not about revolution, nor is it driven by notions of (Western) democracy. They claim that even though it opens up to a *global* culture via the Internet, it does not suggest that political change is imminent (p.4). On the contrary, they acknowledge that there are also continuities, some of which are linked to a Confucian history as well as to more Communist pasts (de Kloet & Fung, 2016). For example, a Chinese millennial student who recently praised the US for its 'fresh air of free speech' was abused back home, as Nationalists in China seized on her remarks by accusing her of 'demonising' it in a repercussion fueled by state-run media (Guardian Newspaper, 2017).

This is in contrast with the youths in contemporary China, who have a relatively stable environment in which to flourish. They receive a good level of education as indicated by the high literacy rate of Chinese youth (over 99 percent in 2012 according to UNICEF figures). However, though a significant number of them manage to obtain stable jobs, there is currently an unemployment rate of 15 percent (Sharma, 2014). Those who are unable to find jobs are sustained by their family/families. Nevertheless, with all the family resources wagering on this single child, many urban children do not have to juggle their ideals with their basic livelihood. That is probably why more and more

young Chinese millennials are opting for studies abroad. Nyiri, Zhang, and Varrall (2010) contend that:

‘Their childhood and early youth was more significantly marked by the emergence of a culture of consumption than by political campaigns, and studying overseas was as much a means to social advancement in China in the context of a marketized education and a highly competitive job market as an opportunity to settle abroad. While these students do not necessarily come from backgrounds that are considered elite in China, the very fact that they are free, and can afford, to study abroad identifies them as beneficiaries of China’s recent transformations’ (2010:51).

Though this transformation presents new opportunities of studying abroad, it may be naive to believe that Chinese millennials would audaciously challenge the establishment. On the contrary, the emerging power of China is, according to Gries (2014), fostering a youthful patriotism that is shaping a state of social stability and prospects for career, money, and power: nationalism is creating a strong reinforcement for their society (Gries, 2004). As a result of this emergence of nationalism, Chinese millennials are absorbing cultural influences from abroad, and challenges to the authorities are deferred and suppressed. The subsequent conforming behaviour is further consolidated by their traditional Chinese cultural upbringing and education (de Kloet & Fung, 2016 p.7). Likewise, increasing exposure to the global media culture and intensified international travels do have some influence on this new generation in China (p.7).

In an article in the New York Times earlier this year, Buckley (2018) reiterated in an instruction, published by the Communist Party organisation of the Ministry of Education, calling for “patriotic education” to permeate each phase and facet of teaching: through schoolbooks, student evaluations, museum visits and the Internet – the principal information source for many young Chinese (Buckley, 2018). According to the document, ‘Organically instill the patriotic spirit into all subjects, curriculums and standards for primary, secondary and higher education in morals, language, history, geography, sports, arts and so on’ (p.2). As a result of this, China has recently been going

to great lengths to proliferate its worldwide authority in disseminating its culture and values overseas by constructing gigantic media setups abroad and propagating multitudes of language and cultural “garrisons”. One of the new tools it is using is online education, a burgeoning industry that promises access to millions of students while being endorsed by some of the world’s most established organizations, Buckley (2018) added.

One of the earliest and most established researchers on Chinese youth culture, Stanley Rosen, argues that today’s Chinese youths are living under challenging and contradictory influences that characterise their attitudes and values. According to him:

‘They have become very *internationalist* in their outlook, and they are strongly affected by global trends. Likewise, they are very *pragmatic* and *materialistic*, largely concerned with living the good life and making money. The third competing influence, most often called *nationalism* in its more extreme form, represents a broader impulse and encompasses not only the defense of China against perceived enemies from abroad, but also the kind of love of country and self-sacrifice in support of those most in need that was evident in the volunteerism that followed the earthquake.’ (Rosen, 2009: 361).

In order to comprehend the complexities and contradictions among Chinese millennials, de Kloet & Fung (2016) stress the importance of avoiding generalisations and fixed definitions of what Chinese youth is or is not. This is corroborated by Cockain (2012), who writes in his book on urban youth in China, that a more empathetic understanding of youth should be adopted that defies easy binaries and generalisations:

‘There has been a paradigm shift whereby young Chinese have shifted from being considered as group-focused, passive (easily manipulated), and politically oriented, brought up in times of scarcity and suffering, to individualistic, reflexive (less easily manipulated), a political and consumption focussed, with experiences of being brought up in times of abundance and excess’ (Cockain, 2012).

Such simple frames should be avoided, especially when referring to contemporary Chinese millennials. With all this in mind, the following section presents a review of the literature on the phenomenon of Chinese outbound tourism.

2.3 A Review of Literature on Chinese Outbound Tourism

In this literature review, the researcher examined literature regarding tourism in general, before focusing on Chinese outbound tourism in particular. A tourism study is largely perceived as one that produces marketing analyses, very often applying statistical methods to cognize trends and tourism activities (Lau, 2012). Similar to other industries, the tourism market is ordinarily based on supply and demand – in this respect vis-à-vis tourist features and holiday-making. In the latter part of the twentieth century, however, travelling developed into a major global activity and some countries / destinations have become exceptionally popular tourist destinations while others have emerged as both popular destinations and source markets. For example, China has become both a popular tourist destination as well as a source market. This is why destinations worldwide are scrambling to attract tourists from this country (Lau, 2012).

2.3.1 Confucianism and the Chinese Tourist

As a result of this, numerous researchers have been conducting studies on Chinese outbound tourism but relatively few concentrate on the Chinese tourists/students themselves; their behaviours and thoughts, regarding their travel to destinations in the West. This research aims at discussing the Chinese tourists and their motivation for visiting the Netherlands in particular. Having said that, hardly any research on Chinese outbound tourism is complete without deliberating on Confucianism (*see* 2.1) and its significance on the behaviour of the Chinese people. After Confucianism had extended dominance over all other schools of thought, Confucian ethics increasingly became a generic benchmark for the Chinese people's behaviour and philosophies, resulting in a tenet that guided conduct, thought and relationship (Yao, 2000). According to Yao (p.34), Confucianism protracted the precincts of ethical codes from individual matters to socio-political arenas, not only offering the state a political system, but also furnishing the establishment with the standards by which to evaluate behaviours and beliefs.

In addition to this, Kwek & Lee (2010) claim that there is limited empirical studies examining Chinese cultural and philosophical ideology in a tourism context. That is why they have investigated the influence of Confucian values on Mainland Chinese corporate travellers at leisure on the Gold Coast, Australia. Their findings suggest that the concept of harmony governs and accentuates the Chinese tourists' behaviour as tourists, which is intricately linked to themes such as respect for authority, relationship building or *Guanxi* and compliance (p.2). Arguably, Confucianism forms the base for maintaining not only the correct and appropriate behaviour but also conformity to one's superior and, exercising of tolerance to the wider group rather than to the individual (p.2). Nevertheless, they call for more research attempts in this area which could serve to advance our practical and theoretical understanding of the Chinese tourist (Kwek & Lee, 2010). In contrast to Yao's (2000) viewpoint, the traditional Chinese culture embraces diverse and sometimes competing schools of thought, with Confucianism being the most popular and powerful (Fan, 1995; Szeto, 2010). Likewise, the modern communist orthodoxy in China also penetrates peoples' lives and behaviours, including travelling (building harmonious society): harmony being the central conception in traditional Chinese philosophy especially in Confucianism (Tang, 2006).

2.3.2 Communism and international tourism

In an article titled "*How Communism Influences Where Chinese Tourists Travel*" which Professor Wolfgang Arlt wrote for Forbes International, he expressed his opinions on how "*communism is weaving itself into another part of modern Chinese culture: international tourism*". "Red Tourism" has been a long-established phenomenon, which represents more than four billion domestic trips made to sites significant to the Communist Party of China's history (Arlt, 2016).

However, these trips are no longer limited to China: in a research conducted by COTRI on behalf of the Engels House in Wuppertal, Germany, it indicated that from 2011, apart

from Russia, Chinese tour operators had already been organizing “red”-themed tours to Germany, the United Kingdom, and the former Yugoslavia. These tours highlighted places with links to figures such as Marx, Engels, Lenin and Tito (Arlt, 2016. p.1).

Although the number of the travellers to these international destinations has grown significantly, the composition of the groups are generally senior citizens.

Nevertheless, there is also a segment of the market which comprises of multi-generational family-groups. These are young Chinese who accompany their parents (usually a ‘dream’ of the parents) on this mission to visit the country which had such a significant impact on their youth. This is also an educational experience for the young Chinese companion (p.2). International tourism is also expanding its grounds in the form of new destinations which commemorate the history of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) overseas. This not only exhibits “Red Tourism” outside of China, but also giving it “Chinese characteristics” (p.2). For instance, the building which accommodated wealthy Chinese gentlemen who had helped to bring Chinese students to France to study and work after the collapse of Qing Dynasty in 1912, has been turned into a memorial hall. This was the home of notables, such as Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping. This establishment which currently offers courses in Mandarin, calligraphy and the art of Chinese tea-ceremony to the local population, attracts Chinese tourists to the city and these visitors are proud in discovering a statue of Deng Xiaoping, particularly the square that is named after him (p.3). Arlt (2016) concludes that with an outbound tourism market roughly €170 billion, there will definitely be more places capitalizing on their Chinese Communist Parties (Arlt, 2016).

2.3.3 Capitalism and International Tourism

Having said that, the economic reforms initiated by the leadership of Den Xiaoping in 1978 have introduced a number of Western views associated with capitalism into China: to have more comfortable life and own material goods to enhance one’s well-being

(luxury goods – at home and abroad - consumed particularly by Mainland Chinese) (Pearce et al., 2013 p.152). This is found in the socio-economic and political debates regarding the shaping of outbound tourism flows from China (Tse, 2009). This market-driven competition which serves to inspire innovation and boost efficient productivity in a market economy is the foundation on which capitalism rests.

Recent studies have also revealed that the traditional values still impact the younger Chinese cohorts through both the formal education system (Zhang et al., 2005) and informally by means of Chinese folk wisdom (Szeto, 2010). However, empirical studies on outbound Chinese tourist behaviour are limited, though available studies do show Confucian influence on the Chinese tourists' attitude. Thus, traditional culture continues to play a crucial role in the behaviour and interests of most Chinese tourists.

Furthermore, in Confucianism, Buddhism, the long agricultural history of Chinese society among others, (Fuligni and Zhang, 2004) family plays a central and uniting role in the social and cultural life of the Chinese. And these days, the young generation in China continue to respect and follow, in some fashion or other, these associative traditions (Nelson and Chen, 2007) and Wu (2013). The notion of differential modes of this association is presented as a key to understanding these social relationships in Chinese society (Cui et al., 2012; Shen, 2007). They argue that individuals are required to deal with others in an established hierarchy of responsibility. Such a hierarchical system has obvious consequences for tourists' experiential and social behaviours, especially when they travel abroad. Firstly, many outbound Chinese travellers are inclined to develop strong in-group interactional patterns (Fu et al., 2012), by establishing new friendships with other China-group travellers on tour. Secondly, outbound travel often means temporary absence from the home-based social group, necessitating communication with this home-base so as to stay connected. Bringing back gifts is the 'gateway' to entering the group again after a temporary absence. Hence,

Chinese tourists tend to spend considerable time shopping while overseas (COTRI and PATA, 2010).

Though, especially in the case of younger Chinese tourists, there is an emerging desire to interact with the local population, the Chinese tourists do sometimes exercise a degree of caution when interacting socially with local people, which is why safety is a priority when selecting outbound travel destinations (Corigliano, 2011; Kim et al., 2005).

Therefore, as long as they feel safe, they do tend to display curiosity towards others when abroad. In addition to this, the generally well-educated independent Chinese travellers, in particular, are empowered by social media (Zhang et al. 2013). In their digital diaries, these travellers post many positive comments about interaction with local hosts, other tourists and document evidence of the newly-found friends they meet (Wu and Pearce, 2013).

Within the Chinese culture, the consumption of food is both a sensory and a social experience (Jacobsen, 2008; Sinclair and Wong Po-Yee, 2000, 2008:62) and with globalisation it is both fashionable and desirable for Chinese to consume foods that are different in taste, culture and quality (Chang et al. 2010). Consequently, travel has extended the dining options for Chinese tourists (Pearce et al., 2013). Besides food, Chinese tourists show an appreciation for clean air, less polluted environmental systems and access to natural resources including the sounds of the sea, birds and the feel of open space (Son and Pearce, 2005). They also envisage and appreciate sceneries through unique cultural lenses: they have a predisposition to assess landscapes as specific images. That is why, for Chinese to have a meaningful experience, they must become part of the landscape, which is therefore then classified as culture-scape and not simply as wasteland in the so-called fetishized Western sense (Li, 2005). These “patterns of relating to the landscape are a part of the intellectual lenses of Chinese tourists” (Pearce et al., 2013).

Sofield and Li (1998) discuss the interaction of cultural and tourism policies in their article on "*Tourism Development and Cultural Policies in China*". They argue that, China in its aim of attaining *modernization*, and reduce frictions in its hurried enactment of socialism, is tolerating traditionalism in favour of accomplishing economic advancement. Consequently, the Republic's modernization efforts (p.362) is being undermined. However, according to them, tourism has emerged as an efficient and effective tool for eliminating the inequalities through its contributions to the modernization process, its practice of heritage for product development and its function in meeting some socialist objectives (Sofield & Li, 1998 p. 363). A unifying theme throughout China's long past of tourism is the notion of culture and the customs of heritage and pilgrimage tourism. Sofield & Li (1998, p.363) assess the tensions formed between the Chinese government's resolve to maintain political stability under the Communist Party by revealing the most appropriate combination of traditional Chinese culture, socialist culture, and "modern" culture regarding tourism developments (Sofield & Li, p.363).

Mok & de Franco (2008) examine the Chinese cultural values and their implications for travel and tourism marketing, as, according to them, very limited research has been done on the connection between the cultural values of the Chinese people and their preferences and expectations as consumers. They contend that, although the Chinese market, with one quarter of the world's population, has been recognized as the market with the greatest spending potential for the 21st century, a conceptual framework of the dominant Chinese cultural values and the implications for travel and tourism marketing has neither been explicitly defined nor discussed (Mok & de Franco, 2000). Therefore, they have applied a conceptual framework to underline the cultural features of the Chinese values by identifying possible marketing implications for each attribute for the hospitality and tourism industry. However, they too, have relied on a quantitative

approach to measuring Chinese cultural values and the implications for travel and tourism marketing.

Further studies (Adler and Graham, 1989; Armstrong, Mok, Go, and Chan, 1997; Hofstede, 2001; Pizam, Pine, Mok, and Shin, 1997) have shown that people from different cultures have different preferences and expectations. These expectations and preferences are judged on the providers' ability to satisfy their customers. Customer satisfaction is principally established on meeting and/or exceeding these expectations. Therefore, an understanding of these cultural differences and subsequent provision for service quality that meets the expectations of the customers are crucial for contemporary tourism marketers (Pearce, et al., 2013).

Furthermore, Pearce, et al., (2013) indicate that energy is currently being focused on understanding the behaviours of the increasing number of Chinese outbound tourists. Seeing the intricacy of this market, compounded by an awareness of regional differences; a change within China and sensitivity to other worldviews are needed to pilot studies in this area (p.145). They claim that the West lack comprehensive theoretical clarifications and therefore calls for answers to a number of vital questions: What motivates Chinese tourists? What are motives for Chinese tourists to interact with each other / to their hosts? How do they view unfamiliar natural environments? They have established that a holistic and inclusive approach to seeking primary answers must be adopted (p. 145). Hence, they recommend a consideration of tourists' experiences as a coordinated display of five amalgamated dynamisms: social behaviours, the role of physical modalities, the cognitive, affective and activity facets of experience.

In fact, Pearce et al., (2013) contend that there are three streams of influence that operate on and through the Chinese outbound tourists' experiences: Confucianism, Communism and Capitalism. These three streams form a so-called oscillating *Triple-C Gaze*. Careful application of this theory can arguably assist in defining the perceptions of

the twenty-first-century outbound Chinese traveller. Though this delineation could provide a broader examination of East/West understandings, it does little to address the Chinese outbound tourists themselves. China has evolved into a rather consumer-focused society and in order to understand the modern Chinese traveller, it is important to examine this dimension as well. Thus, like many studies of this nature Pearce et al., (2013) merely gloss over the issue of the emic (first-order concepts; local language, concepts, or ways of expression used by members in a particular group or setting to name their experience) (Schwandt, 1997) - and etic (second-order concepts; the scientific language used by the social scientist to refer to the same phenomena) of the Chinese tourists themselves. For example, Geertz (1983, p. 55-70) introduced the concepts: 'experience-near' and 'experience-distant', as a refinement of the emic-etic distinction. He clarified that an experience-near concept is one that a respondent or informant "might naturally and effortlessly use to define what he [sic] or his fellows see, feel, think, imagine, and ... which he would readily understand when similarly applied by others"; while an experience-distant is one "that specialists of one sort or another ... employ to forward their scientific, philosophical, or practical aims." Geertz (1983) further explained that both concepts are necessary in an ethnographic analysis because "Confinement to experience-near concepts leaves the ethnographer awash in immediacies, as well as entangled in vernacular. Confinement to experience-distant ones leaves him [sic] stranded in abstractions and smothered in jargon." Furthermore, he emphasises the need for understanding the insider's perspectives vis-a-vis experience-near philosophies while concurrently indicating their correlation to experience-distant perceptions (Clifford, 1983 p. 127).

Regarding Pearce et al., (2013) conceptualization of "*The Tourist Gaze*" as conceived by Urry (1990), tourism is both an imperative constituent of modern-day life and an exceedingly profitable business for many [desti]nations. Urry (1990) claimed that its significance has been largely unacknowledged in the scholastic field. In his inquiry into

the notion of tourism, he reasoned from a sociological perspective, demonstrating that tourism is an exceptional and principal ingredient of present-day societies. By primarily concentrating on the shifting landscape of the tourist, Urry (1990) uncovers its relationship with the wider national variations of postmodernism. Generally speaking, *The Tourist Gaze* is a 'must-read' for scholars and researchers in sociology, especially those interested in the cultural, and geographical analysis of contemporary society. Conversely, the twenty-first century has seen the emergence of the World Wide Web, and the tsunami of social media, which has transformed not only the tourism world, but also every dimension of today's society.

This is primarily significant when studying contemporary Chinese humanities. The vast majority of Chinese (millennial) travellers cannot exist without their smart phones and / or social media, which is present in every aspect of their existence. Consequently, any study of this cohort is rendered incomplete without emphasizing the indispensable value of social media and the Internet on a whole. Nevertheless, Urry's conceptualisation of leisure and travel within contemporary societies in *The Tourist Gaze*, offers the reader a peak into the modern-day lives of today's societies. In fact, it provides a propaedeutic background not only to leisure and tourism studies, but also to social, geographical, anthropological and other analyses.

Furthermore, Pearce et al., (2013) adopt a qualitative approach by presenting an amalgamation of existing literature to provide a fresh, integrative framework and offer a newly devised *gaze* to interpret the Chinese outbound tourism phenomenon. They do this by conjecturing some rather interesting queries regarding what they call the "puzzles" in understanding Chinese tourists' behaviour: 'What is it that Chinese tourists really seek as tourists?' 'Are their motivations and experiences different from Western tourists?' 'Are they inclined to interact with their hosts or do they evidently favour intra-group interactions? Do they visit natural surroundings of destinations with a distinctive

awareness of the human-environment or with a spiritual mindset unlike those with a Western conviction?' 'How do they respond to the explicit features of visited destinations such as food, amenities and unfamiliar undertakings?' (p.146).

Likewise, reasons of status and the aspiration of building one's 'standing' are frequently acknowledged as motivations for Chinese outbound travels (Briggs, 2006; Guo et al., 2007). Chinese tourists usually desire to see the most popular and the most well-recognized sites at a destination. These are subsequently documented in photography, blogs and narratives about the landmarks visited (Pearce et al., 2013). However, this is not particularly a Chinese motivation, but can be viewed as Western tourists' motivations as well (De Botton, 2004). Like Chinese tourists, Western tourists also view travel as an escape from everyday living (Pearce, 2011). For, while tourists from different parts of China may sometimes be interested in the same activities as Western visitors, the reasons underlying the interests may differ considerably. For example, Westerners appreciate scenery from a more nature or action-driven perspective (Fu et al. 2012), such as, swimming at the beach while most Chinese tourists prefer to become part of the landscape and hence, may be more oriented towards walking along the shore and gaining a generic appreciation of the atmosphere (Li, 2008:494). The 'gaze' then seems to be perspectival.

Finally, despite the abundance of literature on tourism studies, varying from broad studies on economy, sociology and politics to descriptive cases-studies of cultural and psychological issues, there are relatively few studies on topics related to the Chinese millennial tourists or the Chinese millennial student studying outside of China. There is also a lack of longitudinal work in tourism studies especially the ways in which Chinese tourists cultivate their travel and holiday experiences. Additionally, comparative studies in terms of the reactions of Chinese tourists to different outbound destinations are also scarce. As a consequence, the ways in which countries particularly in Europe are

adapting to and meeting the needs of outbound Chinese tourists in such fundamental areas such as language, food, interpretation and activity development, is of interest to most tourism providers, yet not many studies deal with these aspects. It is therefore interesting to review the generic evolution of literature on Chinese outbound tourism, especially since its conception in the latter part of the 20th century. In so doing, it is the intention of the researcher of this study to set up a propaedeutic research agenda after this emergent study.

2.4 The Growth of Literature on Chinese Outbound Tourism

The following paragraphs discuss the chronology of literature on Chinese outbound tourism. Keating et al. (2015) propositioned a metaphorical three-stage synopsis of the literature by postulating an evolutionary representation. In *A Systematic Review of the Chinese Outbound Tourism Literature Between 1983 – 2012*, they argue that the advancement of Chinese outbound tourism appears to have followed three fundamental routes: “the crawling out” stage (1983 – 1992); “the scurrying about” stage; (1993 – 2002) and “the walking-erect” stage (2003 – 2012).

They added that, the first stage: “the crawling out” stage started with the government permitting recreational travel to Hong Kong and Macau in 1983. This prompted an increasing number of Chinese tourism researchers and Western tourism scholars who struggled to understand how the customs, preferences and travel behaviour of Chinese tourists, differed from those of the West (Keating et al., 2015). The second stage: “the scurrying about” stage, records the efforts to translate prevailing theories and amend existing frameworks in order to facilitate comprehension and contextualisation. Here scholars attempted to explain and understand the motivations and preferences of Chinese leisure tourists hence the principal elements of a new theory began to arise (Keating et al., 2015). The third stage: “the walking-erect” stage, brought certain acceptability to the tourism field contributing significantly to its acknowledgement

within the field. Thus, more researchers became involved and so Chinese outbound tourism has become increasingly popular (Keating et al., 2015).

Although such historically motivated literature reviews provide a reasonable overview of Chinese outbound tourism, a critical discussion on the implications of Chinese outbound tourism research is lacking. Similarly, little is done to knowledge construction and to stimulate discussions about future directions. Xiang (2015) has published the most comprehensive book on China outbound tourism to date, called *Chinese Outbound Tourism 2.0*. The different chapters build a convincing narrative; however, only brief mention is made of future research directions. Consequently, important gaps and perspectives are disregarded, some of which were intensified in the past two decades by the surge in outbound tourism from non-Western territories.

Furthermore, Platenkamp (2007) debates the lack of attention paid by academics to the different perspectives of people from different backgrounds regarding authenticity and pleasure. He also claims that the more traditional objects of study appear to escape the focus of both academia and professionals in international tourism. He calls for a deeper understanding of the influences of these cross-cultural credentials and the often-confusing developments in these (host) destinations (Platenkamp, 2007). He further contends that in host-guest-relations many stakeholders are involved in changing perspectives (p.11). Nevertheless, it is uncertain if Chinese millennial visitors to the Netherlands require the host destination to provide them with Chinese-experience rather than host-experience. Contemporary Chinese millennial tourists seem to want to *experience* destinations like a local: they want to experiment with local products and services and are even willing to try out local foods.

In light of this, the gigantic stream in non-Western tourism, particularly from Asia, has left tourism studies academically unprepared as most of its theories have been propagated from Western perspectives (Winter, 2009), and are hence culturally

provisional. The implications of this are that past perceptions, such as that of authenticity, may have restricted applicability to non-Western tourists. Consequently, more recent theoretical developments into non-Western perspectives are necessary in order for universal meaning to be conceded (Cohen & Cohen, 2012).

2.5 Major Theorists on Chinese Outbound Tourism

Though the phenomenon is relatively new, there is an increasing number of theorists on Chinese outbound tourism. A predominant one is the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which replicates the outbound Chinese tourists' values in terms of destination attributes and their attitudes toward international travel (Sparks & Pan, 2009). In their article on "Outbound Chinese Tourists: Understanding attitudes, constraints and information sources", they state that important destination attributes include; *natural beauty* and *icons* of a destination, *quality infrastructure*, *autonomy*, *inspirational motives* and *social self-enhancement*. This theory is often applied when investigating the travel decision-making process. Conversely, the key focus of such a theory is that people can act in a specific fashion if they believe that such behaviour will generate favourable results (Ajzen, 1991). Hence, intentions to behave can be labelled as planned or prospective future behaviour (Swan, 1981). Based on TPB, most instrumental terms of forecasting intentions to travel involve, *social normative influences* and perceived levels of *personal control* (Sparks & Pan, 2009).

This study also draws upon an expectation, motivation, and attitude (EMA) model, which highlights the behavioral process and incorporate expectation, motivation and attitude in the context of Chinese outbound tourists (Hsu, Cai, and Li, 2010). In other words, it depicts a tourist behaviour standard which focuses on the pre-visit phase of tourists by demonstrating the social practice and combining expectation, motivation and attitude. A principal example of this is evident in travel motivation which is considered an essential component of the behavioural process. This has consequently resulted in a

surge of attention from the travel industry. Hence the EMA model will be vital in helping to comprehend the many facets of Chinese outbound tourism by focusing on the Chinese millennial students' behaviour prior and during their visit to the Netherlands.

Furthermore, it will be a valuable instrument in examining their expectations, motivation and attitude towards the host destination. Consequently, the EMA model helps to study the various phases of the visit, such as the social practices involved in the pre-visit stage, the visit itself and the various activities executed, and finally, the post-visit experience. The ensuing section sums up some of the literature inspected.

Due to the significance of outbound tourism market to a destination, many scholars have been drawn to study tourists' motivation to travel abroad. This is particularly the case with Chinese outbound tourism to the Netherlands. It is for this reason that it is important to gain knowledge into the motivation for Chinese millennials students /tourists to study / visit the Netherlands. Travel motivation has been investigated by numerous researchers from a wide variety of fields particularly, sociology, anthropology, and psychology. These include (Dann, 1977; Crompton, 1979; Gnoth, 1997). An earlier theorist, Maslow's (1970) hierarchical model of motivation was one of the most pragmatic to be practised in tourism literature. Modelled as a pyramid, whose base comprises of the established physical needs, it is followed by higher levels of psychological needs and the need for self-fulfillment. Moreover, it offers a comprehensive overview of conceivable motives for the realisation of motivation. Scholars have made numerous attempts to revise the model. Pearce (1982) for example, has somewhat succeeded in emulating Maslow's model. However, when studying Chinese millennial students, it is difficult to classify this group under these models seeing the diversity of the Chinese representations. Many of the Chinese students studying in the Netherlands were not born in China, but in the Netherlands. They study in the Netherlands primarily because they are curious about their Chinese heritage.

Thus, not all Chinese millennial students in the Netherlands are from China, and therefore these will not be part of the current study.

Earlier literature on tourist motivation suggests that the analysis of motivations which have been grounded on push and pull dimensions, have been largely acknowledged (Yuan & McDonald, 1990; Uysal & Hagan, 1993). The theory surrounding the push and pull dimension is that people travel because they are pushed by their personal *internal* forces and pulled by the *external* forces of destination attributes. Most of the push factors are the intrinsic desires of the individual traveler. Pull factors, on the contrary, are those that arise as a result of the attractiveness of a destination as perceived by the traveler. They include physical resources and the traveler's own perceptions and expectations such as novelty, benefit expectation and promoted image of the destination (Baloglu & Uysal, 1996). Although these motivational aspects appear outdated, they do provide very crucial insights into understanding how tourists were motivated to visit a particular destination in the twentieth century. It is also apparent from these theories, that, in the case of Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe, for example, these tourists are 'pulled' by the desirability of the place. They are in fact drawn to the Netherlands because of the country's intrinsic appeal, the tangible resources that it possesses, the Chinese tourist's individual perceptions and expectations, as well as concepts - novelty, benefit expectation and (advertised) image of the Netherlands.

2.6 Important Literature Regarding Chinese Outbound Tourism

So far, the literature that has been examined includes some relevant articles on outbound tourism from China. For example, in *A Review of Chinese Outbound Tourism Research and the Way Forward*, Tse (2015) suggests that the impediments to understanding this market are related to the cultural background of the Chinese tourists, the language, and government intervention. He further sketches the need for future research to tackle issues such as source markets where tourist flows are located,

the social impacts of Chinese outbound tourism on its own people and also on host destinations. Additionally, in *The Characteristics of Independent Chinese Outbound Tourists*, Xiang (2013) addresses five aspects of the independent Chinese tourist. These are social-demographic, motivational, decision-making, spatial pattern of destination and consumer patterns. However, these aspects do not specifically mention the Chinese millennial students who can be classified as Independent Chinese outbound tourists in that they themselves travel during their stay in Europe, for example. Furthermore, most Chinese travelers/students to Europe originate from first-tier cities: major urban centres of Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen, and enjoy visiting multiple cities while in Europe (UNWTO, 2015). Consequently, there is very limited research done on Chinese millennial students/tourists from second or third tier source destinations in China.

Notably, a vast majority of both tourists and tourism researches are based in the so-called 'Western' countries of Europe, North America and Oceania. Therefore, activities and experiences of tourists and their analyses were based on occidental, Christian and market-economy driven values and behaviour patterns (Arlt, 2006). For example, the commencements of scientific treatment of tourism are associated with mainly monetary and statistical approaches and much is viewed from a Central European perspective (p. 213). Hardly much thought is given to the subjects: the tourists themselves. Besides in the second half of the twentieth century, tourism was dominated by a Western viewpoint. Cohen (1995) has critiqued the scrutinizing of the modern western tourist as being an essential category and reductionist: little thought is given to the cultural foundations of *Menschenbild* [image-building] of tourism studies. Shaw and Williams (2004) provide an overview of the main tourist motivation literature of the 1980s and 1990s which can be considered as deficient in contemporary insights. Conversely, Lew and Wong (2004) qualify tourism as a tool for enhancing social capital. Hence, the potentially liberating influence of the increasing number of Asian tourism researchers

though encouraging, are not only focused on economic aspects of particularly Chinese outbound tourism but are also prejudiced to mostly Western thoughts.

Finally, on the European stage, Aramberri and Liang (2012) take a reverse track of the “gaze” by analysing how Chinese travel magazines portray Europe to their potential audiences. They provide a vivid description of Europe in Travel Magazines through the eyes of the Chinese tourist. Thus, the literature so far inspected has provided the researcher with a wealth of knowledge regarding the various aspects of Chinese outbound tourism. Nevertheless, there is still a great deal of literature to be inspected.

2.7 Some of the Literature Still Being Inspected

In order to learn more about the many dimensions of tourism from China, the researcher aims to study more on Chinese outbound tourism and particularly about the Chinese people themselves. Nyíri (2002), for example, talks about China, which once prevented foreign travel but now has become a state that supports it. Consequently, the open discourse of the 1990s in China, varying from academics to the media, associated travel abroad with migration in the quest for individual ‘development’ (*fazhan*) through education or work, but optimally through entrepreneurship (Nyíri, 2002b). He contends that media reports and soap operas about and by ‘new migrants’, along with highly popular foreign television series, are influential in shaping travelers’ expectations of sites outside China. Migrants arriving in Europe look for signs they have encountered in these soap operas and reports (Nyíri, 2002).

In another of such article titled *Scenic Spot Europe: Chinese travelers on the Western Periphery*, Nyíri (2005) examines the setting of the advent of widespread Chinese tourism to Europe and at the interpretations of modernism, travel, and Europe that will arise from it, to challenge Europe’s exemplification of itself. The initial section of the article considers the connection between international migration and modernity in contemporary Chinese public discourse and the images of Europe that have been

produced in the context of “New Migrant” literature. The second section of the article examines the emergence of tourism and questions how the resulting contested representations may be changing the Chinese view of Europe. Though this article might be somewhat outdated, in that it reflects a typical image of the 1990s, and the case material applied might not be founded on academic criteria, but based on unforeseen encounters, it provides for an evocative discussion and is intended to inspire a reconsideration of our views on global mobility rather than to stipulate a dogmatic judgement (Nyiri, 2005).

Additionally, in the introductory section of *The Tourist* - one of the most influential scholarly study of tourism – MacCannell stated that “‘the *tourist*’ is one of the best models available for modern-man-in-general’ (MacCannell, 1976:1). Meanwhile, Nyiri (2005), in both ‘*the traveler*’ and ‘*the tourist*’ – indicated that different meanings have long been key metaphors for the (post-modern) individual. However, he contends that these metaphors express a personification of modernity *in the West*, based on free market and liberal democracy (Nyiri, 2005).

In a more recent book by Eric Fish, titled: *China’s Millennials: The Want Generation*, Fish (2015) depicts the Chinese Millennials. He provides a vivid description of his years spent working as a teacher and journalist in China. It takes a multi-faceted approach to the country’s ‘problematic’ youths by interviewing oppressed factory workers, frazzled fresh graduates, social activists and others. His book primarily focuses on the Chinese millennials, whom he dubs ‘The Want Generation’, introducing the audience to this generation, born in 1980s and 90s, from the one-child policy, and coming of age at a time when China is just climbing onto the world stage.

De Kloet & Fung (2016) also discuss this generation in their book: *Youth Cultures in China*. In it, they examine the diversity of youth cultures in China by abandoning common stereotypes of China’s youth to explore how these young urban individuals are

narrating challenging conduits for China's future (De Kloet & Fung, 2016). They demonstrate how Chinese youth negotiate their way around these intricate systems by carving out their personal transitory spaces – from becoming a gold-farmer in a virtual economy to performing as a cos-player. This book ultimately postulates the questions: What does it mean to be young in a country that is changing so rapidly? What does it mean to be young in a place ruled by one Party, during a time of intense globalization and exposure to different cultures? And, will the present system be able to facilitate this rapidly increasing diversity? Additionally, the book includes case studies which depict the romantic fantasies articulated by pop idols in TV dramas in contrast with young students working hard for their entrance exams and dream careers (De Kloet & Fung, 2016).

In *Cultural Studies 1983: A Theoretical History* by Jennifer Daryl Slack and Lawrence Grossberg Eds., a posthumous collection of lectures is delivered by Hall, to students at the University of Illinois in 1983. It covers such topics as the formation of Cultural Studies as a 'political project' and Hall's theorization of hegemony. Moreover, in his *Cultural Studies*, Hall proposed that roughly speaking, 'cultural studies is not one arm of the humanities so much as an attempt to use all of those arms at once...'. According to Hall (1985) culture is a site of "negotiation," as he contended, a space of give and take where intended meanings could be short-circuited. 'Popular culture is one of the sites where this struggle for and against a culture of the powerful is engaged: it is also the stake to be won or lost in that struggle,' he argues. 'It is the arena of consent and resistance.' In a free society, he further claims that, the notion of culture does not answer to dominant, governmental pronouncements, but it nevertheless represents a cataleptic sense of the values shared, of what it means to be right or wrong (91-114).

Furthermore, John Urry in "*Social Networks, travel and Talk*", considers the role that physical, corporeal travel plays in social life. He suggests that there is a large /

increasing scale of such travels which was heralded in by the advent and dissemination of communication devices that in some way or other have replaced physical travel. The foundation of such travels, he claims, is novel modes by which social life is “networked”. Such progressive, wide-ranging networks are essentially extended through the informational revolution, which rely on their functioning for sporadic-occasioned meetings (Urry, 2003).

In sum, these respective works are merely a tip of the literary iceberg that I intend to examine in this study on the multidimensional inquiry into Chinese outbound tourists to Western Europe. I shall explore the visitation of Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands. Similarly, the researcher seeks to critically explore the key interests of millennial tourists from China and those of Chinese millennial students as tourists in the Netherlands.

2.8 Summary of Chapter Two

In sum, the researcher aimed at reviewing the literature pertaining to Chinese outbound tourism. It revealed that numerous authors have conducted research on this subject, but most of them have focused on a quantitative approach, rather than a qualitative one. In studying cross-cultural differences, Smith (2009), contend that culture should not be seen as a fixed and frozen entity. Instead, she suggests that ‘culture’ should be seen as a process of constant struggle between interactions with other cultures. Likewise, social, economic and political factors must be borne in mind when discussing the notion of culture (Smith, 2009). Hall (1997) devised a model illustrating the concepts of “low-context” and “high-context” cultures. An illustration (*see Table 2.2*) was provided between the Dutch and the Chinese cultural differences (Hall, 1977:91). A critique, however, is provided by Smith (2009), who claim that due to the emergence of post-modern theories and more democratic policies in many Western countries, similarities between high- and low-context cultures are becoming commonplace. This is further

illustrated in the discussion of the present-day youth culture in China. An explicit review of the literature on Chinese outbound tourism is given, in which concepts such as Confucianism (*see* 2.3.1), Communism (*see* 2.3.2), and Capitalism (*see* 2.3.3) are exposed. These are seen to play a significant role in the behaviour of Chinese tourists to Western destinations in particular. The promising growth of literature from Eastern perspective is mentioned and a highlight is provided on the major theorists that provide novel concepts on Chinese outbound tourism. Finally, the important literature to be inspected was discussed.

2.9 Conclusions to Chapter Two

Chapter two presented the literature review of this study. In this chapter, the main works applied were evaluated and conclusions are provided in bullet-form below:

- Numerous sources were drawn from, including; Pearce et al., (2013) who discuss “The Puzzles in understanding Chinese tourist behaviour: Towards a triple- C gaze” in which they attempt to understand the behaviours of the increasing number of outbound Chinese tourists. From this it can be concluded that due to the complexity of today’s markets, attentiveness to local variances, transformations within China, and thoughtfulness to other world-views are desirable to pilot studies in this area;
- Sofield & Li (1998), describe traditional Chinese culture, socialist culture and “modern” culture regarding tourism developments; and although there are various theorists on the Chinese culture, Smith (2009) contend that the notion of culture is ‘...not something fixed and frozen as the traditionalists would have us believe...’ (Smith, 2009).
- Mok & de Franco (2000) examine the Chinese cultural values and their implications for travel and tourism marketing; and *Confucianism, Communism*

and *Confucianism* seem to play a vital role in defining the key interests and behaviour of the Chinese visitor during a trip abroad;

- Urry & Larsen (2013) conceptualisation of leisure and travel within contemporary societies in the *Tourist Gaze 3.0: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies*, investigate contemporary lives of today's societies among others;
- Chinese tourists usually desire to see the same popular sites like any other tourist – thus these do not seem to be particularly Chinese motivations;
- Both Chinese and Westerners view travel as an escape from everyday living, so both East and West share similar understandings of the concept of travel;
- Though further literature to be inspected will seek to explore the travel interests and behaviours of China's millennial students as tourists to Western destinations, it is unlikely that they will provide insights into the topic under investigation.

While this literature review attempted to examine literature relating to Chinese outbound tourism, it was revealed that there is hardly any study conducted on the impact of Chinese millennial students' visitation on the Netherlands. There is also none that has studied the Chinese millennial students themselves, their interests and behaviours, and the effect of their presence in the Netherlands on their own exhibited behavior during their study-time and / or on their return home. In order to fill this gap, an analysis will be conducted into the key interests and behaviours of Chinese millennial students as tourists to the Netherlands. It will also inspect what their presence means for both the Dutch tourism industry and on the Dutch higher education system. Therefore, in the ensuing chapter, the methodology adopted in this emergent study will be explicated.

Chapter Three: The Methodology Guiding this Multidimensional Inquiry into Chinese Millennial Students to the Netherlands.

3.0 Introduction to Chapter Three

The previous chapter presented a review of the literature used in this investigation. It highlights the most essential literature examined regarding the key interests and behaviour of the Chinese millennial traveller with a focus on the Chinese millennial student who has chosen to study in the Netherlands. Insights were drawn from especially Pearce et al., (2013); Sofield & Li (1998); Mok and de Franco (2000); Urry (1990) just to name a few. The ensuing chapter introduces the methodology guiding this multidimensional inquiry into Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe, focusing on the visitation of Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands. Hence, the following matters concerning methodological issues will be discussed.

Over the last few decades, tourism researchers have progressively embraced qualitative research methodologies that are established on reflexive and interpretative viewpoints as opposed to positivist research perspectives (Stergiou & Airey, 2011). Meanwhile, this 'liberation in "soft science" inquiry over recent decades has opened up ontological, epistemological and methodological opportunities' (Wilson & Hollinshead, 2015, p. 57), and consequently has resulted in practical concerns as to what proper qualitative data analysis in tourism research really implies. At the same time the recent attention to qualitative methodologies in tourism studies has mostly been given to theoretical and disciplinary issues (e.g. Matteucci & Gnoth, 2017; Wilson & Hollinshead, 2015) but practical descriptions and discussions of both research design (Mason, Augustyn, & Seakhoa-King, 2010) and data analysis schemes remain sporadic and patchy.

The researcher has, therefore, elected to do a qualitative research in order to gain a deeper understanding of Chinese (millennial) students/tourists and their interests while in the Netherlands. The reason for choosing a qualitative approach is because I

feel this will provide valuable insights into how Chinese millennial tourists are changing destinations visited, not only for leisure purposes but also for educational purposes. In order to do this, the appropriate methods of investigation are selected. There is a wide variety of methods common in qualitative research, in fact, the methods are merely limited by the imagination of the researcher. This chapter, therefore, discusses the methodology, introduces the chosen methods and provides justification for selecting these particular methods. A description of this emergent research design, sampling procedures, population, inclusion of both the internal validity and external validity thereof, will also be explicated in order to set up a propaedeutical research agenda, which is necessary in studying the internationally intricate and dynamic issue of Chinese outbound tourism.

Finally, the coding of the data will be clarified, followed by a detailed description of the data analysis in which themes/categories will be identified. Prior to this, the paradigmatic considerations directing this study will be discussed. A recap of the methodology on the key interest of Chinese tourists visits to the Netherlands concludes Chapter Three. Matters related to disciplinarity in tourism studies will now be discussed in the following section.

3.1 The Transdisciplinary Character of the Study on / From its Platform Base in Tourism Studies.

Transdisciplinarity in tourism as defined by Mittelstrass (2003) is a form of scientific work, which arises in cases concerning the solution of non-scientific problems, as well as intra-scientific principle concerning the order of scientific knowledge and scientific research itself. In both cases, it is a *principle of research and science*, which becomes operative whenever it is impossible to define or attempt to solve problems within the boundaries of a subject or discipline.

In fact, disciplines applied in tourism studies are no longer confined to economics, anthropology, ethnology, etcetera, but have proliferated considerably over the years. Nonetheless, the quality and depth of tourism research is strictly denounced within the research society (Arlt, 2006). Numerous tourism researchers have identified issues related to disciplines in tourism. Cooper (2003b), for instance, distinguishes four major deficiencies: a dissemination of subjects and an absence of focus, theoretical flaw and fuzziness, a prevalence of never-to-be-repeated, a-theoretical case studies, and complications with access to quality of comprehensive data sources. That is why, he calls for tourism researchers to '*break the meniscus* of the poverty of tourism studies by taking the many conceptual and theoretical approaches to tourism that have yet to be tested' (Cooper 2003b:3). Additionally, it is assumed that no all-embracing theory of tourism exists because "tourism, like any other field of human endeavour, is a target field," simply providing a fodder for the theoretical approaches of other disciplines (Dann and Cohen, 1991:167). Pearce (2004) argues that a great deal of the original tourism literature is descriptive, destination-specific and a-theoretical:

This Asian tourism research scenario effectively amounts to a form of academic neo-colonialism where some of the brightest students from Asia are educated in the traditions of Western social science thinking and if they return to Asia transmit these ideas in their own setting. Viewed in this way innovation in the theoretical realm is difficult.... Lacking confidence in their own mastery of the theoretical traditions and post-positivism appraisals, bereft of leadership in their own universities from experienced tourism scholars and needing to cement career places, it is not surprising to see Asia pacific scholars resort to strong a-theoretical and largely North American positivist traditions.

(Pearce, 2004: 62-63)

Yet, there are three main issues of disciplinarity that are widely used in qualitative research, especially in tourism studies. These are interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and transdisciplinary. After a brief definition of these three approaches, I shall proceed to explain why I have chosen to use a transdisciplinary approach to studying the many

dimensions of Chinese outbound tourism. First of all, Klein and Newell (1998) offer the following widely-quoted definition of interdisciplinary studies:

A process of answering a question, solving a problem, or addressing a topic that is too broad or complex to be dealt with adequately by a single discipline or profession... [It] draws on disciplinary perspectives and integrates their insights through construction of a more comprehensive perspective (p. 393-4)

Secondly, a multidisciplinary study is defined by its ability to combine or involve several academic disciplines or professional specializations in an approach to a topic or problem. In other words, it draws appropriately from multiple academic disciplines to redefine a problem outside normal boundaries and reach solutions based on a new understanding of a complex issue (Pisek & Greenhalgh, 2001). Unlike interdisciplinarity, it involves little interaction *across* disciplines. For example, in his book on *Tourism Studies and Social Science*, Holden (2005) takes a multidisciplinary approach to comprehending the impact and responsibility of tourism on contemporary society. Here he underlines the multidisciplinary fabric of tourism research and elucidates how economic and political structures in society impact the manifestation of tourism at a global level (Holden, 2005).

Thirdly, a transdisciplinary study is one in which two or more disciplinary perspectives transcend each other to form a new holistic approach to study a topic or problem. The outcome will become completely different from what one would expect from the tally of the parts. Though all three forms should not be used interchangeably, they are somehow related.

Prior to discussing the transdisciplinary character of this study, it is necessary to establish the concept of transdisciplinarity that will be adopted in this investigation. As mentioned in the beginning of this section, Mittelstrass (2002) defines transdisciplinarity as a form of scientific work which emerges from instances of scientific, non-scientific and intra-scientific problems, which are insolvable by applying

merely a single discipline. In other words, it is *a principle of research and science* which becomes operative whenever it is impossible to define or attempt to solve problems within the boundaries of a single subject or discipline (Mittelstrass, (2003).

Transdisciplinarity exceeds the constricted range of subjects and disciplines which have been instituted historically but have lost their historical significance as well as their problem-solving faculties due to disproportionate specialization.

This definition is extended by Nicolescu (2002), who in his *Manifesto*, describes transdisciplinarity as a new philosophical movement, not a new discipline. Its task, he claims, is to identify what is shared by all disciplines; what lies in, through and beyond them. What they have in common is a foundation for “making sense” of a fragment of human knowledge and expectantly stipulating a medium to an amalgamated understanding of it. Nicolescu (2002, p.19-38) contends that, transdisciplinarity is sustained by three conceptual “pillars”: complexity, levels of reality and the rationalities of the integrated medium. The foundation of these pillars is the methodology, validity, and a rigorous system of thought which is pertinent to today’s world.

In general, though, disciplines can contribute meaningfully to our understanding of the tourism phenomenon by providing perspectives from various disciplines; tourism itself is not an independent discipline (Tribe, 1997). It is accommodated within an array of disciplines, which provides us with a rich theoretical contribution to tourism knowledge. For example, in order to study tourism, one has to examine issues from disciplines such as, economics, anthropology, psychology, geography, ethnography and politics, just to name a few.

The researcher has, therefore, elected to take a transdisciplinary approach to study the multidimensionality of outbound travels from China to the Netherlands, as such an approach could provide a more holistic view of the Chinese millennial tourist’s culture, attitude, motivations and consequently interests while visiting the Netherlands in

particular. An equally important issue that needs to be tackled in any tourism study is that of paradigms. The next paragraphs examine the paradigmatic considerations directing this study.

3.2 Guiding Paradigmatic Considerations Directing This Study

To start, a definition is given of what a paradigm is, followed by other paradigmatic concerns guiding this study. A paradigm, according to Guba (1990), is “a set of *basic beliefs* (or meta physics) that deals with ultimates or first principles. It is a representation of a *worldview* that demarcates for the holder of it, the nature of the “world”, the individual’s place in it, and the scope of likely connections to that world and its parts, as in the case of, cosmologies and theologies”. Thus, in order to comprehend the world of the Chinese millennial students, for example, the paradigm that needs to be adopted should provide the researcher with in-depth knowledge of the ‘world’ of the Chinese millennial students themselves. This implies that by searching to understand the ‘world’ of the Chinese millennial students, the researcher seeks to become a part of this community. In so doing, emphasis is placed on experience and interpretation, while an attempt is also made to uncover “hidden” meanings. Hence, there are basic assumptions that need to be considered. Creswell identifies three basic philosophical assumptions, which are founded on Guba’s (1990) *Comparison of Prevailing Paradigms*. These are issues of ontology, epistemology and methodology (illustrated in Table 3.1). This illustration provides the reader with the reasoning behind the researcher’s choice of paradigm.

Table 3.1: Guba's Comparison of Prevailing Paradigms – Basic Philosophical Assumptions Regarding Paradigms.

PARADIGM	ONTOLOGY	EPISTEMOLOGY	METHODOLOGY
Positivist	Realist – reality exists “out there” and is driven by immutable natural laws and mechanism. Knowledge of these entities, laws, and mechanisms is conventionally summarised in the form of time- and context-free generalisations	Dualist/objectivist – it is both possible and essential for the inquirer to adopt a distant, non-interactive posture. Values and other biasing and confounding factors are thereby automatically excluded from influencing the outcomes.	Experimental/manipulative – questions and / or hypotheses are stated in advance in propositional form and subjected to empirical tests (falsification) under carefully controlled conditions.
Post-positivist	Critical realist – reality exists but can never be fully apprehended. It is driven by natural laws that can be only incompletely understood.	Modified objectivist – objectivity remains a regulatory ideal, but it can only be approximated, with special emphasis placed on external guardians such as the critical tradition and the critical community.	Modified experimental / manipulative – emphasise critical multiplicity. Redress imbalances by doing inquiry in more natural settings, using more qualitative methods, depending more on grounded theory, and reintroducing discovery into the inquiry process.
Critical Theory	Critical realist – as in the case of post-positivism	Subjectivist – in the sense that values mediate inquiry.	Dialogic, transformative – eliminate false consciousness and energise and facilitate transformation (via <i>Praxis</i>).
Constructivist	Relativist – realities exist in the form of multiple mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific, dependent for their form and content on the persons who hold them	Subjectivist – inquirer and inquired into are fused into a single entity. Findings are literally the creation of the process of interaction between the two.	Inter-subjective, dialectic – individual constructions are elicited, compared and contrasted dialectically, with the aim of generating a few constructions on which there is substantial consensus.
Interpretivist	Relativist – emphasis placed on experience and interpretation. It is concerned with meanings and seeks to uncover “hidden” meanings.	Subjective/ transactional – reality is socially constructed. Highly influenced by context of the situation. Multiple meanings cognitively.	Inter-subjective – participant's interaction. The researcher is part of the community: face-to-face interviewing, participant observation.

Source: Guba (1990, p. 23-27)

From Table 3.1, it is clear that there are meaningful differences among the paradigms exemplified. Three important observations are:

1. Whereas the positivist seeks to identify general, average and representative knowledge, the interpretivist is interested in unique, specific observations. In this case, many researches seeking to understand the impact of Chinese outbound travels on the places visited, seek to establish prescribed measurements and the effect of these visits by applying statistical data and analytical systems in order to produce general statements. The interpretivist, on the contrary, pursues quintessential details to uncover 'hidden' meanings.
2. Concerning knowledge, the positivist seeks absolutism that which is time, context and value constrained, while the interpretivist seeks meanings that are irrespective of time, context or culture (Guba, 1990). Consequently, this researcher does not adhere to specific political, theological or philosophical values regarding to the Chinese tourists themselves. In fact, as is customary of an interpretivist, she attempts to disclose meanings that are irrespective of politics, spirituality or ethics.
3. The positivist seeks *explanations* grounded on strong predictions whereas the interpretivist seeks *understanding* and is less absorbed in predictions. Hence, while the positivist views explanations are foundations for basing solid projections about the Chinese tourist visits to Europe, the interpretivist's underlying intention is to understand the subjects themselves, thus understanding is fundamental to interpretivism. In so doing, the interpretivist researcher endeavours to empathise with the

Chinese visitors in order to gain deeper understanding of their key interests and motivations when in Europe.

Although Post-positivism and the Critical Theory exhibit commonalities ontologically: they are both critical realists, and therefore differ somewhat epistemologically as well as methodologically. Likewise, there are similarities between the constructivist and the interpretivist: as they both have multiple-constructed realities, which are subjective in nature and influenced by the context of the situation under investigation. The main difference between the two, however, is that whereas the constructivist aims at uncovering and improving constructions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), the interpretivist seeks to understand the situation by empathizing with the participant during the investigation. In balance, primary data generated in studies using the latter methods, cannot be generalized as data is heavily impacted by personal views and values. Consequently, reliability and representativeness of data is undermined to some extent (Klein & Myers, 1999). Thus, the researcher concedes that although this approach does not provide explanations based on strong predictions regarding the substantial growth of Chinese outbound tourism, neither does it identify a general representation of the reasons for this phenomenon; it does seek to reveal *hidden* meanings within the context of the Chinese (millennials') culture.

There are numerous definitions for the term Interpretivism. However, this study will **not** be providing an elaboration of all the scholarly definitions. Rather, the researcher seeks to draw from Goodson and Phillimore's (2004:36) tenet which contend that "the complex social world can be understood only from the point of view of those who operate within it". In the words of Jordan and Gibson (2004:215) "let your data do the talking". Hence, this interpretivist researcher sets out to offer a naturalistic voice to the Chinese outbound tourist phenomenon. Consequently, paradoxical, blurry, vastly context-bound, and muddled interpretations are embedded in the data gathering

process. These interpretations will, undoubtedly, be contested by positivists seeing that, according to them, reliability and validity are deficient. Nevertheless, the interpretivist's responses include, diverse truth-criteria which are appropriate to interpretivism. These include, confirmability, trustworthiness and transparency (Tribe, 1997).

The research has thus chosen to follow the lead of Guba and Lincoln (1994) in the interpretivist paradigm to investigate the multidimensionality of Chinese outbound tourism, while focusing specifically on the Chinese millennial tourists as well as the Chinese millennial students who have elected to study in the Netherlands. Consequently, the following paragraphs provide a more detailed examination of each of the above-mentioned philosophical assumptions and their relevance in examining the study problem. These are established on three foundational suppositions: ontology, epistemology and axiology (Edelheim, 2014). These assumptions will form the basis for how the researcher understands the Chinese outbound tourism world; how she determines truths about this world, and considerations which are deemed valuable both to the tourism society and the researcher, will be considered. Therefore, a discussion on each of the philosophical assumptions and the influence each has on the way they are debated are explained. Finally, the relation of these to the current study of Chinese tourists' visits to destinations such as the Netherlands is elucidated. The first to be discussed is ontology:

3.2.1 Issues Relating to Ontological Matters

Ontology, or the study of being (of things, matters, concepts, experiences etc.), posits questions about the nature of reality regarding the claims / assumptions that an approach to social enquiry makes about the nature of social reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). In other words, ontology forms the scaffold for how individuals are connected in societies, and make sense of the reality in which they live (Edelheim, 2014 p. 31). The power of ontology is that it provides a response to how reality is comprehended. In this

study, the researcher embarks on the ontology (*see pages 109 and 110 for further details on ontology*) of Chinese tourists' visitation to the Netherlands as an agent of social reality. Hollinshead (2004a and 2004b) has tackled the lack of attention to ontological deliberations within tourism studies in two chapters in Phillimore and Goodson's contribution to interpretative research. This is illustrated in table 3.2. Here, an attempt is made to disclose the common ontological flaws of many tourism studies (as identified by Hollinshead (2004: 85-6). It does this by exposing issues such as perspectives, opinions, misinterpretations, misunderstandings and misrepresentations of Chinese tourists and their visitation to west European destinations, particularly with regard to the Netherlands. Likewise, it reveals how the Chinese culture is represented via Western media and social interaction with the Chinese culture. Hence, the ontological picture painted of the Netherlands is that presented by Westerners and not that of the Chinese themselves.

3.2.2 Epistemological Issues Within Tourism Studies

Epistemology is generally used to refer to the study of knowledge. It provides an understanding of how we jointly decide that certain things are true, and others are not. In the epistemology of tourism studies, (the process of knowing what we know about tourism studies) researchers try to get as close as possible to the participants being studied in order to learn 'truths'. They examine the attractiveness of tourism studies, the sources of tourism knowledge, the validity and reliability of claims of knowledge of the external world of tourism, the use of concepts, the boundaries of tourism studies, and the categorization of tourism studies as a discipline or field (Tribe, 1997). In other words, epistemology in tourism looks at the relationship between tourism studies and disciplines such as, sociology, anthropology, geography, economics and so on. Despite the fact that tourism has become a massive phenomenon of considerable economic, social, psychological, cultural and environmental impact, it is hardly acknowledged among academia. Is it a discipline, a field of study? or is it a community? Concurrently, it

has had attention from scholars from different disciplines since the 1970s (Echtner & Jamal, 1997) however, it is still a challenge to establish tourism as an independent discipline in the crowded field of social science (Crick, 1989). Critics have characterized tourism as an under-theorized, heterogeneous, abstruse field of study, which is why epistemological advancement of tourism studies could assist in alleviating these complications and hence, contribute to creating a constructive dialogue which could assist in ending this tourism discussion (Belhassen & Caton, 2009).

This is not only the case when discussing tourism in the West but also in terms of how the so-called 'West' has misunderstood the so-called 'East' and how understandings in the Netherlands of and about China epitomize other 'European' orientation, or otherwise distinguish themselves from them.

In this inquiry into the multidimensional aspects of Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe, the focus will be on the visitation of Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands. The researcher is anxious to learn about the relationship between the Chinese visitors' ethnicity and the reason for their choice for visiting the Netherlands, and ultimately the effects of their visitation on the country itself. She is also keen on learning the interests of these visitors as well as the interests of Chinese millennial students, in order to see if these groups exhibit similar interests while in the Netherlands.

This will be achieved by analysing discourse from pertinent academic and non-academic sources, conducting semi-structured interviews with Chinese millennials and key players in the Dutch tourism industry and holding focus group meetings with both Chinese millennial students and international students. In so doing, an attempt is made to get as close as possible to the participants in this study and ultimately to learn more about the interests of Chinese millennial students while in the Netherlands. In other words, the researcher wants to get as close as possible to the 'truth' about Chinese

millennial students' interests while in the Netherlands. In order to do this, it is vital to also consider axiological issues, which are said to be concerned with principles and philosophies.

3.2.3 Axiological Issues Within Tourism Studies

Carnaghan (2013) defines axiology as the theory of value and value judgement. It seeks to provide an understanding of the nature of morals and judgements of beliefs (Carnaghan, 2013). Axiology is alleged to be closely associated with ethics and aesthetics. In applying a qualitative research methodology in the study of Chinese outbound tourism, the researcher is focusing on the Netherlands. One of the reasons for doing this is that though the researcher was born in Jamaica, she has become Dutch by naturalisation. Her motivation for studying particularly the Chinese millennial tourists as well as the Chinese millennial students during their study period stems from a fascination for the Chinese people on a whole: their culture, history, and resilience. Furthermore, the fairly recent phenomenon of Chinese tourists visiting the Netherlands and other destinations in Europe has sparked her interests in what these groups / visitors do while at the destination; what their visits mean for the host destination; and how they are facilitated during their stay. As a lecturer at a school for tourism studies, the researcher has come in contact with numerous Chinese students. Their behaviour, attitude, motivations and experiences while in the Netherlands are key issues that consume both the Chinese student as well as staff at this tourism institute. Chinese students are said to travel frequently during holidays as well as weekends. They visit friends and relatives, or even go shopping to other cities and/or regions outside of the Netherlands. I am curious to learn where they go and what they do there. In so doing, I hope to discover if their interests are similar to Chinese millennial tourists visiting the Netherlands. It is assumed that Chinese millennial students often play hosts to visiting friends and relatives when they visit them in the Netherlands. How do Chinese millennials' stay in the Netherlands influence the activities they do while entertaining

their visiting friends and relatives? What is known about these visitors? Where do they go and why do they visit these places? These are some of the principal questions that I hope to address in this inquiry.

Finally, I am inherently curious to learn more about the Chinese millennials themselves. Numerous researches report on the impact of Chinese outbound tourism on destinations, particularly addressing the added economic value of these visits. However, few examine the subjects themselves: their backgrounds, evolution, social and cultural development, and their interests while outside of China. That is why I believe it is time that a closer investigation is done on these Chinese visitors, and the Chinese millennial students in particular.

These are some of the axiological matters that will be addressed in this study, which will help in this multidimensional inquiry into Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe and focus on an examination of the Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands. Consequently, a careful methodology has been devised, providing an overview of the strategy that has been adopted during this investigation.

3.2.4 Methodological Issues Within Tourism Studies

The methodology applied in this study of the multidimensionality of Chinese outbound tourism is inductive – a “bottom-up approach to knowing, in which the researcher uses observations to build an abstraction or to describe a picture of the phenomenon under study” Lodico et al., (2010), - emergent – data-driven in nature rather than theory-driven (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and shaped by the researcher’s experience in collecting and analyzing the data. Therefore, these methods, which are fundamental to my knowledge construction on the many dimensions of Chinese outbound tourism, will form the basis of the methodology used in this research. An elaboration on this is supplied in the following section.

3.2.5 Defining the Qualitative Research Methodology

The following paragraphs provide detailed explanation of a qualitative research methodology. A qualitative research is depicted by its goals, which relate to understanding a particular aspect of social life, and its methods generally produce words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis (Neuman & Wiegand, 2000). This is unlike quantitative methods, which aim at measuring (percentage, a particular culture of a community, for example). One disadvantage of a qualitative research methodology is the size of the samples. These may not represent the breadth of the population under investigation, making it difficult to generalise. Likewise, findings are said to lack rigour, that is to say, they do not apply the most suitable research tools to meet the projected objectives of the investigation (p. 364).

Research Methodology, is also about the study of **how** we frame and collect knowledge about the world. Phillimore and Goodson (2004) emphasise that the method of qualitative research is generally applied in order to gather data about activities, events, incidences and performances in particular rather than generalizable settings. Moreover, if exercised propitiously and painstakingly it can allow the researcher to gain richer and deeper understanding of different situations, actions, and processes in a social context (p. 3-29). By asking questions of *why* and *how*, the relationship between the methods used to collect evidence and the explanations, interpretations or understanding of what is examined are considered (Phillimore and Goodson, 2014). As previously mentioned, this study employs a qualitative methodological approach because it seeks to collect rich descriptions of the understudied emics (*internal perspective*) and the complex etics (*external perspective*) of the Chinese culture - in terms of the encountered interests, values and norms.

In the *Handbook of Qualitative Research* Denzin and Lincoln (2005) elucidate qualitative research as involving ‘... an interpretive naturalistic approach to the world. This means

that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (p. 3). When applying *qualitative research methods*, the emphasis is placed on the natural setting and the points of views of the research participants. Furthermore, particular attention is given to the researcher as an individual (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). He or she is *not* the impartial bystander in a white coat – a picture that is often painted when natural scientists are portrayed (p.20). On the contrary, in qualitative research self-reflection about one's own attitude, position and his or her role in society is fundamental to the research. As Denzin and Lincoln explain: 'Behind all research stands the biography of the gendered researcher, who speaks from a particular class, racial, cultural and ethnic community perspective' (p. 21). What is more, is that we can only see *what* our class, culture, race, gender or other factors allow us to recognize. Thus, the application of qualitative research methods allows the researcher to focus on the natural setting, embracing the opinions of both the researcher and the participants in the investigation. This is crucial when selecting the appropriate qualitative research methods in qualitative research. A detailed description of the chosen methods is provided in Chapter four, which elucidates the three data-types selected.

3.3 A Further Description of The Emergent Research Design

The researcher has elected to do a qualitative research rather than a quantitative one. As Silverman (1998) argues, one of the advantages of qualitative research is that the inherently subjective nature of social relationships can be recognised. People interpret others' behaviour through their own lens of observations, and the others' behaviour, too, is framed within their own subjective and discursive framework of reference (p.4). Quantitative research, on the other hand, is used to quantify the research problem by way of generating numerical data or data that can be transformed into useable statistics. Likewise, it is used to quantify attitudes, opinions, behaviors, and other defined variables – and generalize results from larger sample populations.

Although qualitative research, in contrast, is frequently practiced in studying human behaviour, and is therefore often used in tourism studies, it occasionally can be used to make generalisations. Being predominantly exploratory in nature, though, a qualitative study is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations, while assisting in uncovering trends in thoughts. According to Yin, (1989:29), it 'deals with a *logical* problem and not a *logistical* problem'.

In this study, the researcher is examining the multidimensionality of Chinese outbound tourism to the Netherlands. In so doing, the study problem has been identified. As formulated below:

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY IS TO EXAMINE THE KEY INTERESTS OF CHINESE MILLENNIAL STUDENTS AS TOURISTS TO THE NETHERLANDS, AND TO INVESTIGATE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THEIR PARTICULAR VISITATION FOR BOTH THE DUTCH TOURISM INDUSTRY AND THE DUTCH HIGHER EDUCATION BOARD.

Subsequently, in order to better guide the study, an exploration has been done into some theoretical approaches to qualitative research. First of all, on embarking on a qualitative study, researchers ought to be pre-disposed to a set of primary philosophical assumptions, whilst bringing to the study their own worldviews that will ultimately stipulate the direction of the study. Therefore, in Table 3.2 below, a representation of the common ontological difficulties in tourism studies are indicators for the interpretation of meaning for / about China. It is a translation of Hollinshead's (2004) work on common ontological difficulties in tourism studies, which examines shared ontological complications in tourism studies while offering guides for the elucidation of significances for/about China:

Table 3.2: Common Ontological Difficulties in Tourism Studies Indicators for the Interpretation of Meaning for /about China: A Translation of Hollinshead's (2004) Work in this Study.

<p>Conventional ontological flaws in tourism studies (Hollinshead, 2004: 85-6).</p>	<p>Translation of the issues regarding areas of representation and East / West understanding of these areas (very often misinterpreted and lacking in critical understanding)</p>
<p>The varied and often incoherent meaning of sites and experiences to tourists who visit foreign destinations</p>	<p><i>What are the perspectives of the Chinese millennial student/tourists of the Netherlands? And how / do these influence the tourists' experience? What are they keen on seeing/doing when visiting the Netherlands</i></p>
<p>The deep and often hidden meanings in foreign places, of sites and stories to host populations.</p>	<p><i>What is the Chinese millennial student/ tourist's (mis) understandings of history/heritage of the Netherlands? How is the culture of the Netherlands presented in the media in China? Which media is used in portraying the Netherlands in China?</i></p>
<p>The mysterious and blurry / 'distinctive ways' in which foreign peoples differ from each other.</p>	<p><i>How do the diverse / regional Dutch nationals differ from each other (urban, provincial, etc.? In which ways do the Dutch/Westerners tend not to be able to appreciate or understand the Chinese millennial students in particular?</i></p>
<p>The trivial and awkward ways in which tourists and/or the tourism industry commits custodian acts of ethnocentric misinterpretation in foreign/distant/removed locales.</p>	<p><i>In what ways have Chinese millennial students from China regularly misinterpreted other people / places / pasts of China in the last centuries?</i></p>
<p>The long, established and highly discriminatory ways in which the (tourism-producing) West has continued to be prejudiced to specific populations.</p>	<p><i>In what ways have current international Chinese millennial students from China badly misinterpreted the customs / preferences of the Chinese people – i.e. in what ways have they disregarded their traditional values? How have their behaviour reflected this 'other side' of China?</i></p>
<p>The complex and multi-faceted ways in which the tourism industry (and all its public and private sector/players generally act internationally to market/re-market places.</p>	<p><i>Have the Netherlands adopted its image to accommodate the Chinese millennial students as tourists? If so, in what ways have the projections of tourism in the Netherlands adapted its image to accommodate these Chinese millennial students as tourists?</i></p>

Source: Adapted from Hollinshead 2004b: 85-6

Creswell (2012) describes four philosophical assumptions: Ontological, Epistemological, Methodological and Axiological. Each of these is briefly explained below:

1. **Ontological:** Ontology (the nature of reality) relates to the characteristics of reality and its structures. The researcher embraces the belief of multiple realities and reports on these by investigating various forms of evidence from different individuals' perspectives and experiences. When studying Chinese outbound tourism, a variety of realities are being examined and a multi-perspectival approach has been adopted. This is attained by conducting interviews, holding focus group meetings and analysing discourses.
2. **Epistemological:** Epistemology (how researchers know what they know) is the study of *how* researchers acquire knowledge about the phenomenon. Hollinshead and Suleman (2017) debate on the distinct need for fluid acumen within tourism studies seeing that researchers try to get as close as possible to the participants being studied. In this study, this is achieved by leading focus group meetings with Chinese millennial students from several universities in the Netherlands, as well as conducting semi-structured interviews with key players in the Dutch tourism industry as well as educators at Dutch universities. Numerous existing data were used in acquiring information on the topic under investigation.
3. **Methodological:** Methodology is about *how* we collect and organise knowledge about the world being studied. The methodology applied in this study of the multidimensionality of Chinese outbound tourism is inductive – a “bottom-up approach to knowing, in which the researcher uses observations to build an abstraction or to describe a picture of the phenomenon under study” Lodico et al., (2010), - emergent – data-driven in nature rather than theory-driven (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and shaped by the researcher's experience in collecting and analyzing the data.
4. **Axiology:** ... is the study of the role of values and biases in research. In such an investigation, the researcher indicates her/his own values and biases and actively reports these during the study. Simultaneously, the value-laden nature of the information gathered from the field is also reported. That is why the researcher has provided a reflexive report of each chapter/ significant section of this study (*see boxes in appendix 5-10*)

3.4 Matters of Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research

Despite the fact that many critics are disinclined to acknowledge the trustworthiness of qualitative research, structures for safeguarding rigour have been in existence for quite some time. Lincoln & Guba (1985), for example, suggested a concept in which four main criteria are identified. These are, credibility, transferability dependability and confirmability. Seeing that the researcher has adopted the interpretivist paradigm, she will attempt to apply these criteria in offering a representational voice to the Chinese outbound tourist phenomenon. As is common in such a research, data generated are vastly context-bound, confusing and messy, allowing for indistinct interpretations. These interpretations are, without a doubt, disputed by positivists seeing that, according to them, reliability and validity are lacking in such inquiries. Nevertheless, the interpretivist's rejoinders include, diverse truth-criteria – four of which are mentioned above, and which are appropriate to interpretivism (Tribe, 2001). The topic of trustworthiness of qualitative research is exposed in the following sub-section of this study.

3.4.1 Trustworthiness of Qualitative Research

The trustworthiness of qualitative research is fundamentally mistrusted by positivists, possibly because their perceptions of validity and reliability cannot be tackled in the same fashion as in naturalistic inquiries. Silverman (1993) among many other qualitative researchers, has established how qualitative researchers could integrate procedures that address these issues. This researcher will, therefore, attempt to make a comparison between the interpretivist and the positivist paradigms, even though such issues are still “emerging and being defined”, according to Lincoln (1995). This is illustrated in Table 3. 3 below:

Table 3.3 Illustration of a Comparison Between the Positivist and the Interpretivist Paradigms

Positivists terminologies	Interpretivists terminologies
<p>Internal validity: is the search of proving what is projected, by way of <u>measurement</u> or <u>tests</u>.</p>	<p>Credibility: deals with matters of trustworthiness: how compatible or consistent are the findings with reality? In the case of Chinese millennial tourists, the researcher uses similar questions to those used in data collection in a previously conducted research that was successful.</p> <p>Prolonged engagement: developing early familiarity with the culture of participating organisations prior to the initial data collection (Guba, 1981). In this case, this was done in the form of a prior ethnographic phase. In such a phase, the researcher conducted a focus group meeting with participants who fitted the profile of the population, that is Chinese millennial students who themselves are tourists to various (mainly) cities in Europe.</p> <p>The researcher's "reflexive commentary" is also a way of determining credibility. A regular reflexive report is written by the researcher about the developments, effectiveness of techniques employed.</p> <p>Thick Description of the Chinese outbound phenomenon is another way that the researcher tries to establish credibility in this study. It helps to convey the actual situations that have been investigated.</p> <p>An examination of previous research findings is also used to assess the degree to which this study's results are in line with previous studies on Chinese outbound tourism. By linking the findings of this study to an existing body of knowledge is a key criterion for evaluating works of qualitative inquiry, according to Silverman (2000).</p>
<p>External validity/generalisability: is defined by Merriam as being "concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations".</p>	<p>Transferability: Seeing that the findings of qualitative work are exclusive to a small number of particular situations and people, it is not possible to determine that the findings and conclusions are germane to other circumstances and populaces (Shenton, 2004). In this study, it is not possible to obtain complete transferability seeing that the context varies. The diverse backgrounds of the Chinese tourists, the cities they visit, their travel companions/compilation et cetera, are matters of importance when collecting data on Chinese outbound tourism.</p>
<p>Reliability: Here the positivist applies techniques to demonstrate that, should the project be repeated within a similar context, using the same methods, and participants then similar results would be attained (Shenton, 2004).</p>	<p>Dependability: Due to the changing nature of the Chinese outbound phenomenon, it is difficult to rely on published results. These are static and frozen in the "ethnographic present", according to Florio-Ruane (1991 pp. 234-256). The dynamic nature of the research project at hand makes it impossible to focus only on what has been published. Therefore, the researcher relies on current online material, and other overlapping media to establish dependability.</p>
<p>Objectivity: According to Patton (2002), objectivity in science uses instruments that are not dependent on human skills and perceptions. However, he acknowledges that this is difficulty to achieve as even tests and questionnaires are designed by humans and so researcher's biases are inevitable (Patton, 2002).</p>	<p>Confirmability: In qualitative inquiries, the researcher must take steps to safeguard as much as possible that the findings are the results of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the descriptions and inclinations of the researcher. In the current study of Chinese outbound tourism, the researcher records and notes the experiences and behaviours of the informants by video-recording and transcribing these.</p>

Source: adapted from Shenton (2004, p.64)

3.5 Description of the Population and a Justification for the Methods Used in Selecting Units of Observation: Purposive Sampling

In this section of this inquiry into the multidimensionality of Chinese outbound tourism to the Netherlands, a description of the population will be given. This is followed by a justification for the type of method used for selecting the units of observation. To start, a research population is considered to be a seemingly dissimilar collection of individuals or objects that portray similar or common binding characteristics/trait (Flick, 2014). However, due to the size of the Chinese outbound tourism population, the researcher will need to rely on a method of selecting the appropriate units of observation that would provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. As is customary in an emergent study as the current one, there is a need to deploy human instruments and thus the sampling choices are established on this research method.

Additionally, the general practice of sampling is to select cases or examples from a wider population which might be too large to be fully studied, so that the researcher can eventually make statements that apply not just to the individual participant(s) of a study but to a wider population (p. 168). Hence the selection of individuals included in the investigation should take that relation (sample to a wider population) into account (p. 168). Sampling can be established on either formal or substantial criteria. Whereas the former can be driven by the code of representativeness of a sample for the population, the latter is one in which particular characteristics of an individual (or a group) are relevant for deciding to include this individual in the sample. The principles of formal criteria is usually applied in quantitative research while substantial criteria is normally applied in qualitative research (p.168). That is why it is important to define the sampling dimensions in advance to data collection.

This is done by roughly examining and documenting the qualities and distributions of the subjects under investigation. In addition to this, strategies of sampling in stages are often based on theoretical (or purposive sampling) where decisions about choosing and

constructing cases, groups, institutions and so on, are made, in light of data collection and interpretation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

Consequently, within the interpretive paradigm, purposive sampling is mostly used (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Purposive sampling is defined a non-probability sample that it selected based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. It is sometimes referred to as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling (Crossman, 2017). This technique seeks participants / insights that will best assist in providing an understanding of the research problem as can be determined incrementally over time by the reflexive researcher who hopes to become more informed contextually (Creswell, 2003). As a guiding line to the research problem, the sampling method maybe pre-specified or emergent (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Transferability of a qualitative study can be enhanced by “using the purposive / theoretical sampling and by thick descriptions”, according to Decrop (2004, p. 161).

Sampling decisions therefore are aimed at incorporating the material that promises maximum insights, and are viewed in light of the material already used, and provide a basis for knowledge drawn from it. Consequently, the following reflexive account demonstrates how the researcher proceeded to apply purposive sampling.

In general though, the researcher has focused on a limited number of respondents who have been purposefully selected to participate in the study, seeing that they possess in-depth knowledge about the key interests and behaviour of the Chinese millennial tourists. Moreover, they have particular knowledge or expertise regarding the Chinese millennial students, and/or they are tourism providers or experts in their field/industry. While purposive sampling enables one to recruit individuals based on the study problem and sub-problems, there are limitations to the provision of the findings of this study, which is why there is an appropriate mix in variety to this study by way of triangulation, which is addressed in details in section 3.10.

Box 3 presents a reflexive voice on the researcher's choice for a purposive sampling technique. This is followed by a reiteration of the sub-problems of this research, and each is subsequently followed by a justification for each sub-problem. These are formulated in question-format.

BOX 3: REFLEXIVITY ON CHOICE FOR PURPOSIVE SAMPLING

In this study of a multidimensional inquiry into Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe with a particular focus on the visitation of Chinese millennial tourists to the Netherlands, I attempted to gain an understanding into what the key activities of these visitors while in the Netherlands. A comparison was made to Chinese millennial students and their key activities while in the Netherlands. I chose to use purposive sampling as it provides insights into the development of theory and enables the researcher to construct theory on the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, the following procedures were applied:

1. An evaluation was carried out of the perceptions and opinions of the host destination regarding visits of Chinese tourists from China. In so doing, it was important to provide some historical facts about the Chinese people: their culture, beliefs, values and norms, society and the political discussions surrounding Chinese outbound tourism particularly towards international travels. Subsequently, it was important to find out what Chinese visitors do when they are abroad. This is often founded on their cultural values and norms. I tried to establish their motivations for visiting the Netherlands and attempted to find out what they do when they are visiting this destination. Prior to this, it was crucial to provide some background into the Chinese tourists themselves, who are they? What distinguishes Chinese millennials from their parents? Why makes Chinese millennials decide to study in the Netherlands? What activities do these millennials perform during their stay in the Netherlands? How does their stay in the Netherlands influence the interests of visiting friends and relatives to the Netherlands? How does their stay in the Netherlands differ from those of Chinese millennial tourists?

2. I have examined the emergence and development of the Chinese millennials and their travel behaviour. Who are these millennials? How are they different from other millennials? What are their travel preferences? What are their cultural values and how do these influence their decision to visit countries like the Netherlands/Europe? What are their interests while in the Netherlands?

3. I explained the Dutch Education System as it is important to learn how it differs from other higher educational systems in Europe. I wanted to learn if this is one of the reasons why there has been a major increase in the arrivals of Chinese students to the Netherlands. These students choose to come to the Netherlands because of its generic appeal to a wide range of international students. This is playing a significant role in the provision of extensive English-taught programmes at Dutch universities, causing a rise in particularly Chinese millennial students at almost all thirteen Dutch universities. While they are studying in the Netherlands, these students appear to enjoy traveling throughout Europe. What do they do during their stay in the Netherlands? How often do friends and relatives visit them? And what kind of activities do they/their friends and relatives do while they are in the Netherlands? To what extent are these activities influenced by the Chinese millennial student's life/living in the Netherlands?

Chinese outbound tourism has seen an immense growth in the past decade and many tourism providers from both developing and developed destinations are scrambling to design methods to attract these tourists, as they are said to generate jobs, and revenue for the destinations visited. China has the biggest population and with an increase in disposable income among especially millennial tourists, it is now considered the largest source market for incoming tourists for many countries. Moreover, only few Chinese nationals have a passport, so the growth potential is gigantic.

In order to investigate these matters, I have identified, first of all, five sub-problems which will address several dimensions of the sample.

The following section presents the sub-problems of the study and at the end of each, a justification for the sub-problem will be explicated. The reason for doing this is to demonstrate the necessity for the researcher's choice of applying a purposive sampling technique:

SUB-PROBLEM #1

Why do Chinese millennial students / tourists choose to visit the Netherlands (Western Europe)?

Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe has risen considerably in the past decade. Consequently, a significant number of these Chinese visitors travel to the Netherlands and a growing number of them belong to the cohort: millennials, as they were born after 1980. These tourists appear to have different reasons for visiting this destination than their parents, for example. The researcher would like to know what their motivations are for, and interests in choosing the Netherlands above other European destinations.

SUB-PROBLEM #2

Why do Chinese millennial students decide to study in the Netherlands?

The Chinese millennial students make up a substantial amount of the current international student body at universities throughout the Netherlands. There are numerous higher educational institutes in Western Europe where these students could possibly choose to study. The researcher wants to know why Chinese millennial students elect to carry out their studies in the Netherlands.

SUB-PROBLEM #3

What activities do Chinese millennial students participate in during their study-time in the Netherlands?

It is assumed that during their study-time in the Netherlands, Chinese millennial students participate in various activities. These activities are assumed to be different from those of

other Chinese visitors. The researcher is, therefore, anxious to learn what these activities involve.

SUB-PROBLEM #4

What are the consequences of Chinese millennial students' stay in the Netherlands on their own exhibited interests and behaviours?

During their stay in the Netherlands Chinese millennial students are in close contact not only with the Dutch students but also with other international students. They are also involved with a somewhat different society than that of their homeland. They have to adapt somehow to living in the Netherlands, and this could have an effect on their development and demeanor on their return to China. The researcher would, therefore, like to learn what the consequences of their stay in the Netherlands are on their exhibited personal interests and behaviours.

SUB-PROBLEM #5

What are the consequences of the presence of Chinese millennial students on the Netherlands and on the Dutch population in general?

Chinese millennial students very often live in student accommodations or in private dwellings close to the university where they study. While they reside in these areas, they often interact with their direct surroundings, and thus come in contact with not only the local population but also with other millennials. The fact that they live in the Netherlands has implications for the Dutch society in general. That is why the researcher would like to know what the influence of Chinese millennial students are on the Netherlands as a country and on the diverse peoples of this country.

Dimensions of the sample: This has led to a sample structure of five fields (*see Table 3.4*) which I attempted to fill in with cases representing each field. The number of cases depends on the resources and on the goals of the study (providing an analysis of the main interests of Chinese millennial tourists to the Netherlands, and examining if/how these differ from Chinese millennials studying in the Netherlands).

Table 3.4 Example of a Sampling Structure with Dimensions Given in Advance to Data Collection

Context and gender

Tour operator	Government agencies	Universities	Media	Host population
Profession	Female/male	Female / male	Female / male	Female/ male
Director of tourism provider; Hotel manager; Airline operator; Department store/shopping outlet	General manager (Dutch Bureau of Tourism & Conventions - NBTC); UNWTO Report; local government reports;	Professor of Social studies / Chinese studies; Chinese millennial students; university in China; University in the Netherlands	Research manager / marketing manager; Tourism journals; Academic articles; weekly online (Chinese) newspapers; promotional brochures; China Daily; Tourism reports; videos, documentaries	Inhabitants of host population; shop owners; attractions and activities sources;

After providing a vivid description of the purposive sampling procedures in which the approach chosen for this study was highlighted, the data types for the next stage of this investigation is charted in Table 3.5 below. It is to be noted here, that the population was selected based on their assumed contribution to the topic under investigation, and are therefore subjective in nature.

Table 3.5: The Data Considered for the Next Stage of this Study Vis-À-Vis Their 'Envisaged Contribution' and 'Possible Application'

PROPOSED DATA TYPE	CONTRIBUTION OF DATA TYPE	APPLICATION OF DATA TYPE IN THIS STUDY
Semi-structured interview scripts	To gain in-depth understanding through participants' presentation	<i>A. Understanding the culture of the respondents; understanding values, norms from experts; understanding motivations for Chinese tourists' choice for visiting the Netherlands.</i>
Focus group	To gain understanding through participants' discussion on issues related to topic of discussion (interests of millennial Chinese)	<i>B. Understanding attitude, expectation, behaviour, motivation of Chinese millennials studying in the Netherlands.</i>
Online newspaper articles	To get a broad understanding of current trends and development on national (tourism) issues. and also, to know how China is being represented	<i>C. Understanding representation of contemporary China through(recent) online newspaper articles.</i>
Dutch policy documents	To obtain an account of statistics, decision-making documents to substantiate the study	<i>D. Making the data more revelatory (show/clarify hidden message).</i>
Films, videos, documentaries etc.	To explore the Chinese culture and its people, through various events, activities, and rituals. To hear the various stories from the different representations of China.	<i>E. Reflecting: communication and interactions via media and society. Capture the Chinese societies and visualize everyday rituals and habits. Learn about Chinese history and heritage.</i>
Websites	To know how people (tourists/students) communicate and interact via media	<i>F. Hearing the opinions/views of real people. Up-to-date information and actualities about how Chinese experience The Netherlands: what they like/dislike.</i>

The next section presents Table 3.6; which illustrates the relationship between the study problem and sub-problems, the study methods, population choices, and sampling approaches considered:

Table 3.6: The Relationship Between the Study Problem (and its Sub-Problem) and the Study Methods, Population Choices, and Sampling Approaches Being Considered

Study problem and sub-problems	The Candidate Methods	The Candidate Populations	The Candidate Sampling Approaches
Sub-prob. 1: Why do Chinese tourists choose to visit the Netherlands?	Discourse analysis Tour operator Interview The Internet / Blogs	Chinese millennials	<i>To be determined by purposive sampling: studying blogs, internet articles, interviews with tour operators/tourism providers, online articles.</i>
Sub-prob. 2: Why do Chinese millennial students decide to study in the Netherlands?	Focus group meeting	Chinese millennial students	<i>To be determined by purposive sampling: university students in the Netherlands</i>
Sub-prob. 3: What activities do Chinese millennial students participate in during their study time in the Netherlands?	Focus group meetings	Chinese millennial students	<i>To be determined by purposive sampling: interviews with university students in the Netherlands; focus group meetings with Chinese millennial students.</i>
Sub-prob. 4: What are the consequences of Chinese millennial students' stay in the Netherlands on their own exhibited interests and behaviours?	Interviews Blogs Focus group meetings	Chinese millennial students	<i>To be determined by purposive sampling: Chinese millennial students in interviews/focus group meetings; personal/informal talks with Chinese millennial students; internet, blogs, online news articles.</i>
Sub-prob. 5: What are the consequences of the presence of Chinese millennial students on the Netherlands and on the Dutch population in general?	Discourse analysis Semi-structured interviews	Educational institutes landlords Dutch population Store personnel International students	<i>To be determined by purposive sampling: interview with tourism providers, Dutch tourism providers, Dutch citizens, shop-keepers, tourism businesses.</i>

3.6 Matters of Ethics and the Proposed Application in the Study

Seeing the nature of qualitative studies, the collaboration between the researcher and the participants can be ethically challenging for the former, as she is personally involved at various stages of the study. The relationship and intimacy that is often established between the researcher and the participants in qualitative research can raise a wide range of different ethical concerns and researchers face predicaments such as respect for privacy, creation of honest in open exchanges and eluding falsifications (Warusznski, 2002). For this reason, the construction of detailed ethical standards appears to be fundamental, and so this section of the study of Chinese millennial students as tourists to the Netherlands, the researcher will explain the necessity to develop overt guidelines for conducting the qualitative study with regard to her role in the investigation.

Furthermore, researchers executing the qualitative research methodology in tourism studies have an enormous responsibility to their audience. The researcher has to do an evaluation of the data collected, what she observes and simultaneously interpret it. Providing researchers with the necessary proficiencies and employing rigorous administration can lead to a more suitable abstraction of consistent information from qualitative studies (Richards & Schwartz, 2002). Therefore, in this section of this investigation, the researcher will illustrate how she proposes to cover matters of ethics involved in this research in her efforts to provide applicable and trustworthy findings.

As the qualitative researcher is frequently obliged to explain his/her role in the research process (Erlandson et. al., 1993) she is involved at all stages of the study; from defining concepts to the design, interview, transcription, analysis, verification and reporting of the concepts and themes that emerge. Therefore, whenever methods are involved in qualitative research, a human being will be an essential part of the process (Fink, 2000 p.4). Additionally, humans have increasingly become the “instrument of choice” for

naturalistic inquiry due to the certain characteristics: they are highly responsive to the environmental stimuli, because they have the capacity to interact with the situation, pull together different pieces of information at multiple levels simultaneously, and perceive situations holistically, and as such are able to process findings the minute they become available (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). They can also provide immediate feedback, feel and sense unusual responses. Ultimately, their interpersonal skills are of vital importance in this natural setting and study process.

Two significant challenges faced by researchers of a study involve designing and reporting. Others include: anonymity, confidentiality, matters of consent, and the researcher's potential impact on the participants and vice versa. Therefore, in Table 3.7 below, an illustration is made of matters of ethics regarding the inquiry into the many dimensions of Chinese millennial students / visitors to the Netherlands, and their possible application to this study.

Table 3.7. Ethical Concerns and the Proposed Application in this Study

ETHICAL CONCERNS	PROPOSED APPLICATION IN THIS STUDY
Designing	The researcher proposes an appropriate design: one that is clear and comprehensible to the participant. This should facilitate a smooth conduction of the interviews prior to the start of the sessions.
Reporting	The researcher states how the information collected is reported. Seeing the nature of this study, there might be some linguistic cultural / challenges. The researcher aims to simplify terms and methods of reporting to the participant where necessary.
Anonymity	The researcher promises to protect the identity of the participants to this study by first gaining consent from the participant on this issue. Should this individual object to mentioning his/her identity, then other ways of establishing anonymity will be studied. For example, using the participant's initials instead of the complete name. Numerical significations could also be considered: informant 1, or 2 etc.
Confidentiality	The researcher agrees not divulge information revealed in trust. Although in this study, there are no immediate matters of sensitivity, it is still important to inform the participants about matters of confidentiality. It is also important to ensure that personal data is stored securely, and I will ensure that identifiable components, amend biographical details to individuals or institutions (apply pseudonyms) in order to protect all participants from possibly harmful consequences.
Informed consent	<p>The researcher will inform the participants of the nature and the purpose of the research beforehand.</p> <p>I have therefore designed a form (<i>see appendix 11</i>) which will be presented to the participant in advance of the interview/meeting. On this form, it will be stated which data will be collected and how they are to be used. It also stresses my responsibility as a researcher, to completely inform participants of the various aspects of the research in understandable linguistic terms. Difficult terms will be clarified.</p> <p>These include the nature of the study, the participant's potential role, the identity of the researcher, the objective of the research and how the results/findings will be published.</p> <p>Due to the fact that this research is emergent in nature, I will continue to negotiate the terms of agreement as the study progresses. This research is beneficial to numerous stakeholders and so it is necessary to frequently clarify the benefits of this research where necessary.</p>
Researcher's subjectivity	<p>I will conduct this research in a rigorous and professional manner and promise to attribute credit to all parties involved.</p> <p>Likewise, I will acknowledge/credit authorship of data and ideas used in this research study to relevant sources.</p> <p>Though the researcher is bound to show some form of subjectivity in this qualitative study, I will endeavour to try not to influence the participants and hence attempt to be as inconspicuous as possible. In this study of Chinese outbound tourism, it is important to hear the opinions of the participants, to learn about their feelings, motivations, interests and so on. Sometimes it may be necessary to prompt the participant/ or provide further explanations and directions. However, I aim to be sensitive to issues of culture.</p>
Participant's subjectivity	I will be sensitive to the participants opinions and position. In the event that the participant is unwilling or refuses to participate, I will not be persistent. The participant will be reserved the right to refrain from answering questions posited if he/she so desires.

3.7 Discussion of the Methods

The research method is the process used to collect information and data for the purpose of making decisions or to discover/uncover meanings. The strategic decisions regarding matters of methodology were taken earlier on in this chapter. It covered fundamental deliberations such as disciplinary considerations on tourism studies and the researcher's choice of discipline, matters on paradigmatic issues and the adoption of an emergent research design. Section 3.8 provides a detailed description of the chosen methods.

3.7.1 A Detailed Description of the Chosen Methods

Based on the brief description of qualitative research methodology provided above, the researcher will first explain the importance of choosing the most appropriate methods that to assist her in gathering data about activities, events, incidences and specific performances regarding Chinese (millennial) tourists, as well as leisure activities performed by Chinese millennial students during their studies in the Netherlands. Knowledge of the interests of these individuals may be crucial to key players in the Dutch tourism industry, as it could help them to gain a better understanding of the Chinese millennial tourists in particular, and in so doing, facilitate and enhance their visitor experience to the Netherlands. There are various ways of collecting data about the world of Chinese outbound tourism and it is important to select the appropriate methods as these will provide a better understanding of the research problem under investigation. Three methods have been deployed in this study: namely, semi-structured interviews, discourse analysis and focus group meetings. In the following paragraphs, each of these methods will be elucidated.

The first method that was used in this study was semi-structured interviews. These are sometimes referred to as informal interviews in which the interviewer is allowed to have a casual conversation with the interviewees being considered (Bertrand and

Hughes, 2004). Semi-structured interviews are conducted in a one-on-one basis with two or more participants. In this case, the interviewer asks questions to the interviewee and a record is made of this conversation.

For this study, primary data was gathered in the form of semi-structured interviews. These interviews were conducted among four experts in the Netherlands: A Professor on Chinese studies in the Netherlands; a marketer in the Dutch tourism industry, two companies targeting Chinese tourists and a resident of Amsterdam. They were asked four separate sets of questions. These experts have been selected based on the insights they are believed to have on the subject under investigation.

Once again, the five sub-problems illustrating the relevance of the questions posited to the interviewees are as follow:

1. *Sub-problem # one: Why do Chinese (millennial) tourists choose to visit the Netherlands (Western Europe)?*
2. *Sub-problem # two: Why do Chinese millennial students decide to study in the Netherlands?*
3. *Sub-question # three: What activities do Chinese millennial students participate in during their study-time in the Netherlands?*
4. *Sub-problem # four: What are the consequences of Chinese millennial students' stay in the Netherlands on their own exhibited interests and behaviours?*
5. *Sub-problem # five: What are the consequences of the presence of Chinese millennial students on the Netherlands and on the Dutch population in general?*

First of all, some questions are directed at the effects of Chinese students on the class; the pedagogical implications for professors of Chinese students; the presence of these students on the atmosphere in the class; the activities that Chinese students do in their leisure time, and the experiences with these students, were asked to a professor of Contemporary Chinese studies in Leiden University. These questions include:

1. What are the reasons that Chinese students choose to study in the Netherlands?
And why Leiden?
1. What are the effects of Chinese students on the class / group?

2. How have you adapted your (pedagogical) approach to your Chinese students?
3. What are some of the noticeable differences between the Chinese student and other millennial students?
4. What activities / do Chinese students have outside of their academic life / What do they do in their spare time?
5. What particular accommodations / facilities are available for Chinese students?
6. What is your experience with Chinese students?
7. What, if any, are some of the challenges these students face during their stay /studies in the Netherlands?

These questions are meant to elicit responses about the reason (1) Why Chinese students choose to study in the Netherlands rather than in China? (2) How have the institute accommodated the Chinese millennial student during her/his study in the Netherlands? (3) What are noticeable differences between the Chinese student and other millennial students? (4) What activities they participate in during their time spent in the Netherlands? (5) What are your experiences with these Chinese students in particular? (6) and what considerations are made for them during their studies. With the exceptions of questions four and five, the questions posited seemed relevant to the study at hand and could provide answers to sub-problems one, two and three.

In the second interview, questions are asked to a marketing agency in Amsterdam, as it is important to get an insight into how the Dutch capital is being marketed. It is also essential to learn what strategy the city adopts when trying to attract Chinese tourists in general, as well as Chinese millennial tourists in particular. The following set of questions was asked in order to learn how Amsterdam is marketed in China and to gain insight into the particular activities that Chinese tourists participate in while in the Netherlands. Some of the questions that were pertinent to this investigation were:

1. How is Amsterdam being marketed as a tourism destination to the international visitor in general?
2. What makes the city interesting particularly for Chinese tourists?
3. How do you sell Amsterdam to the Chinese millennials in particular?

4. Why have you chosen to use this particular strategy?
5. What are the outcomes of such a strategy on the destination?
6. What activities do these visitors participate in and why these particular activities?
7. What is the role of social media in attracting this target group?
8. What are some noticeable trends that you believe will influence Chinese millennials to the Netherlands?

These questions are meant to elicit responses pertaining to the image of the city of Amsterdam in the eyes of the Chinese tourists. It also seeks to understand the strategy adopted to draw Chinese tourists to the Netherlands. Although seemingly only sub-problems one and three appear relevant to above-mentioned questions, all other questions posited to this participant were indirectly related to all of sub-problems.

The third set of interview questions were asked to a chief executive officer who manages an international incentive company specialising in the Chinese market. The researcher is interested in learning why the company is focusing on China in particular and also to learn what provisions are being made for Chinese visitors. Furthermore, she wanted to learn which marketing strategies are in place for attracting this group. The following questions are thus pertinent to the investigation:

- Why have you decided to focus on the Chinese tourists?
- How do you attract these visitors to the Netherlands?
- What are some of the activities that they take part in when they are here?
- Why do you believe they like these activities?
- What kinds of marketing strategies do you use to attract Chinese visitors?
- Which group of Chinese visitors are more desirable? Millennials or pre-millennials? And why?
- How do you see the development of this group of tourists in the future?

These questions are meant to stimulate responses pertaining to the reasoning behind the focus on Chinese visitors in particular to the Netherlands. Additionally, the researcher wanted to know what arrangements are being made for these particular

visitors, and why these arrangements. These questions are relevant to sub-problems one and three. Similarly, the information obtained did not generate the findings expected, however, they did provide some insights into the marketing strategies related to how Chinese see the Netherlands as a destination and how the Dutch tourism industry is trying to attract Chinese millennial tourists to the Netherlands.

And the fourth interview focused on the inhabitants of Amsterdam, as it is important to hear the opinions of the host population. Tourists' visits to a destination can have both positive and negative impacts on the local population. Whereas it provides revenue for the community, it can also put negative strains on the society at large. Therefore, some relevant questions posited were:

- What do you believe attract visitors to the Amsterdam?
- Have you noticed an increase of Chinese tourists to the city?
- What might be the reason for this increase of Chinese tourists?
- What are some of the attractions that are visited by Chinese tourists?
- Why do you think they visit these places?
- What is the general opinion of the local population to Chinese tourists?
- What are some of the issues surrounding (Chinese) visitors to the city?

The final set of questions are meant to prompt responses concerning the effects of the Chinese tourists' visit on the city, as tourists' visits are said to impact a destination, either positively or negatively. The researcher would also like to know if the atmosphere in the city has changed due to the emergence of these tourists. If so, in what way and most of all, what effect does this have on the local population. These questions provided information relevant to all of the sub-problems, except sub-problem two, which looked only at the Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands.

These four sets of questions provide some rich insights into the implications of Chinese tourists' visits to the Netherlands, and the information generated might shed some light into the interests of Chinese millennial tourists' visit in particular on a destination.

Subsequently, secondary data in the form of discourse analysis will be executed by means of examining online articles and reports about the interests, motivations, and behaviours of Chinese outbound tourists, and especially their reasons for visiting the Netherlands. These documents (*see Table 3.6*) were chosen based on their relevance to this investigation and their ability to contribute to the understanding of the Chinese tourism world. Therefore, the next section first provides a definition of discourse analysis before vividly explaining how the researcher will go about gathering such data.

Secondly, as secondary source material, discourse analysis of literature related to theories on motivation, attitude, culture, representation and East and West understanding, (online) articles relevant to Chinese outbound tourism to the Netherlands (Europe), and a survey report on Chinese tourism to Europe will be examined. Discourse analysis involves the practice – through which texts are *produced/created* and *consumed* (received and interpreted). According to Jørgensen and Phillips (2002), it is perceived as an important form of social practice, which contributes to the constitution of the social world, social identities and social relations. Furthermore, it is the study of a system or collation of representations involving the production of power/knowledge through language (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002). Foucault (1972), whose approach to discourse analysis I will be following conceptually, contends that nothing exists outside of discourse – things do exist but only take on meaning through discourse: for him, it was discourse and praxis in tandem (Foucault, 1972). Foucault (1994: 288) had an aversion to prescription, suggesting that “I take care not to dictate how things should be” and wrote confrontationally to unsettle balance and certitude, in order that “all those who speak for others do to others” are, themselves uncertain of what to do (Graham, 2005). She devised a project aimed at developing what she calls a discursive analytic: a methodological plan at which she establishes a poststructuralist discourse analysis that is informed by and consistent with the work of Michel Foucault. Likewise, Humes and Bryce (2003: 180) speak to the poststructuralist

respect for uncertainty and the influence of key thinkers such as Derrida when they argue that,

“...the search for clarity and simplicity of meaning is seen as illusory because there will always be other perspectives from which to interpret the material under review. To seek a definitive account is, thus, a misguided undertaking.”
(Humes & Bryce, 2003)

This considered, discourse analysis informed by Foucauldian or other poststructural theory attempts to elude the replacement of one ‘truth’ for another, acknowledging that “there can be no universal truths or absolute ethical positions [and hence] ... belief in social scientific investigation as a detached, historical, utopian, truth-seeking process becomes difficult to sustain” (Wetherell, 2001:384). Those who are poststructuralist-oriented contend that,

‘...the process of analysis is always interpretive, always contingent, always a version or a reading from some theoretical, epistemological or ethical standpoint’ (Wetherell, 2001: 384).

Nevertheless, this is not the same as unsystematic speculations, but rather reflects the characteristic reticence of those “doing” discourse analysis within a Foucauldian/poststructural framework to prescribe method or similarly make claims to truth through ‘scientific’, ‘objective’, ‘precise’ methodologies. Foucault (1972) demonstrated that the power of knowledge created by means of conception or articulation, could disclose covert meanings.

That said, for this investigation seven online newspaper articles were selected (see Table 3.5) due to their pertinence to the research problem. These are: (1) Jing Daily (2016), - (*Chinese Tourists’ Behaviour Improving, study by Chinese Tourism Authority Finds*). (2) The CBS (Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics) (2016) – “*The Netherlands More Popular with Chinese Tourists*”. (3) The CBS (Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics) (2016). “*The Netherlands again more popular with Chinese Tourists*”. (4) DCCC Business Newsletter (April 11, 2016). “*Why the Netherlands Attracts More Chinese Tourism in*

Recent Years." (5) DCCC Business Newsletter (2014), (6) China Outlook – “*China Economic Forecast*”, (7) Credit Lyonnais Securitas Asia (CLSA) – “*Outbound Chinese Tourists to double by 2020 propelling Global Growth in Travel-related Sectors*”. The researcher has elected to examine such sources due to the contemporaneousness of online news articles, particularly based on the relevance of the specific article to the study problem and sub-problems. Furthermore, sections of three reports: (1) A Trend Survey by Z-Punkt – The Foresight Company in corporation with TUI Think Tank at TUI AG depicting the *New Chinese Tourists in Europe from 2017*; (2) China Tourism Academy (CTA) 2011, Annual Report of China Outbound Tourism Development 2011; (3) UNWTO (2014) World Tourism Organisation Report, were inspected.

Finally, the third means of data collection administered in this investigation is focus group work. Kitzinger and Barbour (1999) defined it as: “Any group discussion may be called a focus group as long as the researcher is actively encouraging of, and attentive to, the group interaction” (p. 20). In Focus group work, emphasis is placed on the interactive character of data gathering. According to Morgan (1988, p. 12) the trademark of focus groups is the unambiguous use of group interaction to generate data and understandings that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group. The focus group technique, according to Weeden (2005) involves a small group of people, that converge to discuss a set of pre-determined research questions. In focus groups the opportunity and potentials for group interaction, and the ensuing synergy, can be dynamic and stimulating, enabling participants to brainstorm with each other (Berg, 2001). However, managing the group could be challenging, as individual dominance may erupt, locality might pose problems and equilibrium of participation might be jeopardized. Though in this particular case, the researcher’s experience could be considered defining, as she could be confronted with issues such as: dominance of some participants above others, and insufficient participation in the group due to shyness and/or linguistic challenges. The latter might be caused by the English language

capacity of the participants. Another factor that might influence the outcome of the meeting is locality: the venue should be conducive to holding an unobstructed gathering.

Although focus groups are generally used in marketing and media research, they are equally effective as a method on their own or in combination with other methods such as surveys, observations, interviews, and so on (p.11). Some other applications of focus groups include:

- Positioning to a new field of study;
- Assessing different research sites or study populations;
- Constructing /Developing interview schedules and questionnaires;
- Obtaining participants' interpretations of findings from earlier studies, and other such applications (p.11).

In this inquiry into the multidimensionality of Chinese outbound tourism, the researcher attempts to elicit responses from Chinese millennial students who opt to study at a university in the Netherlands, by conducting focus group meetings at three institutes in the Netherlands and one among students from a university in China. The following questions were asked during each meeting, which lasted sixty to ninety minutes.

1. What are the reasons for choosing to study in the Netherlands?
2. How did you learn about the Netherlands?
3. What activities do you take part in during the time you are not studying/in your spare time?
4. Do you do these activities on your own or in a group? Please explain your choice.
5. How important are museums to you, and why?
6. Chinese tourists are said to be keen on shopping, especially when they are travelling through Europe. How important is shopping for you?
7. What is the importance of social media to you?
8. How important is family to you? How important are friends to you?

Thus, these questions were posited in order to hear the views, beliefs and opinions of the participants, as well as to interpret their behaviour and attitude during the

meetings. All meetings were video-recorded and later transcribed in preparation for careful analysis.

In this study, the researcher sought to use these methods for exploratory purposes – for gathering information. The principal advantages and disadvantages of the chosen methods and the application of these are illustrated in Table 3. 8 below.

Table 3.8: The Principal Reasoning Behind the Chosen Methods and the Proposed Application of each of these.

1. Chosen method	2. General advantages	3. General Disadvantages	4. The Possible Application in this study
<p>Semi-structured interviews</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respondents can answer questions in as much detail as they want/choose - Valid information about respondent's attitudes, values and opinions can be obtained <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how they explain and contextualize issues. - Atmosphere conducive of portraying the respondent's honesty and openness - Flexibility- the interviewer can adjust questions and change direction during the interview. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - only a relatively small number of interviews are possible due to time issues. - Results are hard to compare in in-depth interviews since each interview is unique. - Due to small size of the sample results are unlikely to be representative of a particular population. - Time-consuming, both in data collection and data analysis. During the interview process preparing the data for analysis can be extremely time-consuming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants will be selected based on their capacity to answer questions proposed. - They are invited to an interview which is scheduled in advance. - Interviewer introduces herself as well as the topic of discussion. The order / structure of the interview is also explained. - The researcher asks questions selected and the interviewee answers as explicitly as possible. - interviewer summarises and ends the interview, thanking the interviewee for his/her participation.
<p>Discourse analysis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be applied to any text, circumstances or problems. - Broaden the researcher's horizons, extensive studying of literature/texts - Takes into account role of historical and socio-political issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does not explain/provide definite answers - Time-consuming - Hard to understand meaning through texts, challenging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Researcher gathers relevant literature for analysis. - After careful selection, intensive reading is done and areas for analysis are synthesized and analysed. ---- Both contemporary as well as historical and political documents are being studied. Documents are categorised into relevant areas.
<p>Focus groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Face-to-face involvement, moderator ensures that meeting on track. - Group participants interact with each other – dynamic atmosphere - Use of verbal and non-verbal behaviour - Social and flexible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could see one or two dominant individuals, causes biased report - Artificial / staged environment can influence responses generated - Less projectable 	<p>Proper organisation is key to holding a focus group meeting, therefore, all members are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - selected/invited based on their relation to the research problem. - explanation is provided on topic of discussion and organisation of discussion stated: (rules and ethical issues explained) - researcher introduces questions, stimulate responses of all participants. - after meeting ends, participants are thanked for participation.

3.8 The Rationale for Selecting Aforementioned Methods

The reasons for selecting the afore-mentioned data is because it is felt that these are germane to providing insights regarding the study's problem. First of all, by choosing to interview four experts, the researcher wants to gain first-hand knowledge of the strategies outlined by Dutch tourism industry regarding Chinese tourists to the Netherlands. Secondly, in order to understand what provisions are being made for the Chinese millennial students in the Netherlands, a university professor on Chinese Studies was questioned. Then two businesses specialising in providing for Chinese visitors to the Netherlands were interviewed. It was believed that these persons could provide a better understanding of the activities and interests of these tourists/visitors. Finally, a resident of Amsterdam was interviewed as it was believed that this individual could provide some insights about the host destination's views and opinions of these Chinese visitors. The interviewees include a professor of Contemporary Chinese Studies at a university in the Netherlands, an executive of a Meeting, Incentive, Conventions, and Events (MICE) organisation in the Netherlands; the Research Manager of Amsterdam Marketing (An affiliate of the Dutch Tourism Board); and finally, an inhabitant of Amsterdam, (Dutch capital).

Interviews are inter-active, especially when applying the interpretivist paradigm, seeing that the knowledge acquired is socially constructed (Carson et al., 2001). Moreover, there are no rigid structural frameworks and the interviewer adopts a more personal and flexible research construct while capturing meanings in human interactions (Black, 2006) in order to make sense of what is perceived as reality. By interviewing a professor of Contemporary Chinese Studies at a university, the researcher aims to gain a better understanding of Chinese millennial students, their reasons for choosing to study in the Netherlands, and their interests and activities while in the Netherlands. An interview with a researcher of Amsterdam Marketing provides insights into the strategy applied in promoting the Netherlands to international tourists as well as insights into

the measures adopted in attracting Chinese (millennial) tourists in particular. In interviewing a Chief Executive Officer of a MICE organisation, I propose to learn their reasons for targeting the Chinese market, and to see the tactics they use in attracting these demographics. And the final interview was conducted with an inhabitant of Amsterdam, who the researcher believes could provide understandings about the impact of Chinese millennial tourists/students on the city of Amsterdam.

Secondly, various relevant online articles, reports and journals are being studied, which could provide up-to-date information vis-à-vis Chinese outbound tourism, the Chinese tourists, Chinese students and tourism studies in general. Seeing that the Chinese outbound tourism is a recent phenomenon, which is sensitive to trends and contemporary events, it is important to rely on current information, as well as daily/weekly happenings.

Finally, focus group work was carried out among Chinese millennial students at three institutes of higher education in the Netherlands. This provides the researcher with knowledge regarding these students' motivations, travel behaviour, and their interests and activities while in the Netherlands. Students were candid in their responses, which helped to create lively and fruitful discussions about their experiences while living and studying in the Netherlands. Non-verbal behaviour from students helped the researcher to gain rich insights into the students' feelings and psychological journey into the Dutch society.

In sum, the justification for choosing the semi-structured interviews, discourse analysis, and focus group meetings as methods of data collection is because it is felt that these techniques could provide relevant insights into the research problem. The research approach adopted is qualitative in nature due to the fact that the subject of tourism is fundamentally qualitative. The researcher's primary objective is to understand meanings, experiences, values and beliefs among Chinese outbound tourists as well as

Chinese students and their interests in visiting and/or studying in the Netherlands. This is primarily dictated by the research problem and has enabled the researcher to decide on the most suitable methods to elicit responses from which meanings are interpreted. Seeing the intention of the researcher to establish a propaedeutic research agenda as she proceeds with this emergent study, it is important to set up crucial pillars on which future research efforts can be supported. Hence, in the research methods section, she proposed three methods of collecting data. The advantages and disadvantages of the methods chosen as well as the proposed application are illustrated in Table 3.8. In the next section, detailed information is provided on the need for triangulation in this qualitative research study

3.9 Triangulation in Qualitative Research

Triangulation, as described by Lincoln & Guba (1985), involves using multiple data source in an investigation to produce an understanding of a phenomenon. Triangulation is also seen as a method for substantiating findings, especially in qualitative research. Whereas the quantitative researcher uses triangulation to test for validity, the qualitative researcher seeks for richness, robustness, comprehension and appropriate development of the matter under investigation. Flick (2014) provides a more expansive definition of triangulation. According to him, “triangulation refers to the combination of different methods, study groups, local and temporal settings, and different theoretical perspectives in dealing with a phenomenon” (Flick, 2014 pp. 183). Furthermore, Denzin (1989), distinguishes four types of triangulation (1989b, pp. 237-241):

1. **Data triangulation:** the practicing and application of different methods in data generation;
2. **Investigator triangulation:** the use of different observers / interviewers to identify / lessen prejudices stemming from the researcher’s subjectivity;

3. **Theory triangulation:** starts at “approaching data with multiple perspectives and hypotheses in mind”. In this way, “various theoretical viewpoints could be placed side by side to address their utility and power” (1989b, pp. 239-240);
4. **Methodological triangulation:** the ‘within-method’ and the ‘between-method’ triangulation.

Flick (2014 pp. 184) provides an even more comprehensive definition of triangulation in the Box 4 below:

BOX 3: DEFINITION OF TRIANGULATION

Triangulation implies researchers taking different perspectives of a phenomenon under investigation or, generically speaking, when responding to research questions. These perspectives can be corroborated by exercising numerous methods and / or conjectural approaches, which should somehow be interrelated. Moreover, triangulation refers to the amalgamation of diverse data-types grounded on the theoretical perspectives, pertaining to the data. These perspectives should be treated equivalently and applied in a consistent manner. Concurrently, triangulation (of different methods or data sorts) should generate additional knowledge and at diverse levels, by providing understandings that extend beyond that achievable by a single approach, thus contributing to the promotion of quality in research.

In this study on a multidimensional inquiry of Chinese outbound tourism, the researcher seeks to draw from the forms of triangulation mentioned above. First by triangulating data from focus group meetings with Chinese millennial tourists and students, semi-structured interviews with tourism providers, experts in higher education in the Dutch higher educational institutes, and the Dutch tourism board. Furthermore, data generated from discourse will be applied. Secondly, *investigator triangulation* will be employed by means of interviews produced by way of online blogs and articles. Thirdly, *theoretical triangulation* will be accomplished by using the works of various theorists on (Chinese) tourism studies, and finally, *methodological triangulation* in which the researcher uses her reflexive capacity to make well-weighted alternatives about her

research design in a clarifying way as she hopefully endeavours to become more cognizant of the insular yet operative settings in which the study is substantiated.

3.10 Summary of Chapter Three

In sum, Chapter Three provided the methodological issues of this inquiry into the multidimensionality of Chinese outbound tourism by first embarking on the transdisciplinary character of this issue, from its platform base in tourism studies. This was followed by the paradigmatic considerations which assisted in obtaining a better understanding the world of the Chinese millennial tourists/students. Subsequently, philosophical issues relating to ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology within tourism studies were explicated. Then it was vital to provide a thorough description of the emergent nature of the research design. In so doing, the researcher has subscribed to Silverman's (1998) argumentation for the subjective nature of social relationships of qualitative research. In such a design, matters of trustworthiness are crucial, thus, an illustration was made (*see* Table 3.4), by comparing two important paradigms: positivists and interpretivists. After this, a description was given of the population chosen for this inquiry. This was followed by a justification for the type of methods applied in selecting units of observation and matters of ethics relating to their proposed application in the study. An elucidation of the chosen methods, the composition of the questionnaires, complemented by a justification for the lines of questioning, was provided. Finally, the reasoning behind the selection of methods, and the researcher's choice for triangulation to foster richness, robustness and comprehensive elaboration on the topic under investigation, preceded the summary of this chapter.

3.11 Conclusions to Chapter Three

In concluding, Chapter Three addressed the strategy adopted regarding matters of methodology. The vital theoretical considerations undertaken are presented in bullet fashion and include the:

- disciplinary contemplations concerning tourism studies and the researcher's choice of discipline;
- ... paradigmatic considerations which are particularly important for a study of cultural / cross-cultural understandings and misunderstandings, where this study is an interpretive one;
- ... emergent research design as the researcher becomes increasingly and relevantly informed about the study contexts and the emics/etics involved;
- ... researcher's respect for the ontological and epistemological sensitivities involved, notably vis-à-vis the efforts of a non-Chinese researcher to understand Confucian and Chinese values;
- ... notion that a study of cultural values and cultural-national inclinations ought to be fully and purposely triangulated in terms of methods' level work and data type utilization and be executed via purposive sampling approaches which emphasise the researcher's reflexive capacity to make informed choices about her research design in an unfolding way as she hopefully becomes more aware of the local contexts and operational settings in which the study is gradually grounded;
- ...intentions of the researcher to commence her research design work by exploring the contributory value of semi-structured interviews, discourse analysis (at the methods level), and focus group work;

Whereas this chapter closes with matters related to triangulation, the ensuing chapter discusses the exercise of the methods and the data analysis process applied in this study.

Chapter Four: Exercise of Methods and Data Analysis Process

4.0 Introduction to Chapter Four

While particularly the theoretical aspects were dealt with in Chapter Three, this current chapter focuses on the practicalities of the methods outlined in the previous chapter. Subsequently, the detailed steps of the data gathering and the data analysis processes are demarcated. These provided for the administration of methods for making observations and included the semi-structured interviews, focus group meetings with Chinese millennial students and Chinese millennial tourists as well as discourse analysis. The data analysis process is detailed preceded the application of how data was thematically analysed. A summary was given of the chapter and thereafter a conclusion. Hence, the details of the data gathering process is supplied in the ensuing section.

4.1 A Detailed Step of the Data Gathering Process

For clarity, it is vital to carefully delineate the steps used in the collection of both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through semi-structured interviews (for details of the benefits of this method *see* 3.7) among four experts in the Dutch Tourism Industry (DTI), as it was believed that these experts were best able to supply vital information regarding Chinese millennial students / tourists and their interests while in the Netherlands. Additionally, four focus group meetings were conducted among Chinese millennial students at three Dutch Higher educational institutes and one from China. In this way, I wanted to capture genuine responses to the questions formulated in the study. By using focus groups, I sought to capture both the verbal and the non-verbal behaviours of the students.

To start, the interviews were designed using open-ended questions. These questions were devised to provide rich qualitative data, enabling the researcher to gain insights into the views of the interviewees on the issue under investigation (Creswell, 2012). The reason for using open-ended questions is that these prompt interviewees to respond

with sentences, lists, and stories, providing deep and rich insights into the topic. Moreover, they allow respondents to include additional information, such as feelings, attitudes, and understandings of the subject matter.

Thus, the researcher first constructed a list of open-questions which was posited to the interviewees. These questions provided the researcher with responses that could facilitate a deeper understanding of the research problem. After contacting this individual, the researcher explained the nature of the problem and discussed the organisation of the meeting. A date was scheduled for the meeting and the researcher reiterated the formalities of the interview process as well as the procedures. The list of open-ended question prepared were systematically posited, and the respondent was given sufficient time to answer the questions. Follow-up questions were asked in the event there were matters of incomprehension of questions. It is to be noted here, that English is the second-language used in the Netherlands, so there might be matters of misunderstandings or other linguistic challenges. At the end of the interview, which had a maximum duration of one and a half hours, the interviewer summarised the interview and outlined the procedures following the interview. The interviewee was given the chance to ask any final question(s), after which the interview was terminated.

The first interview was with a professor of Contemporary Chinese Studies at a university in the Netherlands (*see* Table 3.4). It was believed that this individual was capable of providing information about Chinese millennial students who studied at this university. This contact was generated via a meeting held at an institute of higher education in the Netherlands. At this meeting, experts related to Chinese outbound tourists and visitors from China to the Netherlands were invited to speak, among them was one of the contributors to this study. He willingly consented to a meeting with the researcher to discuss his insights on the issues related to the study.

The second interview was carried out with the research manager of Amsterdam Marketing - the chief destination marketing agency for the city of Amsterdam. Amsterdam Marketing is also an affiliate of the Netherlands Bureau of Tourism and Conventions - NBTC (the Dutch Tourism Board). I believe this individual was able to provide information about how the Chinese market is targeted. I had also met this person at a general lecture on Chinese tourism's impact to developed destinations and he agreed to discuss this topic in a semi-structured interview which took place in Amsterdam.

The third interview was conducted with the Chief Executive Officer of Incentive Europe, a Meeting Incentive Conference and Events (MICE) company in Amsterdam (*see* Table 3.5) that specializes in organizing incentive trips particularly for Chinese companies visiting Europe. I chose to interview this individual because his company focuses primarily on the Chinese market and it was interesting to learn what strategies it applies when approaching the Chinese outbound (tourism) market.

Finally, the fourth interviewee is a resident of Amsterdam (*see* Table 3.5), who has lived in Amsterdam for over three decades and is thus aware of the transformation that is taking place there regarding the impact of (Chinese) tourists on this destination. I believe this individual would be able to relate her attitude, feelings, response to these Chinese tourists on her city.

In the main phase of this emergent study, the researcher thought it necessary to add three new informants:

- A Chinese millennial tourist who was visiting a popular attraction, particularly favoured by Chinese millennial tourists. This tourist was visiting Giethoorn, a small village in the North of the Netherlands. Seeing that this was an informal talk, there were no questions prepared for this talk, so the tone was casual and natural in form.

- the Dutch Ambassador to China lecture on Dutch / Chinese relations and the importance of cross-cultural understandings within higher education. The ambassador spoke of contemporary China, and the growing importance of tourism for the current Chinese government. He also expressed the need for cultural awareness between the Dutch and Chinese.
- A personal talk conducted with a Chinese millennial student, who had previously participated in one of the four focus group meetings. It was deemed relevant, as the student indicated that she did not speak as freely as she had wanted to during the meeting.

Subsequently four focus group meetings were held at three institutes of higher education in the Netherlands and one among Chinese millennial students from a university in China.

In the secondary data analysis, various scientific journals and articles were analysed.

Furthermore, online newspapers, articles, books, blogs, and so on, were assessed.

Documentaries and video materials were also evaluated, as well as reports from tourism organisations, such as the UNWTO and the Chinese Tourism Association. These were selected on the basis of their relevance to the research problem formulated for this study.

4.2 Data Analysis

Flick (2014, pp. 370) provides an extensive definition of qualitative data analysis.

According to him, qualitative data analysis is the interpretation and classification of linguistic (or visual) material with the following aims:

- To reduce and make sense of implicit and explicit sense of meanings from the vast amounts of information and diverse sources;
- To make meaning from data which imply subjective or social values;
- To combine a rough examination of the material (overviews, condensations, summaries) with comprehensive analysis (development of categories or interpretations);

- To use *descriptive* information and offer explanations or interpretations to the phenomenon under investigation.

This information can consist of interviews, video material, documents, blogs, pictures and so on. Although qualitative research analysis typically revolves around the impressions and interpretations of major researchers, by means of simplification, study contributors can also play an active role in detecting key themes emerging from the data (Sutton & Austin, 2015 pp. 226-231).

In studying Chinese millennial students, the researcher sought to gain information by means of semi-structured interviews with participants whom it was thought could provide valuable insights about the key interests of Chinese millennial students residing in the Netherlands. These individuals were purposely selected and the researcher wanted to explore their beliefs, values, understandings, feelings, experiences and perspectives about millennial students/tourists from China. It was felt that the subjects themselves were a valuable part of the investigation, so interviews were also carried out with the Chinese millennial students, in order to elicit their knowledge and perspectives of their experiences in the Netherlands. During their study-time, these students play host to visiting friends and relatives, and therefore show their visitors places and attractions that they themselves consider worth visiting. In addition, the Chinese millennial students experience personal transformation in their own development. This has implications for their future. In light of this, all interviews were recorded and later transcribed in preparation for analysis.

Furthermore, knowledge was elicited from focus group meetings, which is an organised discussion between six or more participants. In such a meeting, the participants are given the opportunity and space to discuss a specific topic – in this case, the researcher wanted to learn about how the group thinks about the questions designed specifically for the occasion. Seeing that the participants were from different regions of China, it was

important that this was made known prior to the start of the discussions. Prior to the meetings, participants carefully filled out the consent form presented in advance by the researcher. Subsequently, the meetings were video-recorded and later transcribed for analysis (*see study appendix*).

Additionally, analysis of discourse was used to generate data for this study. A wide variety of material was studied, from numerous online journals and articles, online newspapers, documentaries, books, special lectures and seminars, conference proceedings, and video materials and films. The analyses of these were initially done via NVivo, a software tool which will be explained in the ensuing section. To complement this, data was manually analysed via thematic analysis.

4.3 An Explanation of the Thematic Analysis Applied in this Study

An important part of any research process is the analysis of the data gathered. In this multidimensional inquiry into Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe: the visitation of Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands, data was gathered by means of discourse analysis, semi-structured interviews and focus group meetings. In the ensuing paragraphs, detailed analysis of the data collected is provided.

First of all, the analysis of qualitative research data implicates the aim to expose and / or comprehend the 'big picture' by using the data to describe the phenomenon under investigation, and in so doing, unravel 'meaning' (Guest, et al., 2012). One of the most common forms of data analysis in qualitative research is *Thematic Analysis*. In this process in which themes are highlighted, identified, inspected, and recorded. These provide a level of patterned responses/meanings within the data (Daly, et al., 1997). Themes are important to the description of a phenomenon and are concomitant to a specific research question. Not only does this analytical technique require organisation and rich description of the data set, thematic analysis goes beyond simply counting phrases /words in a text, by identifying implicit and explicit conceptions within the data.

4.3.1 The Data Analysis Process

This process, referred to as (data)coding, forms the primary process in theme-development within the raw data by recognizing important patterns in the data and encoding them prior to interpretation (Boyatzis, 1998). Furthermore, the interpretation of these codes can include comparing theme frequencies, identifying theme co-occurrence, and graphically exposing relationships among them (Guest, et al., 2012). Data was analysed by using a computer software called *NVivo*. This is a qualitative data analysis (QDA) computer software package produced by QSR International (2017). It was designed for qualitative researchers working with very rich text-based and/or multimedia information in which deep levels of analysis on small or large volumes of data are required. NVivo is mostly used by academic, government, health as well as commercial researchers across a diverse range of fields including social sciences such as anthropology, psychology, communication, sociology as well as tourism and marketing (web.stanford.edu, 2011).

For this study, the following procedure (as outlined in the *Slideshare* provided by Stanford University) was applied:

- The project was created from the data generated from the interviews, focus group meetings and secondary data;
- After collecting data, recordings of interviews and focus group meetings were transcribed and deposited in *Nodes* (containers for concepts topics, themes of source materials) as 'internal files'; articles from (recent) newspapers, reports, books, journals and other existing discourse were also placed in *Nodes* under 'external files';
- The files were then prepared for import into Nvivo;
- Likewise, other recordings / fieldworks were transcribed and sources from existing data/discourse were placed in Nodes;

- Information from all sources in the nodes are then classified / coded and relationships are underlined; memos (a record of thoughts and observations) were used to make note of **patterns**, which are crucial for **theory construction**;
- The nodes and attributes were queried using the 'Queries' mode;
- The data were subsequently summarised by classifying them. Classifications provide a way to **record descriptive information** about the sources, nodes and **relationships** within the project. *Attributes* which are characteristics that are associated with a document/node, enable the researcher to compare cases based on **distinctive** qualities.

Additionally, for corroboration, rigour and trustworthiness (*see* section 3.10) of the analysis of the data amassed, data was also manually analysed. The researcher revisited / explored each transcribed interview and focus group meetings conducted in search of patterns that could throw (further) light on the themes that were identified using NVivo. These were critically examined and justified where necessary. However, the manual analysis of the data served as the primary method of analysis for this study, after Nvivo was used to first classify the data (*see* study appendix in attached transcriptions).

4.4 Summary of Chapter Four

In brief, Chapter Four provided a discussion of the pragmatisms of the methods applied in study and provided a comprehensive explanation of the procedures of data collection and analysis. Subsequently, the detailed steps of the data gathering and the data analysis processes were determined. The interviews were designed using open-ended questions, which were meant to elicit rich qualitative data, enabling the researcher to gain insight into the interests, attitude and beliefs of the Chinese (millennial) tourists / students. In so doing, the interviewees were prompted to respond with sentences, lists, comments and especially narratives, providing deep insights into the topic. Additionally, respondents were able to include more information, such as feelings, attitudes, and

understandings of the subject under investigation. Next, focus group meetings were conducted among Chinese millennial students who are studying in the Netherlands and so, the participants were given the opportunity and space to discuss their feelings and emotions about their reasons for studying in the Netherlands and other questions designed specifically for the occasion (*see* section 3.8). Subsequently, an application of how the data was analysed was presented. The researcher elected to use thematic analysis. In this process, themes are highlighted, identified, inspected, and recorded, providing a level of patterned responses/meanings within the data. This analytical practice requires organisation and rich description of the data sets, and thematic analysis not just merely count phrases/ words in a text, but it identifies implicit and explicit concepts within the data. The data collected were organised in themes by using a software programme called *NVivo* and also manually analysed for cross-verification.

4.5 Conclusion to Chapter Four

Chapter Four focused on the practicalities of the methods charted in the chapter, by explaining the importance of choosing the most appropriate methods used in collecting data about activities, events, incidences and specific performances regarding Chinese (millennial) tourists, as well as leisure activities performed by Chinese millennial students during their studies in the Netherlands. From this chapter it could be concluded that:

- semi-structured interviews, focus group meetings and discourse analysis were the most appropriate methods for this investigation because it was felt that these were germane to offering insights regarding the research problem;
- the comprehensive steps of the data collection and the data analysis process were established providing the most suitable tools for this investigation;

- a detailed description of the chosen methods which preceded an explanation for these methods and a justification for the type of sampling used for observation specified the development of the methods used for making observations, while the reliability and trustworthiness of the methods provided a justification for the data analysis (computer-aided and manual).

Based on a description of the thematic analysis applied in this investigation, a discussion of the findings of this study is presented in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five: Findings and Analysis from the Data

5.0 Introduction to Chapter Five

Chapter Four focused on the pragmatisms of the methods outlined in this study into the multidimensional inquiry into Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe and highlights the visitation of Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands. In so doing, detailed steps of the data gathering and analysis processes were determined. These contain a detailed description of the chosen methods, followed by an explanation of the population and an account of/and justification for the type of sampling used for selecting units of observation. Furthermore, a development of the means for making these observations, and the administration of methods for making observations, that is to say, interviews, focus group work and discourse analysis, were explicated.

Chapter Five now, presents the findings from the analysis of the data. First of all, the purpose of this study was to examine what the key interests of Chinese millennial tourists to the Netherlands are, compared to Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands; and to investigate what the implications of studying in the Netherlands are for both the Dutch tourism industry and the Dutch Higher Education Board. The researcher sought to investigate what the main benefits of Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands are and compare these to Chinese millennial tourists to the Netherlands. Concurrently, she wanted to learn what the implications of these visits are not only for the Dutch Tourism Board, but also for the Dutch Higher Education Board. In order to provide a clear description of how these findings will be documented, a brief outline is subsequently postulated. This is done in order to establish a foundational research agenda in this emergent study as well as in the broader tourism field.

By applying thematic analysis, seven central themes were identified. These are:

1. The **Culture(s)** and **Values** of **Chinese millennial travellers**;

2. **Motivations** for visit(s) to the Netherlands;
3. The **Netherlands** and its higher educational institutes;
4. Chinese millennial students **in the Netherlands**;
5. **Travel interests** and **behaviours** of Chinese millennial students in/through Europe;
6. The Chinese millennial students and their **surroundings**;
7. **Implications** of Chinese millennial students in the Netherlands.

Furthermore, these themes will be partitioned into subheadings which further synthesize each theme, in order to organise the information into coherent paragraphs, and furnish the reader with clear guidelines into the research findings. In addition to this, the researcher proposes to comment on the interpretations of the responses and provide critiques where relevant. Statements and comments are thus made from the gathered data. The respondents' name will be omitted for the sake of anonymity, as outlined in the ethics section (*see* section 3.7).

5.1 The Cultures and Values of Chinese Millennial Students as Tourists

The cultures and values of the Chinese millennial travellers were identified to be core features of the Chinese traveller. Chinese cultural heritage is very important for the Chinese both nationally and internationally, as both sectors depend on each other for survival. Within China, there is a movement that calls for better use of China's cultural heritage within the country, but these days, China is increasingly spreading its national heritage to the far reaches of the globe and, as frequently mentioned in this study, China is using its tourism as a soft power mechanism while experiencing other cultures in the meantime. The following section expands on the culture of Chinese millennial travellers and examines how this influences their experience of the cultures of other (European/Dutch) destinations.

5.1.1 The Culture of the Chinese Millennial Traveller

One of the most groundbreaking phenomena in the global tourism industry of the past decades, is the emergence of outbound travel from China. Chinese tourists travel around Europe, in the hope of experiencing the various cultures of each country:

“The first thing I want to do is to experience different cultures, especially when in Netherlands” (CM from ZU)

Approximately half of these Chinese tourists are a group referred to as Chinese millennial travellers. But what is the nature and culture of these tourists? Chinese millennial tourists are generally affluent, educated, technologically dexterous, socially oriented (Simson, 2016) and as stated by Fish (2015), a bit spoilt. They represent one of the largest cohorts of millennials and as Goldman Sachs claims, “Chinese millennials is the single-most important demographic in the world today.” In this report by Goldman Sachs, it is stated that:

‘Over the next decade, 74 million millennials at Chinese universities are set to graduate. They will look to travel overseas in large numbers, given they are well informed and do not consider language barriers to be prohibitive.’ (Goldman Sachs report, in APEX Media, Maryann Simson, 2016)

In order to provide for these travelers, it is crucial to gain a deeper understanding of who they are (this will also be addressed in Chapter Six). Jason Dorsey, cofounder and millennial researcher at The Center for Generational Kinetics in Austin, Texas, argues that, while it is important to have knowledge of the real age-group of a generation, it is essentially knowledge of attitudes and life experiences that should be scrutinized for a more vivid comprehension of a group. During the ‘coming of age’ of the Chinese millennial, the country experienced a gigantic economic boom: advances in consumer technology, the proliferation of the World Wide Web and, perhaps most critically, the enforcement of a strict one-child policy over the past twenty years in many areas of China (Dorsey 2015). Naturally, the social climate of their time has contributed to the

development of each individual character, but these considerations need to be addressed when examining the culture of the Chinese millennial traveler.

Chinese millennials are claimed to be the epitome of tech-savvy and tech-addiction. They spend a great deal of time online, more than any other millennials, according to Dorsey (2015), which suggests that they are better at using technology than other millennials, even and especially when they travel. As quoted from Dorsey:

'Millennials in other places tend to be less tech-savvy, more tech dependent. They don't know how tech works; they just know they can't get on without it... There is a complete integration into that digital world, which to them is as important and almost as real as the physical world.'

This passionate engagement in the digital world, plus an existence of virtual seclusion as only-child, and the rapidity of urban life, particularly in various large Chinese cities, indicate that they are often quite contented to stay home. Consequently, they are satisfied to interact with friends digitally on their favorite social networks, such as WeChat and Weibo, exploring various products and online-shopping, streaming movies and gaming are all perfectly normal activities that the Chinese millennial engage in (Simson, 2016).

Simson likewise claims that "ninety-seven percent of Chinese millennial travellers report sharing their travel experience online, via travel review sites, personal blogs and more." A great many of these supposedly use their smartphones at least four times a day. Some of them admit to not being able to get by without looking at their device every five minutes.

'I cannot do without my phone for a day, and even when I travel around Europe, I need to know what is going on, not only in my social network, but also for news from home' (CMS-SBS)

Smart phones are used to check what is happening on the home-front and to keep in touch with friends and relatives about the accounts of the European trip.

Similarly, the Chinese millennial is focused on the *'luxury of escape'*: they want to get away from the hustle and bustle of the big city that they call home and explore exotic destinations. This is one of the cultural habits of this cohort, that pursues a motive to indulge, to escape from city life and to venture out to destinations that are likely to provide for exclusive and authentic experiences.

Furthermore, they are inclined to travel without the assistance of a travel agency. This has implications for the visa formalities that are required for a European visit. They customarily do not plan their trips with a clear destination in mind, but visa requirements appear to play a role when deciding on the place of visitation. Although many European destinations have relaxed visa procedures over the past few years, Chinese millennial travellers consider visa applications a major obstacle to travelling abroad. Additionally, these visitors are going off-the-beaten track in search of new experiences. What is more, is that during these undertakings, well-being is an essential requirement. These factors make the Chinese millennial traveller quite different from other generations. According to Dorsey...

'Here's where Chinese millennials really differ from other generations.... They like small luxuries.' (Dorsey, 2016).

Hence, the Chinese millennials are said to be travelling to the far corners of the world, seeking out unique experiences and discovering new shores. Unlike their parents who frequently travel in large groups, they often travel alone or in small groups. This usually poses challenges when applying for visas, which are easier acquired through a (Chinese) travel agency. However, the Chinese millennial tourist prefers to book holidays online, which is why the visa process is somewhat more complicated. The Chinese millennial travellers are technologically savvy though, and most of them book their travels via their smartphone or tablet, and they use these devices numerous times a day. Not only do they use their mobile devices to book their trips online, almost everything is done / paid

for with their smartphones. When asked what she would do without her smartphone, one participant responded.

“.... When I wake up, the first thing is to touch my phone and update some information to see what is happening in the world and so it's important for me”.
(CMS - NHTV)

Additionally, The Chinese millennial traveller is always ‘connected’ as she/he also uses her/his smartphone to stay connected to friends and family and to post images of their travel experiences abroad. This is important not only as a proof of them being seen at these destinations, but to enhance their status within their social network. One participant claims that she posts images of being at certain destinations, so that: ...

‘...people see that you have been to this place and so you are very special...’ (CMS - SU)

The Chinese millennial traveller appears to be well educated, and most of them have a university degree. Hence, they are able to communicate in English while travelling. Whereas their parents would make use of tour guides while abroad, they do not use tour guides: they prefer to explore the destination alone or with a partner / friend. While the Chinese millennial traveller is keen on visiting the popular destinations, especially when travelling in Europe, they also tend to go off-the-beaten track in search of unique experiences, and interactions with the local population is desired and even sought after. According to one participant:

‘I don't really like big cities. For me, Amsterdam is not big, but it's also a very international city and a lot of different people there, so I prefer to visit the rural place, to enjoy the quiet environment: the nature, flowers, trees and the wild, just like that...’ (CMS -ZU).

That is why one is more likely to find a Chinese millennial traveller in the countryside or in smaller towns, wandering and taking in the fresh air, rather than travelling in large groups of Chinese travellers. The latter prefer the famous, big cities, especially when in Europe. However, the notion of ‘big’ is relative to the Chinese traveller, seeing that their cities vary in dimensions when compared to European cities. For example, the city of

Beijing has the same number of residents as the entire population of the Netherlands. So, it is not surprising that what some in the West would refer to as a “big” city, is seen by the Chinese traveller as merely a normal “town”. Apart from the culture of the Chinese traveller, another important character to be examined is their values, especially when visiting destinations in Europe.

5.1.2 The Values of the Chinese Millennial Traveller

Four distinctive values of the Chinese millennial traveller identified during data analysis were: safe environment, clean air and blue sky, museums, and sampling local cuisine (though, like many other Chinese on European tour, in the end they seem to stick to Chinese food). First of all, the issue of **safety** is paramount to both Chinese tourists and students.

‘...We Chinese people are coming to the West: to new places, we really care about safety. That is the first thing we care about, and then later on we talk about other issues like where you find Chinese food...’ (CMS - ZU)

One Chinese millennial stated that there are Chinese student communities who established excursion tours specially for Chinese students in the Netherlands. These companies hire buses and on weekends and holidays they organise tours for Chinese students. Three benefits of participating in such a tour are: cost, communication and safety.

Most Chinese from Mainland China are aware of the recent terrorist attacks that have plagued particularly the tourism industry in Europe, especially France, Belgium, Germany and the UK. This was evident in the months following the attacks when, not only visitor-numbers plummeted, but also the parents of Chinese millennial students were hesitant and sometimes reluctant in sending their (only) child to study in Europe. According to one participant:

‘There’s one thing that is really important, that ah, because the things happen in Nice and Paris, all my relatives and my friends like kind of stop me going there to

study because it's too dangerous and we worry about your safety. It is better for you to think like further about this decision. But I come here anyway.' (CMS - SBS)

Safety is not only important to the Chinese millennial traveller, but also to the pre-millennials. This is illustrated in their behaviours during their trip in Europe, and the comfort they find in group travel. Especially during visits to big cities, a guide is mandatory among large groups. The guide is aware of the vulnerability of the visitors and therefore strict measures are taken to ensure safety. Apparently, these tourists carry around large sums in cash, and their luggage is crammed with expensive items, which is why they are prone to thieves in big cities. However, Chinese travellers are inclined to take less cash around these days especially the millennials, who mostly make payments digitally.

Secondly, clean air is another important value for the Chinese visitor. As is widely known, China is the most populous country in the world, with over 1.4 billion people. Owing to its emergence as a leading player in the world, and based on its rapid economic growth and astonishing expansion, it has become a major partner for the European Union. This development has spawned issues such as, environmental pollution; jam-packed streets in rapid emerging cities, (air) traffic congestions and expansive environmental pollution. All these factors are evident in the multitude of mega-cities that have sprung up in Mainland China. This is one of the reasons why when Chinese (millennial) visitors travel around Europe, they are impressed with not only the peripheral dimensions of European cities, but also the cleanliness of the air.

In "A Visual Analysis of a Cultural Tourism Destination", Eringa & Zhou (2015) investigated how a relatively unknown town emerged as cultural capital of Europe by using visual materials to attract visitors from various destinations, including China. In their analysis, they aimed at assessing the motivating factors that inform travellers from different cultural backgrounds to select their travel destination while, at the same time, exploring the effect of visual communication in the promotion of cultural tourism. Data

gathered showed that Chinese participants mostly took pictures of 'blue skies' and 'sun-filled' skies, to project a positive image of the destination. When asked: "How does visual information affect your imagination of a destination?" one respondent answered:

'It gives a very intuitive feeling of local conditions, which creates a strong attraction for me. Pictures always catch my attention. When I feel attracted to a place, I still begin to plan a journey there.' (Eringa & Zhou, 2015).

Another participant, from Zhejiang expressed:

'I like to experience the authentic rural areas, to see the rural people and experience their life in a total real relaxed way...' (CMS - ZU)

However, due to the pollution in the major cities in China, it is sometimes impossible to see the sky through the dense fog that hangs over the cities. This might be one of the reasons that the Chinese tourists place so much value on blue skies when visiting Europe: it reflects the clean air that is lacking in the major cities of China. Chinese visitors crave clean air and blue skies and they enjoy the tranquility of nature, one without congestion and pollution:

'For me, I like to enjoy the quiet environment; the nature, flowers, trees and the wild, just like that...' (CMC - ZU)

Therefore, enjoying the natural settings in Europe is also a valuable activity for most Chinese tourists during their time in Europe. They tend to appreciate this more so because of a lack thereof back home, which is caused by traffic and human congestions in the gigantic Chinese cities.

A third value of the Chinese tourists visiting Europe is their passion for **museums**. The Netherlands has some of the most exceptional museums in Europe and probably the world. For example, the Redlight District, the world-renowned sex district in Amsterdam, is an area in the city designated for prostitution. Every year, millions of national and international tourists make their way to this part of the city to see the prostitutes who parade in the red, quintessential windows, exhibiting their 'attributes'. Unlike in China, prostitution is legal in the Netherlands. Because of this phenomenon,

Chinese tourists flock this area and are amazed at the seemingly promiscuity of the Dutch society towards this activity. As one participant stated:

'... so, the first thing we do is the Redlight Street. The Chinese are a little bit conservative, so it's a totally different experience to see so many men around, although I'm not a man, but I like to join in the experience...' (CMS -ZU)

Most of the participants admitted that visiting museums is a very important aspect of the Chinese culture, and a favourite activity when visiting Europe. The continent is said to be very old and the architecture in various major European cities is rather ancient.

'... Well, I'm kind of museum person, so I want to go to every museum in the Netherlands.' (CMS - ZU)

'Museums are very important for many people in many different countries... to experience those wonderful works of arts, paintings the experience, the history and the artistic achievements of the artists.' (CSM -ZU)

Visiting museums are especially important as it provides the tourists with information about the earlier population of a destination. Chinese tourists are especially interested in how the local population lives, how the local government has evolved over time, and they want to see how people worked and survived in the past. Some students found visiting museums a good way to pass the rainy, dark days, when being outdoors is not a welcome option. Furthermore, the museum is a window into the heart of the country and its people. It tells the history and culture of the destination. As was poetically expressed by one participant:

'Museum is like the window to the culture of a city.' (CMS -ZU)

Museums record the cultural footprints of the country and helps visitors to step into the lives of the people represented in paintings and drawings. Though the Chinese tourists tend to be mostly interested in the Dutch Masters: Van Gogh, Rembrandt, Vermeer and Frans Hals, they also visit less famous museums with other types of art-forms. Nevertheless, Chinese tourists place a high value on visiting museums when travelling

through Europe. The following section now presents the travel motivations for Chinese millennials to visit the Netherlands.

5.2 Travel Motivations for Chinese Millennial Students as Tourists to the Netherlands

There are numerous reasons why Chinese tourists travel to Western Europe and to the Netherlands in particular. As ascribed in the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and simulated to portray the outbound Chinese tourists' value in terms of destination attributes and their attitudes toward international behaviour, Sparks & Pan (2009) describe in their article on "Understanding Attitudes, Constraints and Information Sources", that essential destination features include: natural beauty and icons of a place, quality of the infrastructure, independence, inspirational motives and social self-enhancement. Based on the findings of this study, the chief reasons given for Chinese millennials to visit the Netherlands were the; ancient culture, museums and architecture (of the main cities), friendliness of the Dutch population, feeling of safety and finally, the shopping possibilities that are offered.

5.2.1 Principal Travel Motivations

Although the growth appears to be levelling off somewhat, shopping still remains the top motivation for Chinese tourists to visit Europe. Regarding the travel budget spent on shopping, China surpassed the United States, and the average Chinese tourist spends 50 percent of her/his travel budget on shopping. Most of these visitors are keen on purchasing famous brands, as these are cheaper than back home. As one Chinese tourist stated:

'We like to shop, and we buy a lot of brands, because this is cheaper for us than back home'. (CM -WC)

In fact, Chinese customers are among the most important – if not *the* most important customers of many of the large international luxury brands. Worldwide, they account for approximately one-third of all expenditure on personal luxury goods and services,

according to Quartz Media LLC, (2018). Shopping in Europe is so much cheaper, that many Chinese shoppers have come to regard it as “the world’s largest in-season outlet,” as Bain & Company explains. The main reason for this is that the Chinese government places heavy taxes and duties on luxury items. This is exacerbated by the appreciated Yuan plus the distribution costs for the individual brands in China, according to the Fortune Character Institute (FCI), which researches China’s elite.

Another major attraction of the Chinese tourists is “Museum Europe”. In China, Europe is predominantly valued for its scenery, culture and history. Especially of interests are the sites which are significant for Chinese history, for instance, the places where Deng Xiaoping studied and worked in France. Besides cultural motivations, a holiday to Europe provides the Chinese visitor with a great reputation boost to the social network back home, consolidating status within that particular social surroundings. Hence, this is another primary reason for a European travel for the Chinese tourist. What also adds prestige to the home-front is their tendency to purchase high quality gifts and souvenirs on their European tour for friends and relatives at home and colleagues at work. Not only has the number of Chinese travellers increased considerably over the past decade, but also their eagerness to spend. In 2004, the Chinese had spent an average of approximately €538 per international trip; by 2009 this figure jumped to €702 (Z_Punkt, 2017). Visiting shopping outlets and purchasing luxury goods are also reasons for Chinese tourists to visit Europe. Shopping in Europe, especially for brands is preferred to shopping back home as products bought in Europe are perceived to be authentic rather than fake.

‘When we buy the brands in Europe, we are sure they are not fake: if we buy them back home, there is a chance that this might be fake, so we buy them here.’(CM-WC)

Grounded on these reasons, Chinese tourists prefer to shop for especially luxury items on their European tour.

In conclusion, the Chinese are motivated to visit Europe as they are fascinated by the natural surroundings: clean air and blue sky. This is in contrast with the congested conditions of the conurbations of China. They are fond of sightseeing, and a great deal of their time on their European tour is spent visiting the famous iconic places and especially taking pictures of these visits. Sightseeing at the famous scenic spots are everlasting memories which they use as proof of their European journey. Shopping, especially for luxury products are top of a European list of 'to dos'. However, recently there is a group of Chinese who travel to Europe for educational purposes. This is discussed in the ensuing paragraphs.

5.3 The Netherlands and its Higher Educational Institutes; Reasons why Chinese Millennials Choose to Study in The Netherlands.

In this section of the outcome of the data analysed for this study, the Netherlands as a state within Western Europe will be reviewed. In addition to focusing on its educational institutes, the reasons why Chinese millennials choose to study in this nation will be revealed.

5.3.1 The Netherlands Otherwise called "Holland"

The Netherlands, famously called Holland, is situated in the Northwest of Europe. It is merely three hundred kilometers from North to South and 170 kilometers from East to West. The nation counts approximately seventeen million inhabitants, who reside mostly in urban areas. It is one of the most densely populated countries in Europe and probably even in the world, especially in its capital, Amsterdam. This is manifested in the numerous challenges being faced by the local government there, particularly regarding housing. The country is known for its flat landscape, its windmills, canals and numerous waterways.

Holland, as it is famously called, reached its height of global recognition during the 17th century, otherwise called the Golden Age, when it was considered the cultural and

economic centre of the world. One reason for this was its immense (naval) trading networks that had then been established. These networks provide a window of opportunities to contemporary global economies. Primarily driven by export, the Dutch economy is among the top five largest exporters of goods and services, and according to the Dutch Government, Govt.nl, (2018), seventy percent of the its GDP comprises of export.

The Dutch are known for their open-minded mentality, they are tolerant and exhibit a freedom-loving approach towards diversity (Govt. nl, 2018): over 190 different nationalities reside in the Netherlands. The Dutch designed what they notably call the “Polder Model”, meaning, ‘Survival through Consensus’. This model is reflected in the philosophy of the country, which invites every citizen, despite his or her origin, to contribute their opinion regarding national problem-solving. The people of the Netherlands are uncomplicated, and tend to have a rather phlegmatic attitude. However, they are somewhat different with regards to sports. When asked about their first impression of the Netherlands, some participants of one of the focus group meetings conducted admitted that they were very amused and impressed by the exuberant welcome they received on a train-ride from Amsterdam to the Southern part of the country:

‘I was totally inspired by the football match at Rotterdam station when we were travelling to Breda last Sunday, we were on the train together and I think the emotional experience is really good.’ (CMS - ZU).

So, they are also very impressed by the Dutch population’s love for football. Being a part of the local experience is one of the cherished moments they have when they return home.

In short, the Netherlands, is a small but powerful nation of largely urban inhabitants. As one of the greatest economic supremacies of the 17th century, it has established a gigantic trading network around the globe and therefore is a recognised top exporter of

goods and services. Dutch people are famous for their liberal and tolerant mentality, and they exhibit a freedom-loving attitude towards diversity: the population consists of people from approximately 190 different nations. The popular concept: “Polder Model”, meaning, ‘Survival through Consensus’, was designed by the Dutch. Besides being a creative and liberal people, the Netherlands is also a football nation and this is illustrated in its many achievements over the years (Govt., 2018).

5.3.2 Higher Education in the Netherlands

Coincidentally, not only did the Netherlands reach its height of global recognition during the 17th Century (NUFFIC, 2018), it also established its first university then, when in 1575 William, Prince of Orange founded Leiden University: one of the most prominent and prestigious universities in the world (NUFFIC, 2018). During the Dutch Golden Age, scholars from across Europe were drawn to the country because of its liberal environment of intellectual open-mindedness, and Leiden’s generic international standing. Later on, many other universities followed and today there are two main types of higher educational institutions in the Netherlands: these are research universities and universities of applied sciences. The objective of the former is to involve students in scientific undertakings and immerse them in academic domains, while the latter offers students a programme aimed at the hands-on application of diverse humanities or natural sciences. Applied sciences universities are more practically-oriented than research universities, seeing that they prepare students for the professional world: one that is in line with the applied field of study undertaken.

Approximately ten percent of the student population in the Netherlands are internationals (NUFFIC, 2018). In other words, one in every ten students in higher education in the Netherlands originates from abroad. Hence, more than 90,000 students who are currently enrolled in higher educational institutes in the Netherlands are

international, and, each year, this number has been steadily rising. There are numerous reasons for this, and the main causes are explained in the proceeding section.

5.3.3 The Reasons why Chinese Millennials Choose to Study in The Netherlands

There are roughly five main reasons why international students are attracted to the Netherlands. First of all, the country has some of the best research universities in the world, according to the Times Higher Education World Rankings 2016-2017 (THE, 2017). And, as mentioned under 1.6.1, this is one of the reasons that students from all over the world come to study in the Netherlands. Recently, the country has seen a substantial increase of Chinese millennials who have elected to study at universities throughout the Netherlands. This has implications, not only for these educational institutes in the Netherlands and the Dutch population, but also for the students themselves. A second reason why international student elects to study in the Netherlands, according to the Dutch Higher Education Board (NUFFIC, 2018), is the value for money that is offered in the Netherlands. As one participant stated:

'...the tuition fee here is much lower compare with Australia or Canada or US.'
(CMS - SU)

The annual tuition fees are fairly inexpensive not only for students from European countries, but also for Chinese students wishing to study in the Netherlands. Furthermore, the cost of living in the Netherlands is relatively low compared to other European cities. Students get discounts in entertainment establishments, such as bars and cafes, restaurants, museums and most cinemas. Besides, there are various scholarships provided by most universities in the Netherlands.

A third reason why especially Chinese millennial students elect to study in the Netherlands is that the Dutch speak English at a very high level and almost everyone speaks and understands English, so it is relatively easy to communicate on campus as

well as among the local populace. This is especially helpful for Chinese millennial students, as their level of English is usually not high. One participant stated that:

*'Before I come here I speak English a lot of time but when I come here I find their English language level is very high. Maybe 80% of the people here can speak English fluently, even though their mother language is not English, it's Dutch ...'.
(CMS from SU)*

Thus, though fluency is a prerequisite for getting a student visa for the Netherlands, and Chinese students follow intensive English courses back home, they are pleasantly surprised at the advanced level of English of the Dutch. This is also noticeable in the supermarkets and in stores – store clerks are very helpful and friendly and are always willing to help Chinese students find their way in the shops.

The fourth reason why the Netherlands is popular among international students is the amounts of English-taught programmes offered by Dutch universities. Moreover, Dutch researchers are among the best performing in the world. They are the supreme masters of anything to do with water and the previously mentioned “Polder Model” is applied in developing innovative solutions for numerous water-management problems facing contemporary societies (Govt.nl, 2018).

The Dutch are called in for water-management tasks that no other nation is able to perform. Moreover, the Dutch produce some of the most outstanding artists, writers, philosophers, scientists, DJs and fashion-designers in the world (Govt. nl, 2018). This is probably due to the open and informal environment in which they work. Both on and off-campus, the atmosphere is rather open and the relationship between teacher and student is conducive to learning, as professors share and debate insights into immensely complex phenomena. Some Chinese students even develop a convivial relationship with their professors and perceive them as a part of their social network, and it is not uncommon to see students having an informal drink with their professors after class on

a nice summer day: a notion that would be inconceivable back home. According to one student:

'...in my first year here, I had two types of friends, my Chinese friends and my Dutch friends. These would include some of my professors from my class. I would call him by his first name, which I wouldn't do back home.' (CMS from SU)

Thus, the natural, open and informal atmosphere, which is typical of the Dutch could be advantageous for the creation of relationships for the Chinese millennial student. With core expertise in nanotechnology, renewable energy sources, medicine, architecture, water management, and fashion, just to name a few, thousands of students are travelling to the Netherlands to pursue a Bachelors', Masters' or PhD degree from some of the most famous universities in the world (Govt.nl, 2018).

Finally, there are many career opportunities that are provided upon graduation from a Dutch university. In many cases, it is possible for an international student to extend her or his stay for a maximum of twelve months, in case (s)he cannot find a suitable job position. During this time, the graduate is given the opportunity to do an internship or to seek jobs. Should the individual then be able to find a job, he or she can gain a permit to reside in the Netherlands. This permit allows the student to work and travel around in Europe without visa concerns. Working in the Netherlands upon graduation, also provides valuable international work-experience, which is also a valuable asset on return to China, as stated by one student:

'...when I finish my education and I cannot find still job immediately, I also have one year for search here, so I have enough time here to find a job or to find an internship so I think it's good for me because I want to have some experience for a working abroad.' (CMS -SU)

Hence, it is not only the chance to find a proper job, but also the opportunity to gain valuable international experience that make the Netherlands so interesting to study for Chinese millennial students.

Furthermore, one of the greatest fears that Chinese millennials have is returning to China and readjusting to their former society. During their studies in the Netherlands, they have somehow ‘changed’, and have adopted different perspectives than they had when they arrived in the Netherlands. They have lived among (international) students, as well as in Dutch communities, and have therefore been influenced somehow by these communities. Moreover, when they leave their hometowns, they have been absent from their physical ‘network’. Re-entering this ‘social space’ might have its inherent complications and thus the student could have issues regarding re-adapting to this society. As one respondent contends:

‘It’s quite different than they are used to in China. They act quite differently here: here they have to take initiative, they have to be out-spoken. These things are not really valued back home’ (PSL)

This respondent continued to say that:

‘... the student has been out of the loop for two years, right? That time could have been used much more efficiently and effectively to maintain contacts and sound up potential employers. So, on the one hand there is this foreign degree, yes, it’s something that you really need to get, but how much more relevance does it have in the daily reality? Is it still a value? When will we see in China this trend to do handicraft to be old fashioned doing things with your hands? Not everybody can be a great scientist.’ (PSL).

Thus, the value of a foreign degree is questionable, as students consider handicraft to be outdated, and this degree that is attained abroad does not guarantee that the Chinese millennial student will get a suitable job on her or his return to China. That is why, having this one year in which the graduate can elect to do an internship or find a relevant job, provides some kind of assurance for the Chinese millennial student who has completed her or his studies in the Netherlands. This problem is further exacerbated by the fact that there are too many graduates for too few jobs in China.

‘...they are all being trained for high-level jobs but the high-level jobs have not been expanding on the same speed and with the educational level...and so you have 3 to 5 thousand people applying for one single job.’ (PSL)

The fact that there are concerns related to finding a proper job on their return home, is evident also from the response from the Chinese millennial students themselves.

According to one of them:

'When I get back home, it is not easy to find a job according to my study here.... I will maybe have to find another kind of job than what I study for here.' (CMS -SU)

Therefore, the Netherlands provides an opportunity for students to find a job or an internship position upon graduation. This is very important for the student as it helps them to focus more on their studies, rather than on their future job prospects.

Having said that, there has been some recent developments regarding Chinese students who studied abroad. In an article published in ChinaDaily (2016)– an online newspaper – China will intensify efforts to encourage return of overseas talent. Beijing is said to be “rolling out more incentives for overseas Chinese students to return for starting their own businesses and making innovation” according to a State Council executive chaired by Premier Li Keqiang in April, 2018. A considerable number of Chinese students is said to be returning home for innovation and entrepreneurship each year after completing academic studies abroad.

'Between 1978 and 2017, 83.73 percent of overseas Chinese students, totaling 3.132 million, had come back after completing their studies. In 2017 alone, the number of returned students reached 480,900, up by 11.19 percent from 2016.'

(Ministry of Education PRC, 2018)

Moreover, China is said to be 'luring PhD holders'. As the number of doctoral and postdoctoral Chinese students studying in the US who are returning to China is growing, the government is attracting these cohort by creating numerous incentives. They do this by offering financial support and advice but also by providing more jobs at higher pay and innovation-driven development, according to Zhang Ruinan of Global Career Path (Zhang, 2018). Therefore, there have been recent efforts to entice overseas Chinese students to China in order to assist in the country's rapid development (Zhang, 2018).

In sum, there are five core reasons for Chinese millennials to choose to study in the Netherlands, these are:

- the Dutch has some of the best universities in the world;
- the cost of studying is less than similar institutes world-wide;
- there is a vast amount of English-taught programmes;
- the level of English within the Dutch society is considered one of the highest in the non-English speaking world;
- Finally, the career opportunities for graduates are very good, as they are offered one extra year after graduation to decide on either an internship or a job in the Netherlands.

After analysing the five core reasons why Chinese millennial students opt to study in the Netherlands, and based on the evidence provided from data, the findings from the Chinese millennial students in the Netherlands will now be presented.

5.4 Chinese Millennial Students in the Netherlands

The previous section discussed some of the reasons Chinese millennial students choose to study in the Netherlands. This section of the findings will examine the life of these students while they are in the Netherlands. Some students have been staying in the Netherlands for a longer period of time seeing that they have already followed other programmes either in the Netherlands or at other universities within Europe. As one participant recalled:

'I did my Master's in Germany and now I come here to do a PhD, because the Erasmus Business School is one of the best for my area of study.' (CM - WD)

'I did my bachelor programme here, so I came like five years ago, so there were not many Chinese people at that time, so my parents think it's a good thing to practice my language here, because it is a long way from America or Canada.' (CMS - SU)

So, for students who have lived in the Netherlands / Europe for longer periods of time, coping with life in the Netherlands is not as difficult as with students who have been in

the country for a year or less. The reason for this is that these students have become more familiar with the Dutch way of life: they are accustomed to the food, the weather, the Dutch people and generally the entire way of life in the Netherlands. This makes it somewhat easier for them to get by. Some of them have even learnt to speak the Dutch language. Most of them stated that initially they would have preferred another destination: like Canada, for example. However, the visa situation for Canada is very complicated, and seeing that they are pressured by their parents into finishing their studies as quickly as possible, they opt for a study in the Netherlands. One particular student said:

'I decided to go here because I fail my visa to Canada, so I come here. I don't have time to waste because I don't want to wait and when I compare here it's very peaceful and when I decide to come here Europe is a bit dangerous, something like that and also there is less Chinese people here.' (CMS - SU)

The Netherlands is actually not the initial choice of most Chinese millennial students, but once they are here they get used to the Dutch way of life very quickly. They know how to do their daily (or weekly) shopping at the local supermarket. At first, it would take hours to shop for a few items, but after a while, it becomes easy to find things. The shop personnel are very kind and polite and will help them to find these items. In contrast to back home in China, it does not matter whether or not goods are purchased: the supermarket staff are genuinely happy to help. Naturally, the fact that they all speak English is a huge advantage. One student stated that:

'No matter if you buy something or you ask them to find some products for you: it's really nice. A lot of people can speak English, but for me is so hard to buy stuff from the supermarket in the first place because it's all Dutch. Maybe I just can buy the egg and bread and milk: I don't know, I had to google it. It takes me one or two hours just to buy a little stuff: it's very hard for me. But right now, it's better.' (CMS - SU).

Although the people in the stores and supermarket are very helpful, Chinese millennials sometimes face initial challenges regarding the Dutch mentality, especially during their

classes. The Dutch are somewhat frank and often tend to just say what comes to mind without thinking of the consequences. One student remarked:

'When I came to here you know I still remember one thing, because I was really shocked because it was like 4 or 5 years ago and a student from the Netherlands asked me, is there any Apple Store in China? I was like, seriously? What do you know about China? How do you know about China?' (CMS - SU)

Indeed, the Dutch can be rather ignorant at times, and some believe that the Netherlands is the most developed nation in the world. They also tend to be very candid, especially when they believe strongly on an issue. This is in sheer contrast with the Chinese, who are considered reserved and are not likely give an opinion without being specifically asked. One student said:

'... I think the most things compare with Chinese people is that Dutch people are more direct. I also heard it before I came so, never mind what they say they just, they didn't mean anything, they just tell you about their opinion, so don't mind them.' (CMS - SU)

The Chinese is somewhat reserved, especially in the classroom compared to other international students, and particularly to the Dutch. This is not to say they are not as intelligent or lack the knowledge of the subject matter at hand: it implies that they are not used to giving unsolicited opinions and speaking their minds in public. Particularly matters related to their home-country are off-limits and is shunned at all times.

Additionally, the Dutch tertiary education also varies from that of the Chinese.

This is evident in the practices of the feared "*Gaokao*", the assessment for entrance to university in China. This test, which was instigated in 1977, is one of the most significant moments in the lives of most Chinese teenagers, as it determines whether or not a student is allowed to attend university. Should one's score be too low, it is not possible to attend any of the top universities in the country. The worst possible outcome could mean that the candidate would have to attend a less accredited university or would be refused a university entrance completely. As a consequence, some students even end up taking their own lives when they realise their future prospects have diminished, right in

front of their eyes. To make things worse, the pressure from their communities and the embarrassment placed upon the families also play an important role, according to Ed Sander of the *ChinaTalk* online magazine (see appendix 10 p. 141 - *transcripts*).

Therefore, when especially Chinese millennial students who study in a Dutch undergraduate programme arrive in the Netherlands, they are surprised at the differences in the education system here, as well as the attitude of the students on campus. A test like the “*Gaokao*” does not exist in the Netherlands and there is no pressure from society to score the maximum in order to get into the top universities. In fact, some Dutch students even elect to attend business colleges, that are more hands-on, instead of attending research universities. In addition to this, the unique Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) in the Netherlands are very popular, as they provide practically-oriented Bachelors’ and Masters’ programmes. A degree from a university of applied sciences is preferred by most multinational companies. PhDs are not very popular in the business sector, and graduates with a PhD in the Netherlands are shocked to learn that such a degree is not welcomed when they decide to look for a job in the industry. One PhD graduate from a renowned Dutch university explained that:

‘In Germany, you can have a PhD and go to work in the industry: this is very normal. In China too, but in the Netherlands, where I try to apply for some management job, they say “What is this?” Normally, they would not receive a CV like this. Maybe you should do a research job.’ (CM - WD)

It is customary in the Netherlands, that once a student has successfully completed a PhD, she or he is expected to work as a researcher at a (research) university, whereas in countries like Germany and China it is quite common for a PhD graduate to either work in the industry or as a researcher at a university. Likewise, the learning styles is quite different in the Netherlands when compared to China.

This is particularly true when looking at post graduate degree programmes. Take, for example, the doctoral track in the Netherlands, and in Europe for that matter. In this

system, PhD students are expected invent theories or add to knowledge construction. When undertaking a PhD in China, on the contrary, the supervisor makes the candidate a part of his/her own project, so the student does not need to originate theories or generate knowledge independently. Therefore, this can be quite challenging for the Chinese millennial student, who has to get accustomed to the Dutch way of doing things.

'If you do a PhD in China, the supervisor makes you part of his project, you do not have to come up with something that's original or contributes to scholarship, like we have to here.' (PSL)

Hence, this tends to create an enormous amount of stress for the Chinese millennial student, who not only has to get used to getting around campus but also acclimatizing to the Dutch academic world. What is also exacerbating campus life for the Chinese millennial student is what the Dutch professors consider the basic academic skills of these students. For instance, the simple academic proficiency of formulating research questions, can be a frustrating enterprise for these students, simply because they expect to be told what to do at all times, rather than making (the necessary) decisions independently. All this creates a great deal of anxiety, resulting in an even greater feeling of insecurity and angst. As a professor explained:

'...they have to formulate research question(s) instead of me telling them what to do... that's what they are used to...' (PSL).

So, Chinese millennial students, particularly PhD candidates, tend to experience pronounced anxieties during their studies in the Netherlands. They have to get familiarized with the Dutch education system, as well as to campus life in general, seeing that this is quite different from back home in China, where the supervisor is totally in charge of the candidate's study. This is something that is not advocated in the Netherlands nor at any university in Europe.

In conclusion, Chinese millennial students in the Netherlands are generally happy with their choice of studying in the country even though it is not their initial choice. There are

actually two distinct categories of students: those who are here for a longer time and those who are here for just a short time. The former admits to being used to the Dutch way of life after the first year, while the latter is undergoing issues relating to acclimatization to both the Dutch way of life and to student life. The Dutch higher education generally differs from the Chinese system and so, the student has numerous challenges getting used to life on campus as well as living in the Netherlands. The behaviour in the classroom is likewise seen as different as the Chinese student is expected to be more pro-active regarding research questions and the entire research process is experienced as dissimilar from back home. Thus, having provided a depiction of the Chinese millennial students in the Netherlands, the following sections inspect the travel interests and behaviours of the Chinese millennial(s) students in/through Europe.

5.5 The Travel Interests and Behaviours of Chinese Millennial Students in / Through The Netherlands/Europe.

Whereas the previous section presented the findings of the Chinese millennial student's experiences during their time in the Netherlands, this section, addresses the travel interests of these students during their study in the Netherlands. The results show that these students are fond of travelling and during their studies in the Netherlands, they often visit not only the major cities in the Netherlands but also popular European destinations, especially those in Western Europe. Additionally, recent reports indicate that they have developed a taste for smaller cities and rural areas. They are seeking for novel and authentic experiences and unique places to visit. However, the top destinations for Chinese millennial students (to Europe) remains metropolises like Paris, London, Rome and Prague, according to the participants. Hence, the next section provides a delineation of the generic travel interests of the Chinese millennial students in and through Europe.

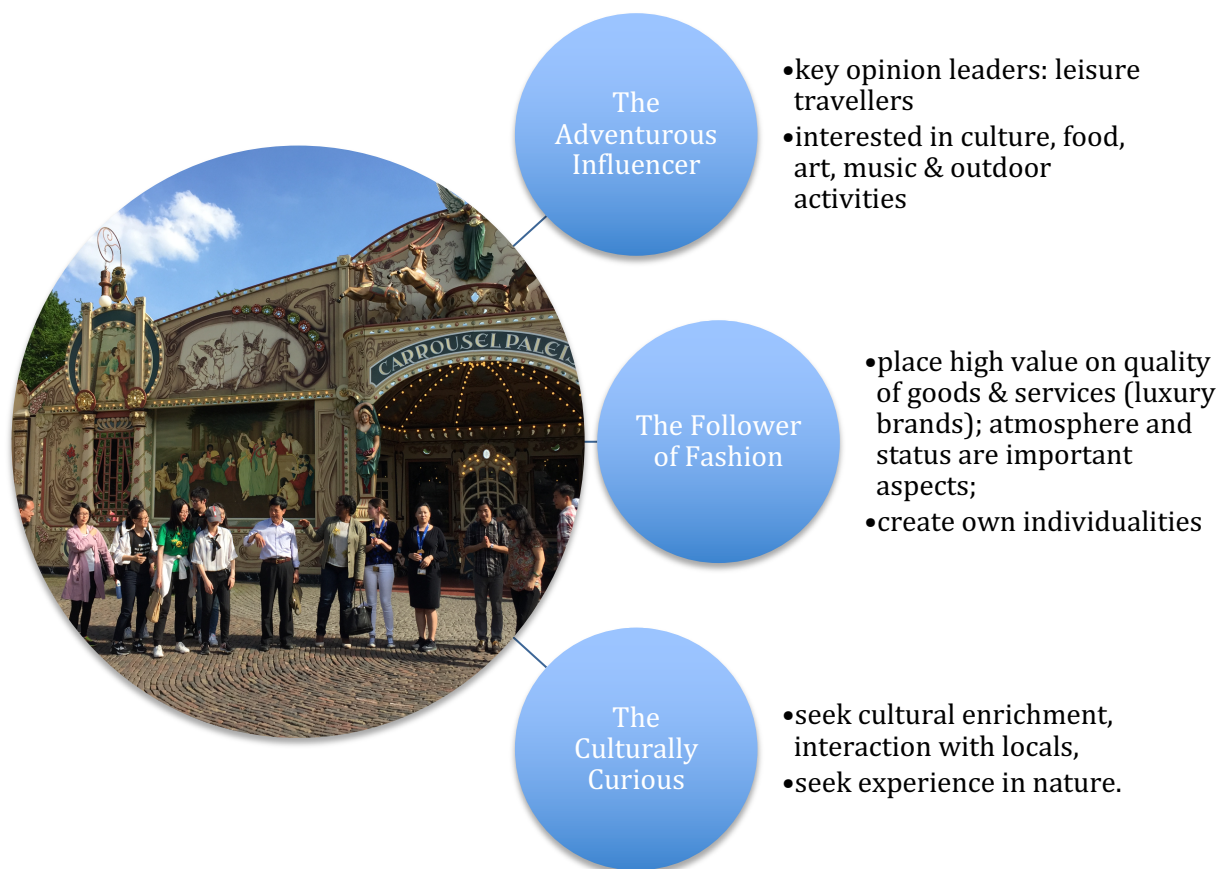
5.5.1 The Travel Interests of Chinese Millennial Traveller in/Through Europe

The days of massive group tours of Chinese pre-millennials to Europe are a thing of the past. These tourists were usually presented with uncompromising shopping occasions and lavish (mainly Chinese-food) banquets with entertainment to fit every occasion. As the Chinese outbound tourism industry proliferates, so do the different types of holidays these tourists take. The millennials, for example, which currently consists of a majority of the present tourism arrivals from China, are quintessentially more internationally-oriented than their parents, and their travel preferences are shaped by their individual socio-economic positions. According to Supchina.com, this group of travellers is more prosperous and elect to remain single longer than their predecessors.

5.5.1.1 Classification of the Chinese Millennial Traveller

Before starting to discuss the findings categorised under this theme, it is important to first offer some contextual data on the classification of the Chinese millennial traveller. This cohort can be subdivided into three distinct segmentations, according to a study conducted by *Jing Travel* – an online voice for news and analysis on Chinese global travel: *The Adventurous Influencer*, *the Follower of Fashion* and *the Culturally Curious*. The following illustration provides a picture of the three distinctive features of these groups:

Figure 5.1: Represents a segmentation of the Chinese millennial traveller.



Source: Caption by Koerts (2017), taken on a field trip to the Efteling (attraction park), Netherlands, with Chinese students from a university (China).

Firstly, there is the Adventurous Influencer, the smallest yet most dominant of the three. Being highly active on social media, they are early adopters and usually key opinion leaders. This group is chiefly interested in culture, food, art, music and outdoor activities. Of the three groups, the adventurous influencer spends more time on leisure travel. A majority of the Chinese millennial students who participated in this study apparently fall under this category, as most of their leisure time is spent visiting cities throughout Europe during their study time in the Netherlands. When asked what they would be doing during the imminent midterm holiday, most of them said they would be travelling within Europe:

'I will go to Prague next week with my roommate. Actually, I did not think that I could go all around through the European country when I came here. And then CM1 and CM2 told me yes, you can go everywhere you want and so I don't want to waste the holiday so every holiday I plan to go somewhere. So, next week Prague is the first stop.' (CMS - SU).

'I come here for exploring Europe, so in the weekend in my free time I want to just go out and visit countries near Netherlands and also far away. Like I have a very big trip planned for in December. I will visit like Iceland, Sweden, and what's the name, ah, Finland and others, like Austria and others. I like just to travel around Europe.' (CMS - NHTV)

Not only are they interested in major cities, the smaller cities, rural towns and villages are also among the destinations to which they escape during long weekends and holidays. They are interested in (local) culture, art, music and festivals as well as most outdoor activities.

The second group of this classification is the *'Followers of fashion'*, who place a high value on the quality of goods and services whenever and wherever they travel, and so they appreciate luxury (brands) and outstanding services during their journeys. Both the atmosphere of a destination and its' status are important aspects of their explorations. Furthermore, this group is keen on pursuing trends and are often more driven than their peers by a longing for relaxation. Their migratory way of living is a fashion for these young Chinese and it offers the opportunity to take a step back from

their rather hectic way of living in the rapidly developing mega-cities of China. As one Hong Kong-based travel blogger explains:

'When we travel, we see more and more different kinds of lifestyles, what people in other countries and the young people there are doing, and we find inspiration for ourselves.' (Jing Daily, Blogger SZ).

Hence, the general Chinese millennial travellers tend to stay shy of organized tours, choosing instead to book their own travels, or embark on an exploration with a friend /partner in order to seek novel adventures and unique experiences. They go off-the-beaten track in search of this exclusive experience which they share with their friends on social media. One student succinctly stated:

'... but I don't usually go to the traditional attraction. I like to go around the countryside and feel like the locals: to see what they do and feel what they feel. I want to come here for once, but I prefer the countryside. I want to see and feel the culture of the local people.' (CMS - NHTV).

Travel is likewise seen as an escape route for them; they want to get away from the social and cultural demands of the rapidly evolving Chinese society in which they ordinarily live and work. Being conscious of different lifestyles and value systems is vital for these travellers, as they try to discover their 'worlds' – create their own individualities, which are understandably different from the societal and familial expectations of marrying, buying homes and settling into stable jobs. They want to be able to make up their own minds, instead of this being done for them by their parents, family-members or their society at large. While focusing on personal growth, the aforementioned travel-blogger writes about how travel has stimulated her to think more generally about happiness and personal values.

'That's one reason to travel, to discover other ways to live.' (CM blogger, Supchina.com, 2017).

Therefore, travelling, according to Chinese millennials, is one way to learn about how other societies live and function. Having this knowledge, they believe, will enhance their individual lives and contribute to their personal development.

The third group is the '*Culturally Curious*', which is the largest of the three. These travellers are seeking cultural enrichment, interaction with locals, and experiences in nature. According to TL, an investment manager:

'I prefer the kind of traveling that is free and unconstrained, which opens up my mind and allows me to experience different cultures and ways of life. That way, I feel free from the bounds of my limited knowledge and vision of the world.' (TL, Supchina.com, 2018).

(CM blogger -TL) 陆余恬, 27, who is spending the holiday week traveling across the U.S. with a group of five friends, wants to see everything - from New York City's Museum of Modern Art to Yosemite National Park in California.

'People in my generation want an in-depth experience in the culture and way of life when we travel to a new place.' (CM blogger, Supchina.com).

So, this group is seeking to enhance their cultural understanding by exploring different societies. They value interaction with the local population and search for memorable experiences in 'new' places. In so doing, they discover other living-styles which they believe will shape their personal identities and ultimately, their future.

Finally, in order to understand the Chinese millennial visitors', travel decision-making processes, it is vital to follow their digital footprint (this will be further explicated in Chapter six, as part of the recommendations section). Generally speaking, Chinese millennials get their information online, and roughly 95 percent of this cohort connect via mobile devices to popular services such as WeChat, QQ, and Weibo, according to Laura Powell of the *Jing Travel Report*. This report also claims that the effect of the *Adventurous Influencers* (principal opinion leaders and celebrities), who are vital in shaping travel choices, confronting obstacles like perceived safety matters is significant too. So, after having examined the travel interests of the Chinese millennial students in and through Europe, the travel behaviours of this cohort will now be addressed.

5.5.2 The Travel Behaviours of Chinese Millennial Students in/Through Europe

The most dominant subset among the Chinese millennial travellers is the group classified as the *Adventurous Influencers*. The Chinese millennial students seemingly fit this category, as they are: (1) active on social media, (2) early adopters (accepting of others) and they have a way of swaying opinions, (3) interested in culture, food, art, music and outdoor activities and (4) avid travellers and pursuers of leisure activities. That is why they are ordinarily more flexible in their travel behaviours.

As earlier mentioned (see 5.3.3 and 5.4), The Netherlands is hardly ever the first place that Chinese millennial students choose to study. By far, France is the preferred destination for most of these students, who are attracted to the country for a number of reasons: among others, for its image, culture, art and fashion. However, the past few years have seen an increasing number of Chinese students who have decided to study in the Netherlands. The Chinese have become the second largest group of international students in the nation; the first being the Germans, according to the Leiden Asia Centre (LAC), a branch of the International Institute for Asian Studies (ILAS), a postdoctoral research centre based in Leiden and Amsterdam. Therefore, the presence of Chinese students has become an essential feature in Dutch higher education.

The Netherlands is different in many ways from China, and there are hardly any similar traits that can be identified. Therefore, when students come to study in the country, there are bound to be issues that seem unfamiliar and peculiar. That is why they are said to behave differently when they visit places in Europe. Nevertheless, with the advent of the Internet and social media, most of them are aware of the cultural differences before and during their travels. The *Adventurous Influencers*, for example, are constantly engaged with their mobile devices and are said to be more 'online' than 'offline'. As one participant stated:

'I cannot imagine a day without my phone.... I cannot live without it. It helps me to communicate with my friends, parents or family. When I post something on social media then they can then know what is happening in my life.' (CMS - SU)

It is probably due to the fact that they seem to be constantly on their smartphones, that they sometimes may appear anti-social and do not care to interact to people from other nationalities. Nevertheless, they do most of their leisure activities via information from social media: shopping, one of their favourite pastimes, is crucial in their travel behaviour and there is hardly a Chinese visitor who does not visit Europe for shopping. There are three main reasons for this. First of all, Chinese are fond of luxury goods and famous brands. As one interviewee stated:

'So, in China we are going to buy what we say luxury products, with a middle, high-end products with good quality and with a recognizable brand.' (CM - WD)

These are very expensive in China, seeing that the Chinese government has placed significant tariffs on luxury goods, making them extremely expensive for Chinese consumers. Secondly, there is a substantial increase in the disposable income, thus the population has more money to spend on luxury goods. The Chinese visitor and particularly the millennials use social media to compare prices, and so they are aware of the huge discrepancy with the prices in their homeland. And, the third reason why Chinese love shopping in Europe is because they not only shop for themselves, but also for friends and family members. This is why it is not unusual to see a Chinese shopper purchasing two or three luxury brand handbags. They make sure to do this also in famous cities in Europe, such as Paris' Champs Elysee, and most importantly there is a photo-documentation of this activity placed on social media to 'show-off' to their friends and family. A further feature of this activity, is that the product is authentic. In China, there is an extra risk that such luxury brands might be fake. As one interviewee stated:

'... So why should I buy in China? Also, in China, you have the chance to buy a fake one.' (CM - WD)

According to the participants in the focus groups, the interviews conducted, and based on literature inspected in this study, shopping seems to be a major priority of the Chinese millennial student. Concurrently, the fact that the Chinese (in general) are seen as big spenders, particularly on luxury goods and services, when they are in stores, they sometimes feel overwhelmed by store personnel, who tend to 'roll out the red carpet' for them. Conversely, this is not always appreciated by the student, as suggested by one millennial student:

'... they are all coming to ask me what I want, as I come into the store. I don't have a chance to look around. Sometimes, I just want to look around, not to buy something... so I feel uncomfortable in this case.' (CMS -SBS)

So, these tourists get the feeling that they are only being accommodated because of their money. Most people, especially in the fashion houses or boutiques, are of the opinion that all Chinese (tourists) are affluent. It is, of course very difficult for them to differentiate if these visitors are students or just clients.

Furthermore, skeptical young Chinese will disdainfully admit that some young Chinese travellers are not particularly interested in experiencing the culture of the destination when they are travelling around in Europe, or anything cultural for that matter. This is also suggested by one respondent, who stated that:

'...They are not interested in culture: they just want to shop. They buy brands, they also buy for their friends or family. Because this is sometimes two or three times more expensive back home. They prefer to buy the brands here as back in China these might be fake. Here when you buy things you are sure it's not fake...'
(CMI - WD)

Although certain unconvinced young Chinese travellers are said to be indifferent to the culture of Europe, this is not shared by most of the Chinese millennial students who participated in this study. Most of them were very much interested in the culture of the destinations visited during their stay in the Netherlands. Their interests and visits to museums throughout Europe was evidence of this. Amsterdam is usually the port of entry for Chinese tourists who desire to see Europe. For these visitors, it is easy to

obtain a Schengen visa, which provides access to all twenty-five Schengen countries for a period of approximately ninety days, according to Travelvisabookings.com (2017). Thus, when studying in the Netherlands, the Chinese millennial students hardly spend a weekend in the city they reside. As one student remarked:

'I think studying in the Netherlands is really convenient for foreign students to travel because we have the Schengen visa and you can travel all over the European countries, so I was planning to go on a trip for every holiday...' (CMS - SU)

Consequently, they travel extensively through Europe visiting famous cities such as; Paris, Rome, and London, and countries like Iceland, Portugal and the Czech Republic. One of the reasons for this is that especially students learn about destination from their history/cultural studies during their education back in China. Hence, when they come to Europe, they want to see and experience these historical and cultural spots. Some learn about these destinations from stories and songs that they recall when they were young. One Chinese millennial student relayed her experience:

'We have a song it's in the plaza of Prague, and you see the sunset, it's a song and so I went to Prague and I see the plaza and I say, ah, that's the plaza.' (CMS-SBS)

'If I go to Prague I also see the other countries that's near here, since I'm here, I visit more, so like a circle to visit the other countries and then come back here.' (CMS-SBS)

Thus, students have prior knowledge about the destinations they visit while they are studying in Europe, which explains their reasons for specifically targeting these spots. Furthermore, during these visits, the Chinese millennial students want to 'blend in', rather than 'stand out'. In this process of 'blending in', they like to try out local cuisines in the cities that they visit or in the places where they live. However, they always retreat to Chinese food, according to one participant:

"I have a Chinese stomach, so I prefer Chinese food." (CMS - SBS)

Besides frequently visiting museums, they often participate in outdoor activities and attend music and dance festivals throughout Europe. They like the great outdoors,

especially the wide-open spaces, the landscape and the blue skies. The reason being, they are not accustomed to seeing much of this back in China, as most of the big cities there are very modern, and therefore densely populated. When participating in these activities, they prefer to have a fellow student or a friend with whom to travel around Europe and share experiences.

'...So, if you have a friend to travel with, maybe it's good, she can take some photos for you and in this so I can travel with a friend because my parents are, actually, they are my sponsors, you see.' (CMS - SU)

However, some of them do not mind travelling on their own.

'For me, I prefer to travel alone because if you are alone you can choose the way you have transportation, or accommodation yourself.' (CMS- SU)

If, on the other hand, they do choose to travel with a fellow-student/partner, they seek out friends who are also studying at universities throughout Europe, and together they go to another destination or may sometimes even opt to stay at the destination of the friend. Should they decide to stay at the home-location, the host-student – the one who lives in that location - generally acts as guide to show the most important features of this particular destination. This is interesting, as the places they go might be different from what the tourist would normally have visited. The reason for this is that, as the host-student has become more familiar with her or his new 'home-town', this individual therefore develops a different view of the place. Thus, the experience is not only unique, but also very predisposed to the host-student's prejudices of that particular area.

In general, though, students studying abroad are not only visited by friends, but also by relatives and family. Here too, the host-student functions as a guide for these visitors. Conversely, this sometimes poses numerous challenges for the student, as very often these visiting relatives and family expect to be entertained by the Chinese millennial student, who also needs to focus on her or his study. The students are expected to guide their guests around Europe, due to the fact that the English language-level of these

visiting friends and relatives is either negligible or very basic. The students are thus pressured into taking their guests around Europe, as well as providing entertainment and the necessary travel arrangements during this European trip. One interviewee explained that:

'When our parents are here, we want to show them around the city we live, but we also go to Paris, Rome, Germany and Amsterdam, Den Haag, Leiden, Utrecht, so in the weekend we will go somewhere.' (CM - WD)

Consequently, this puts added pressure on the student, who also needs to consider her or his individual work and does not have the time to show the family and friends around Europe.

Another added burden on the Chinese millennial student during a stay in Europe is the fact that they are from a single-child family: hence they do not have siblings. The student worries about footing the burden of taking care of their parents as they grow older. One student despondently replied to a question about what she felt about her future:

'After I finish my graduation ceremony in 2018, and I prefer to come back to China as our parents is getting older and it's better to be with them, so come back to China and find a company and personally it's hard to create your own business.' (CMS - SBS)

This is a major problem for most Chinese millennials, and this is so serious that it seems to affect their academic performance. One respondent stated that he knew of a Chinese millennial student who eventually had to quit her studies and return to China to take care of her aging parents, seeing that it is somewhat expected of them. Another informant even indicated that she had to put her studies on hold to care for her mother who had been hospitalized for a month. Thus, the responsibility that is shouldered by the Chinese millennial student is burdensome.

There are however, some interesting developments regarding Chinese millennial students and tourists to the Netherlands, which might appear insignificant, but could shed some light into changing travel interests and behaviour of the Chinese millennial

students / tourists. According to one informant, there are several student communities popping up on university campuses throughout the Netherlands / across Europe that organise coach-trips around Europe for Chinese students as well as for their visiting friends and relatives. These communities provide opportunities for Chinese students to meet their fellowmen who are studying at a European university. They arrange trips/excursions to major cities and towns and each trip is characterised by a particular theme. One of these, for example, features the lavender fields of the Provence in France, or wine-tasting in Italy (Goeugo.eu, 2018). These trips are inexpensive and everything is organised by the Chinese students themselves in the Chinese language, which is why it is very difficult for non-Chinese to participate in such excursions. Students can invite visiting friends and relatives to take part in such a trip and so convivial relationships are established.

'I have been on such a trip twice and I met other students and they talk about their life in the Netherlands and how they cope with living here.' (CMS-RC)

He further said that although this was a good way to meet fellow countrymen, this did not help with the integration into the Dutch culture, seeing that everyone continued to speak in Mandarin and everyone wanted to continue the behaviour they exhibit while in their homeland. It does however, help to alleviate the feeling of homesickness for students who tend to get lonely while studying in the Netherlands.

What was also noticeable was the fact that these students preferred to travel in a group above travelling alone or with a partner. This is in contrast with travel habits of the typical Chinese millennial traveller, who is normally seen as a free independent traveller. The reason given is that it is not only cheaper, but it is also perceived as a safer way of travelling across Europe. Additionally, some students also still show signs of insecurities regarding particularly the Dutch population and its language. Though most speak adequate English, they prefer to communicate in their mother-tongue above a

foreign language. The Dutch is a particularly difficult language for the Chinese to learn and, although there is a small group that try to avoid such close communities and prefer to intermingle in the Dutch society, most of them depend on information from within the Chinese communities specially founded for students to the Netherlands.

In conclusion, the *Adventurous Influencers* are the most dominant subgroup among the Chinese millennial travellers, and Chinese millennial students seemingly fit this type, as they are active on social media, flexible yet persuasive in their behaviour and show particular interest in culture, food, art, music and outdoor activities. These students are passionate travellers during their time in the Netherlands and they are also fervent partakers of leisure activities. As the manifestation of Chinese students has emerged as an essential consideration within the Dutch higher education system, it is important to investigate the travel behaviour of these students in and through Europe. The Netherlands is different in many ways from China, hence there is hardly much similarities between the two cultures. Therefore, when Chinese millennial students decide to study in the country, there are bound to be unfamiliar habits and customs to deal with. That is why they are said to behave differently when they visit places in Europe. Having dealt with the interests and behaviours of Chinese millennial students in and through Europe, it is now necessary to examine the surroundings in which they live and study while in the Netherlands.

5.6 The Chinese Millennial Students and their Surroundings

Every year, hundreds of Chinese millennial students find their way to the Netherlands to study. Although most of these students have been coming to do a post graduate degree course, recently there are students who have decided to undertake an undergraduate study. Their presence in the Netherlands is evident both within the university campuses in major cities in the Netherlands and in the vicinity where they reside. This section discusses these Chinese millennial students and the effect of their presence in the

(international) classroom. Subsequently, it will examine their influence on the immediate surroundings where they reside as well as the places they visit.

5.6.1 The Chinese Millennial Students on Campus in the Netherlands

Most Chinese millennial students who decide to study in the Netherlands generally choose to study in the bigger cities: the universities in and around Amsterdam are considered favorites. One in particular is The University of Amsterdam, which is the highest ranked Dutch university. Another is the University of Delft, which is famous among Chinese millennial students because of its areas of specializations. A third is the university of Leiden. In this section, the researcher will focus on four main topics on the Chinese millennial students' campus-life. These include: cultural differences, linguistic challenges, education styles and living in the Netherlands. First, the findings from the analysis of the data are examined.

The University of Amsterdam (UvA) is a world-known iconic institute, located in the historic heart of the Dutch capital and is home to a student-body of approximately 31,000 students; 5,000 of whom are international students from over 100 countries. There are several reasons why UvA is so popular among international students. First of all, it offers one of the largest selections of international programmes in the Netherlands. In fact, there are more than 200 international degree programmes which are completely taught in English (UvA.nl., 2018).

Chinese students elect to study at the UvA due to above-mentioned reasons, as well as its location in the centre of the historic metropolis. According to one past-student of UvA;

'Life in Amsterdam is different and great. I was curious about almost everything when I first came to this international city, so I started to explore it straight away ...' (CMS-UvA)

This student also recalls an old saying in China, which is:

“to travel a thousand miles beats reading a thousand books”.

She further admits that:

‘I have learnt more about the Netherlands and the whole EU by experiencing local life, getting to know different people and exchanging ideas with them by keeping an open mind. Meanwhile my life skills have developed to a new stage because I have to deal with everything on my own in daily life.’ (CMS - UvA)

Due to the differences between the Dutch and the Chinese culture, it is particularly challenging to live in this city, with its cobbled-stone streets, thousands of bikes and overcrowded living facilities. Not only does the Chinese millennial student have to contend with the different habits of the Amsterdammers, as they are so famously called, but they are confronted with the Dutch language and lifestyle. Yet, it is sometimes very easy to get by without this language because most Dutch speak English. Nevertheless, the signage in some public places is far from idyllic. Numerous participants contend that:

‘...They have to do something about the signs, especially in the train stations, and in some public places: everything is in Dutch and the announcements are also made in Dutch.’ (CM - WD)

Students travel around, both in the Netherlands and throughout Europe. This is why it is important that they can find their way around – transportation, accommodation, facilities, just to name a few. They also want to integrate with the local population and though most people speak English well in and around Amsterdam, there are still instances in which the Chinese millennial student feels very insecure. While, for example, it is difficult to find (Chinese) food in supermarkets, the local staff are usually quite friendly and are often quite willing to help out when necessary.

This is somewhat different while on campus though. At Dutch universities, the atmosphere is very informal and it is not unusual for a student to call a professor by her or his first name, should the student desire to ask a question. In China, on the contrary, this is considered disrespectful. As one student explained:

'In China, if I want to ask a teacher a question, I should raise my hand. And the teacher let you speak. But in the Netherlands, this is different: you can just speak. In the Netherlands, students can say what they want all the time. We are more respectful of the teachers.' (CM- PY)

This is, therefore, one of the customs on Dutch campuses that the Chinese student needs to get accustomed to while studying in the Netherlands. Another aspect of campus life among this group is that classes are conducted solely in English, hence students are required to have a good knowledge of the English language. Whereas most students have studied English back in China, their level is certainly not enough to be able to follow the lessons at (post) graduate level. That is why according to one Chinese millennial, students have a very difficult time in the first months upon arrival in the Netherlands. One Chinese millennial student of the University of Amsterdam admits that:

'The language barrier I confronted when I got here at the very beginning was definitely beyond what I had imagined before I left China. I was aware that it was going to be a challenge, yet I did not realise it could be as serious and sometimes depressing as it turned out to be.' (CMS - UvA).

Despite her initial difficulties, she could deal with the routine daily communication issues which she actually found simple due to the kindness that was shown to her by the immediate surroundings: people were generally kind and they would listen with patience as she tried to get by on her broken English. However, following the lectures was a different matter; ploughing through the academic articles, coping with the vast amount of reading, and even trying to understand the assignments, was like a torture. And, as she admits,

'...even though I do not dare to say that I fully understand everything that is being said during the classes, I'm managing' (CMS - UvA).

The same student encourages potential Chinese students not to despair, though in the beginning the road may seem unsurpassable at times. She has noticed the immense changes due to her perseverance and her survival tactics. By devising a strategy that works for her, she has overcome.

'Language is about repetition and practice. It is merely a matter of time + effort = result' (CM - UvA).

Although this strategy might not work for others, it appears to be an approach to take when dealing with language issues especially while studying in the Netherlands. Thus, in order to succeed at universities in the Netherlands, this student advises others to find a technique which assists in enhancing one's level of academic English.

Having said that, life in Holland is somewhat different than in China for a number of reasons. First of all, the Dutch are more open, tolerant and there is little control on behaviour. There is much more freedom in lifestyle choice and not much pressure is placed on students to perform at their best. The generic Chinese student, however, who is sent to study in the Netherlands, is usually sponsored by the family, relatives or even the community at large. Their existence in the Netherlands is owed to their family and/or family-members. Therefore, they are expected to perform at their best. This pressure is sometimes so intense that the student is unable to live her or his own life or make her or his choice of partner. Not that this was allowed back home either: a partner might be introduced to the family only after graduation. Another matter of some concern is that the student may not have partners of the same-sex. Should this be the case, then this is kept a secret for friends and relatives of the family. One female Chinese millennial student divulged that:

'I like it here, because you can have a relationship with a girl and no one thinks it is bad. I can't do this when I'm home. If my parents know they will not support me anymore.' (CMS - SU).

In addition to this, there is constant pressure from parents to study hard, and have good grades. These are then flaunted among the colleagues and business associates in China, boosting the status of the parents. So, the freedom of partner-choice and the pressure placed on by their parents, place extra stress on the Chinese millennial student and impede their academic performance. That said, it is now important to examine the

Chinese millennial students and their local communities while they are in the Netherlands.

5.6.2 Chinese Millennial Students and the Local Communities

While in the Netherlands, it is essential that the Chinese millennial students get used to their local surroundings as quickly as possible. This is easier said than done, as there is a vast difference between the Dutch community and the Chinese millennial students' community. These students are usually housed within the vicinity of their place of study, seeing that some of the lectures are given after regular lecture-hours. Chinese students are also inclined to stay in a communal lodging. This appears to be beneficial to rapid adaptation to the Netherlands. When students are used to their new surroundings, they tend to feel less home-sick. One important downside of this, however, is the fact that living in a Chinese-specific community does not stimulate interaction with the Dutch population. At such accommodations, students continue to behave as if they were back home in China.

It is, therefore, suggested that by creating an inter-cultural space in which various international students live, it is easier to make new (local) friends, and embrace new (socio-cultural) relations, which in the end encourages an appreciation of cross-cultural differences. As voiced by one respondent:

'In that sense, you really make friends, you understand them, you know, many people are different. Otherwise you hang out every day with Chinese and it doesn't help you, your language skills, it does not help your social competency, you know, it doesn't really help.' (CMS - NHTV)

Hence, while it is important to provide special facilities for Chinese millennial students in the Netherlands in order to make the student feel more 'at home', it does very little to facilitate integration in the Dutch way of living, as students continue to speak Mandarin, cook Chinese food and continue their Chinese habits, while living in the Netherlands. A solution to this problem, however, is to create more international living communities in

which an amalgamation of various students is obligatory. This was highlighted by one Chinese millennial student stressed the need for more interspersing of international students' throughout living quarters by saying that:

"We can provide a better way to motivate the Chinese students, to stay, you know, in an international house, instead of trying to stay with other Chinese students together. This would be also much better. Because I also try to tell my younger Chinese fellows, if you have a chance, go to stay in an international student house."
(CMS - NHTV)

Hence, rather than putting all Chinese students in one dormitory, there ought to be an intermingling of international students around the dormitories.

In addition to this, Chinese students like to venture out in the weekends, on short holidays or long weekends, to the rural areas in the Netherlands. They like to visit, the Zaanse Schans in Zaandam, a typical Dutch village just outside of Amsterdam. Here one can re-live life in this part of the Netherlands in the 16th and 17th centuries. This is also where the first supermarket of Albert Heijn was established. The village has hundreds of working windmills, which are on display for the tourists. On a summer's day, it is very peaceful and relaxing to explore nature here in this traditional village.

Another popular attraction for the Chinese tourist is Kinderdijk: Kinderdijk is set on traditional Dutch landscape and depicts 750 years of Dutch mastery of the water. It is the windmill wonderland of Europe. 'Children's Dike', as the English translation goes, is a quintessential Dutch village just over fifteen kilometers South-East of Rotterdam. As mentioned under 5.1, the Netherlands is built below sea-level and therefore in the past, a mechanism was needed to prevent flooding. This was the original purpose of the windmills, which later functioned to drain the polder and create a new "Nederland" (*The Travelling Dutchman.com* 2013).

With regard to the places that Chinese tourists visit while in the Netherlands, it is interesting to see that on their quest for unique experiences, they tend to visit idyllic

villages which reflect the archetypal rudiments of the destination. One typical example of this is a tiny village in the north of the Netherlands called “Giethoorn” (translated: Goat’s horn). Every year thousands of tourists, particularly Chinese, descend on this miniature destination to see this fairy-tale-like town. Notwithstanding its (physical) size, Giethoorn has become a household word in certain parts of China, and every year Chinese tourists flock this hamlet to experience what is famously dubbed “The Dutch Venice”, mainly so because there are no roads in the town. To access their homes and place of business, the residents of this quaint little village are obliged to use boats and canoes. Along with the thousands of tourists who visit, especially during the high season, these residents must navigate the narrow and meandering waterways. On foot is also a challenge as the roads and small bridges are likewise narrow and congested.

Despite the immense crowd, though, the little town is tranquil and unique: the loudest audible sound is the quacking of the ducks and geese, that flock to scavenge the foods produced by the tourists. The majority of these visitors are Chinese millennial tourists, especially students. Consequently, many signs are written in Dutch, English and Chinese.

‘When I went to Giethoorn, I went into the gardens and a house and saw a beautiful cupboard, we don’t have these kinds of cupboard in China. It’s very pretty, and old. I also take pictures of the beautiful flowers.’ (CM - HK).

To the Chinese, the entire village is like an ‘open museum’, and they expect to just wander around freely. Some of them are shocked when they are told that they cannot just walk into the gardens or the homes. Though some residents put up signs to deter them, they cannot understand these signs, or they misinterpret them.

This is somewhat troubling to some homeowners, who feel they are constantly on display while visitors on the other hand do not understand that these are the personal properties of the residents. And so, there are some concerns as to the sustainability of such concepts. Nevertheless, the destination has hardly been less popular because of

this, hence Giethoorn generally likes the attention it is being paid to it by the Chinese visitors.

'The gardens are so beautiful, and everything is so peaceful, it is like a fairy-tale. It is just nice to walk around here, and to get away from the city and the noise.'
(CM - HK)

And while some residents are moving out, others are moving in. A Chinese/Dutch national has been purchasing properties and leisure establishments in above-mentioned town, in order to further draw more Chinese visitors to the Netherlands.

On a somewhat different note, Chinese millennial students are at times mistaken for Chinese tourists, especially when they are at shopping outlets or at the mega department stores that dot the Continent. They are seen as affluent customers and are generally treated hospitably. However, some Chinese students notice resentment and even antipathy from other shoppers. Contrastingly, some sales attendants and shop-owners tend to bend-over-backwards to service the Chinese millennial students. In one case, when a shop-owner realised that the client was 'merely' a student, the shop-owner's level of hospitality was rescinded.

During a class discussion on 'Chinese tourists' visit to the Netherlands,' a group of Dutch students were asked about their opinions. It was surprising to hear that a number of them expressed dissatisfaction about these visitors. According to them, 'they are buying up the expensive bags and they are given special treatment'. Others in the class, however, expressed the many benefits that Chinese visitors bring to the country, and agreed that compared to other nationalities, Chinese tourists to the Netherlands were generally welcomed overall.

On an international note, there are growing media reports claiming that Chinese tourists in general, are badly behaved when they are abroad. "*They wreck corals and throw their rubbish in the sea*", a taxi driver told the *South China Morning Post* (SCMP) in March,

2015. This was followed by a drastic action by the national government, that consequently decided to reduce the number of inbound flights from China by fifty percent (Volodzko, 2016). Ninety-five percent of the petty crimes in Jeju are said to be committed by Chinese. One explanation given for this lack of proper conduct is deprived development or education. Nonetheless, even China's most affluent and best educated also exhibit such behaviours (Volodzko, 2016). He further argues that "people say that altruism has never really been a part of the culture". This is exemplified in the Chinese proverb: "Sweep the snow from your own door; don't look after the frost on other people's roofs." Despite this, Volodzko (2016 p.2) is convinced that this is essentially a contrived phenomenon.

In an earlier article written by Volodzko, who was the chief editor for the Korea JoongAng Daily in 2016, in the *Diplomat*, he studied the media attention paid to Chinese tourists behaving badly. He maintained that just as the expression "ugly American" is no longer articulated, we could envisage accounts of "ugly Chinese" to wane, particularly as the country is experiencing increasing socio-economic advancements. However, there are differences between the two nations. The Americans experienced a postwar period of reflection which saw the emergence of 'freedom fighters' and great philosophers who could openly criticize central aspects of American society as well as its government. This was instrumental in helping to shape the national narrative and improve the lives of millions of Americans (p.3). However, this is very different in China where such people have either been jailed and in the worst scenario, eradicated for their philosophies. Furthermore, their visions have been obliterated, and the country's histories have been kept superficial and egocentric (Volodzko, 2016).

Volodzko (2016) also claims that for rapidly aging societies, China can be a fountain of youth, just like Mexico is for the United States. However, criminal and improper behaviour abroad need to be monitored and dealt with appropriately. Yet it is not only

the Chinese outbound tourism that is the culprit in this case. The socialization of the Chinese population in general also has a significant role to play.

In sum, this section discussed the Chinese millennial students and the effect of their presence in the classroom, on campus and at places of attraction, such as Zaanse Schans, Kinderdijk and Giethoorn. It also examined their influence on the immediate surroundings. The ensuing segment postulates an elucidation of the implications of Chinese millennial students in the Netherlands.

5.7 The Relevance of Chinese Millennial Students for the Netherlands.

In the findings' section of this multidimensional inquiry into Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe, a focus is placed on the Chinese millennial student in the Netherlands. The researcher aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the students' interests and behaviour while in the Netherlands. The previous section examined the Chinese millennial students and their surroundings, while this segment discusses the implications of Chinese millennials' manifestations in the Netherlands. It inspects four distinctive areas. First of all; what is the significance of these students' presence in the Netherlands on their immediate surroundings? Secondly, what does it mean for the Dutch tourism industry. Thirdly, how does it influence the Dutch Higher Education in particular and finally, how does their studying in the Netherlands impact both their individual development and their direct environments on their return to China? The next sections examine the importance of the Chinese millennial students' presence on the Dutch population.

5.7.1 The Significance of the Chinese Millennial Students' Presence on the Dutch Population.

The recent phenomenon of the yearly arrival of thousands of Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands, has a significant impact on the Dutch population. As illustrated in section 5.2 of this chapter, the Netherlands is a major trading nation, which

means that it depends largely on international trade. Seeing that China is a very important trading partner, not only for the Netherlands, but also for the entire European Community, many international students find their way to this country to conduct a study, due to the fact that this nation has some of the top universities in the world. However, on completion of their studies they return to their respective countries – taking their newly acquired knowledge with them. In order to retain, the students, especially Chinese students are encouraged to stay on and support the Dutch economy. This is also good for the Dutch population, as it incites job creation for the local populace, while helping to build and sustain constructive relationship with China. The Dutch education board does this either by providing internship positions for graduates or helping them to find jobs in the Netherlands. One student stressed that she welcomes the opportunity to stay on after her studies in order to find a job or start her own business in the Netherlands.

'After I graduate I will find a job. My school can help me to get that knowledge. And maybe I open a spa and have more Chinese supermarket. So not Dutch Chinese but real Chinese food.' (CMS - NHTV)

So, on acquiring the appropriate education, Chinese students are encouraged to stay on and shape their individual career. Furthermore, the Chinese millennial students have an impact on the Dutch tourism industry.

5.7.2 The Consequences of Chinese Millennial Students to the Dutch Tourism Industry.

The influences of the Chinese millennial students on the Dutch tourism industry is often underestimated. When the students are in the Netherlands, they are very much interested in visiting smaller cities and rural areas; such as local museums, markets, beaches, festivals and take part in excursions to local attractions and events. As part of the *adventurous influencers'* cohort, they are very active on social media, and so they use this medium to post pictures and videos of these local events. They like unique experiences, which are often found off-the-beaten track. This is very important for the

Dutch tourism industry, seeing that this could serve as a useful marketing instrument. Consequently, other Chinese millennial students are induced to visit the Netherlands. Meanwhile, when visiting friends and relatives are in the Netherlands, the host-students function as a guide to them: by showing them around their place of residence and taking them to events and activities that they themselves consider interesting to see. And, most importantly, most Chinese students who study in the Netherlands are affluent, and they spend money purchasing goods and services. They go to shopping outlets both within the Netherlands and in other parts in Europe. These shopping outlets provide complimentary bus-service to their establishment for the Chinese students. As one millennial stated:

'...there is a bus there and all the Chinese students go inside the bus and go one day to the shopping centre, the outlet and buy things and come back for free...'
(CM -WC)

So, this is very important for the tourism industry, as shopping is seen as a major event for Chinese students. The next section scrutinizes their influence on the Dutch higher education system, and highlights how this system is altering its practices to accommodate the Chinese millennial student.

5.7.3 The Influence of The Chinese Millennial Students on The Dutch Higher Education System

There are considerable differences between the Dutch and the Chinese tertiary education and this section highlights three of the most important ones. It might not be surprising that the educational styles are somewhat different in that students are expected to actively take part in class activities such as debates and discussions. In these class activities, they are required to voice their individual opinions. This is in contrast to their home country, where the professors speak and everyone listens, and only speaks when this has been requested. At university in the Netherlands, all students are encouraged to play an active role in discussions and debates and to communicate actively with the professors. Such a system is rather new and confronting to the Chinese

student, who is not accustomed to this and therefore is overwhelmed by a feeling of uneasiness and discomfort. According to a student of the University of Amsterdam:

'Here we are expected to participate in class more actively than we are used to in our home country.' (CM - UvA).

However, once the student gets accustomed to this method of knowledge acquisition, (s)he finds the experience constructive and rewarding. This is an experience they apply in their career once they leave university.

Furthermore, all students are required to do a great deal of studying, both before and after classes: so, there is a fundamental need to prepare for each lecture by doing preliminary work in advance of each lecture. This is done in order to have in-depth knowledge of the theme to be discussed in the actual lecture. Not only does this assist in stimulating one's study-ability, it also paves the way to a better understanding of the academic work. Simultaneously, it helps students to read and write their own research paper. Hence, students are given the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the various research methodologies available.

Moreover, the semester and examination systems are quite different in that in the Netherlands, there are five or sometimes even six exam periods during the academic year. Exams transpire at the end of each period. Conversely, in China one academic year is divided into two semesters and exams are positioned at the end of each semester. So, in the latter, it is only necessary to study twice a year, whereas in the Netherlands, the student is obliged to study throughout the year, and cannot leave all the work till the very last moment before exams. According to one Chinese millennial student:

'...this kind of pressure does push us to work hard and be successful in our studies at the UvA and in our case, the International Business Law program.' (CM – UvA))

The Dutch Higher Education Board would like to encourage more Chinese students to undertake a study in the Netherlands, because this provides both social and economic

benefits to the individual student and to the entire country. Although the fees that the student pays seem considerably low compared to countries like the US and Canada, the Chinese student is obliged to pay more than the European student.

While studying in the Netherlands, these students are provided with extra accommodations, specifically to cater to their individual needs. They purchase goods and services, further helping to build partnerships and cross-cultural exchanges between Dutch and Chinese universities. It is also possible to learn Mandarin in most Dutch universities. Many events and activities are held, particularly in major cities, and are specifically geared towards the Chinese. The Leiden Asian Centre, for example, is one such institution which was founded based on a collaborative effort between the Netherlands and China. Furthermore, At the other Dutch universities, English courses are introduced which a focus on Chinese outbound tourism. Such courses provide in-depth information about this phenomenon, and highlight the effects of this on both the Dutch society and on Higher Education. After looking at the influence of the Chinese millennial students on the Dutch Higher Education System, the next section examines the impact of studying in the Netherlands on the Chinese millennial student.

One interesting aspect of studying in the Netherlands comes from a former Chinese millennial student, who describes the cross-cultural differences between the Dutch and the Chinese as experienced during her studies in Amsterdam:

'When I first came here, I had problems understanding both the party culture and of course the language. This made things difficult. However, my flat-mates continued to encourage me to come to the kitchen more often and to talk to them. After half a year, they said my English was becoming much better than before. We started to participate in more parties which was a way to get to know different people and different ways of thinking.' (CM blogger, 2015)

According to this blogger (2015), 'partying' in the West is rather similar to 'having dinners' in the Chinese culture. One difference she admits is that whereas *they* dine with friends in a restaurant, in the West the meeting takes place in a bar or someplace similar and its mostly for drinking and socializing. Another difference is that Western culture is

seen as 'open', compared to the Chinese, who are obviously introverted and reserved in expressing their opinions directly. Nevertheless, having lived in Amsterdam:

'What we have learned from the culture is that we should think and communicate more openly and actively...' Chinese blogger (2015).

This blogger (2015), therefore, contends that the most important lesson learnt, is that one must not be too shy to express one's self. That said, the presence of Chinese students in the Netherlands on their own personal development as well as on their immediate surroundings should not be underestimated.

5.7.4 The Impact of Chinese Millennial Students' Studying in the Netherlands on Their Personal Development and Their Direct Environs on Their Return Home.

The decision of a Chinese millennial student to study in the Netherlands is not an easy one, especially for students who are leaving their country for the first time. The Chinese millennial student is normally from the One-Child Policy, that was instigated (in 1979) by the Chinese government to curtail the Chinese population. The effect of this decision is being felt in contemporary China, and as the country evolves, these single children are becoming of age. Their interests and behaviours when they go abroad is defined by this policy and they are faced with numerous challenges, one of which is growing up without a sibling. The pre-millennials, many of which grew up either under or right after the Cultural Revolution, have placed a heavy load on the shoulders of this single-child, and she or he faces the burden of taking care of his/her parents as the latter grow old.

Furthermore, in China, youngsters are generally placed under institutional systems to learn, reproduce, and exercise the philosophies that they are taught during their young life. From the restraint imposed upon them by the family, to the textbooks of a school, they are fashioned into beliefs that prepare them not only for family life and life at school but also for later in a value-free society. The life of the single-child is being planned by her/his family even after the marital vows have been articulated. One interviewee explained that it sometimes seems as if the single child has to make up for

the high expectations of her / his parents. All this has significant consequences for the single child, who has been sent off to study in Europe. Seeing that a great deal has been invested in the education and the future of this child, there is considerable pressure on the child to meet all these expectations. However, this is only the case with Chinese millennials from urban areas, as millennials from rural areas and minorities, were permitted to have more than one child. Hence, in these cases, the situation is somewhat different.

Therefore, almost all the participants who were interviewed admitted that they planned to return to China to take care of their aging parents, who had invested heavily in their education in Europe. According to one student:

'Our parents don't have their own life, they just put everything into our life.' (CM - SU)

This weighs heavily on their conscience and so, the Chinese millennial student seems to want to live their lives for their parents. Consequently, these students are hesitant when considering their future careers, whether in the Netherlands or in China. As voiced by one student:

'Sometimes you can feel the love, the complete love, but sometimes they put their dreams on us and that can make me feel tired and I feel that I cannot really live for my own; I have to live for my family. And this is neither good nor bad.' (CM - SU)

The student has a feeling of guilt during their time in the Netherlands, and they are of the opinion that their parents are constantly "intruding" in their lives. They feel as if they do not have a life of their own, as their parents place a heavy demand on the life of the single-child. Furthermore, the parents want to arrange the future of the student, and they believe the student should marry and pro-create on completion of her or his study.

'When Chinese people get older and older then they want you to find a partner. But for me that's my own business, I can't find a friend it's not a problem. But for most Chinese people they worry if you can't find a partner because they say they are getting old and there is no partner.' (CM - SU)

Thus, the parents are continuously trying to manage the life of their single child and because of this, sometimes conflicts emerge, especially when the student sees the lives of their fellow Dutch classmate, who is in a totally different position. The Dutch, for example, mostly have siblings with whom they can share issues regarding “parental interference”. Moreover, they are very individualistic and like to do as they please, without interferences from their parents. This does not help the Chinese millennial student, who is unsure of what to make of such behaviour, especially when they return home.

Another complication lies in the fact that it is difficult to find and retain a proper job when they return to China. Seeking for a job is a major challenge for Chinese millennials and though there are no current release available on the youth unemployment figures in China, there are reasons to believe these are high. That said, graduating from certain prestigious universities abroad might, however, increase one’s chance of securing a position in international companies. Although, having been away from their social sphere for some time could make it difficult to adjust to the Chinese society they had left, they had maintained some kind of contact with their friends and family. Nevertheless, they have ‘changed’ and consequently experience a great deal of anxiety. As one respondent stated:

‘...And then you earn your degree and then you go back. But then what? So, you’ve been out of the loop for two years, right? That time could have been used much better to efficiently and effectively maintain contacts and sound up potential employers.’ (PSL).

Studying in Europe and adjusting to the Western lifestyle is a major challenge for most Chinese millennial students. Yet after considerable sacrifice made in adjusting to the Dutch way of life, they become accustomed to this novel lifestyle. Students’ travels around the Continent and their visits to famous places in Europe in particular, serves to boost the social circles of the parents as well as their own. Accordingly, this puts pressure on the student not only to perform, but also to see as much of Europe as possible. One

student stressed that she travels because, then she can send pictures of her travels to her parents. Her parents would, in turn, use these pictures to boost their own social networks. According to her,

'... If I see the famous spots, then my parents also see it: they sponsor me. I travel for them so anything I see they also see.' (CMS-SU)

In addition to this, the education system is quite different compared to back in China. First of all, the student is encouraged to make her / his own decision regarding her / his study. Most of them are empowered by this freedom of choice and want to maintain this newly acquired autonomy on their return to China. One student describes her life in Amsterdam as follows:

'Life in Amsterdam is different and great. I was curious about almost everything when I first came to this international city, so I started to explore it straight away. There is an old saying in China, which is 'to travel a thousand miles beats reading a thousand books'. It's true; I've learned more about the Netherlands and the whole EU by experiencing local life, getting to know different people and exchanging ideas with them by keeping an open mind. Meanwhile my life skills have developed to a new stage because I have to deal with everything on my own in daily life.' (CM blogger, 2015).

Furthermore, she stressed that as food is regarded as a primary necessity, her cooking skills, which initially were practically nihil, were significantly improved and she now can effortlessly cook several kinds of food all by herself within the shortest space of time. Not only has her cooking skills improved, she contends that she has learnt most from the difficult experiences gained, and these have helped to shape her to achieve personal growth and independence, during her life and study in Amsterdam.

Secondly, the Dutch lifestyle is very different compared to the Chinese, especially when it comes to selecting a partner. Whereas the Dutch may choose a partner of the same-sex, this is not possible for a Chinese. Homosexuality is a taboo in China and may not be expressed on university campuses or in public. Some parents even shun their child if they learn that she/he is paring with a person of the same sex. There are, consequently,

youngsters who fake relationships so as not to be 'disowned' or 'disinherited' by their parents. In the Netherlands, this is not the case, and everyone is allowed to express his or her sexual preference. The Chinese student, therefore, is very contented with this freedom of choice of partner. Furthermore, they are also free to give their own opinions, on even controversial matters. Although most Chinese shy away from controversial issues, they appreciate the opportunity to talk openly about such sensitive matters. On their return to China, this undoubtedly has an impact on them and their surroundings.

A third difference is the behaviour in the classroom. Chinese millennial students are more respectful of their teachers and so if the student wants to ask a question, she / he raises a hand, and the teacher is addressed by her full name, whereas in the Netherlands, the Dutch students speak to their teachers by their first names. It is not unusual for a teacher to be interrupted and questioned during a lecture, should an issue require clarity. This is, however, considered disrespectful in China.

'In China, if I want to ask a teacher a question, I should raise my hand. And the teacher let you speak. But in the Netherlands, this is different: you can just speak. In the Netherlands, students can say what they want all the time. We are more respectful of the teachers.' (CMS -SU)

While this is questioned by the Chinese millennial student, it does reflect a difference in the cross-cultural relationship of the students' behaviour, although this is not necessarily the case with all Chinese students. Those from Shanghai are considered rather similar to students in the West. Shanghai, for instance, is international and so students tend to exhibit a 'Western behaviour'.

'Shanghai is more like a city in the West. So, they are influenced by the Western world. The culture is influenced by the western world. They are more international.' (CMS - SU)

Thus, although cities such as Shanghai tend to exhibit Western features, basically Chinese students generally behave differently in the classroom when compared to students in the Netherlands.

When comparing universities in the Netherlands and the United States, it is interesting to see there are both similarities and differences between Chinese millennial students who studied in the U.S and those who studied in the Netherlands. The following paragraphs present an analysis of the findings after examining an article in the online newspaper, *SupChina*. Here, it was curious to note, that a growing number of overseas Chinese students are opting to return to China upon graduation. According to the online newspaper, “as China’s latest cohort of international students prepare to commence classes at universities abroad this September, *SupChina* takes a look on the other side – the growing numbers of international graduates returning home to navigate new lives in China. In this article, Simone McCarthy, a graduate of Columbia School of Journalism and Chinese Language and Culture, interviewed graduates seeking to contribute their overseas education and some of the values they learned abroad to their home-country, China.

On starting his Master’s degree, one Chinese student [LX] had his future job at the back of his mind. He watched the market, visited job fairs, and dreamt of settling in a country where, according to him, people are “living the best life on this planet.” Meanwhile, graduate student [MR], imagined what her life would be like if she had accepted one of the human resources and marketing jobs offered by large American companies: with such a comfortable salary, these positions came with the possibility of buying a home in a few years’ time and gaining a world of experience in the business world. Finally, [BW] considered her friends who had previously graduated, some of whom had worked in America for several years on extended student visas, but were compelled to return to China, with no luck in obtaining work visas. “Why not just come directly back, if I’ll have to come back in two years anyway?” she reasoned.

The three above-mentioned graduate students are part of a mounting number of Chinese who pursue higher education abroad and then return to their home country to

live and work. They have had to get re-acquainted with an environment of gigantic cultural differences from the American college campuses where they had studied. These issues are becoming increasingly common as more and more internationally educated Chinese students are returning to their home country. Overseas-educated graduates encompass a fortunate cohort in modern-day Chinese society. “More and more people are having this idea to explore the world, they are not thinking, ‘I just want to go to America and never come back’”. “That’s not the mentality anymore,” says SC, who works with Chinese schoolers preparing for college in the U.S. – a top destination for China’s international students. “They want to open another door to see a bigger world and get an educational advantage.” She emphasises.

This home-ward path is often paved with economic and political prospects: China’s development, the American job market, work visa protocols, just to name a few. However, theirs are also individual journeys that require navigating the immense cultural divisions between U.S. college campuses and China, while integrating the two when they return home. Three recent graduates shared their experiences with *SupChina* on China about returning home:

‘... If I come back to China, I know if something happens to my dad’s business, if I can’t find any job, I cannot even feed myself,’ she says. “But I also cannot see how far I will go. Maybe I will have more opportunities; maybe I will have a better future. It’s a risk, but it’s worth taking.’ (the first college graduate, 2017)

This graduate argued that the recent developments in contemporary Kunming, the capital of China’s southwestern Yunnan Province, has brought about a major transformation in the streets: “Kunming is always surprising me,” she claims, and this progress heralds in numerous opportunities and better standards of living for all.

On a recent visit home, the second college graduate had noticed the major improvements and adaptations to new technologies in many areas in contemporary China. She had found herself very excited about China, and less interested in staking her

future on obtaining the coveted work visa in the U.S. Upon graduation at a U.S. university, she was given the choice between a job offer as an analyst in the U.S. and one similar position in Shanghai. However, she decided to return home and to avoid the future challenge of the visa process. In fact, she did not find this a difficult decision as she reasoned:

'I had this concept when I first went to the U.S. that I should have one to two years of working experience before I come back,' she remarked. "But actually, now I feel that in China, some of the job opportunities are very great.' (second college graduate, 2017).

An international education can be of added value when seeking employment, but it comes at a high premium, according to McCarthy, contributor to *SupChina*.

'I would not be able to afford my American education on this salary if I didn't have help from my father.' (third college graduate, 2017).

After completion of his undergraduate degree at Shanghai's Tongji University, where the tuition fee is relatively inexpensive (US\$740 per annum) compared to the United States, he pursued a graduate degree at Purdue University (US). There his entire study costs were approximately \$90,000 in total. Without the support of the entire family, it is impossible to undertake such an expensive foreign programme, especially since in the U.S. tuitions have to be paid in advance. It is also not possible to take out federal loans or apply for grants. Besides, not having to pay back student debts, the third college graduate argued that the lower salary and lower standard of living in China is a trade-off that he gladly accepts. With the current political climate in the U.S., he is happy to return home. After suffering from numerous disappointing job interviews in which he was asked: "You are Chinese, right?" he decided to take the homeward path. Additionally, the rising global economic importance and international investment from multinational companies, this implies "more and more chances are piling up here" he added.

Another important aspect of Chinese millennial students/tourists on the Dutch population is that, tourism-related businesses as well as other businesses

(supermarkets, department stores) are adapting their offers to meet the needs of the Chinese millennial tourists. There are numerous Chinese supermarkets dotted all over the Netherlands, where Chinese students in particular visit to buy authentic Chinese products from 'home', but some of these products are also now available in regular supermarkets all over the Netherlands. The Dutch population are also 'trying out' these products, and it is not unusual to see Dutch citizens in these facilities. At attractions where Chinese tourists frequent, important signage is provided in Chinese: though some participants complained that there are not enough signs in Mandarin in public areas.

In sum, this expansive chapter presented the findings derived from a thematic analysis of the data generated for this study. In Table 5.1, the strengths and weaknesses of the analysis was revealed by theme, and the establishment of the seven themes is illustrated. The purpose of this study was to investigate what the key interests of Chinese millennial students as tourists to the Netherlands are, and investigate what the implications of these visits are for both the Dutch tourism industry and the Dutch higher education board. The resultant section represents the key findings of the analysis:

- The key interests of Chinese millennial tourists are that they are interested in the Dutch culture. They usually visit the main cities when they are in the Netherlands, especially the vast array of museums, most of which are centred in the main cities. They also are intrigued by the *Redlight District* in Amsterdam, which is the Sex District of the city. Furthermore, they are interested in the flower gardens of the *Keukenhof* and the tulip fields near Lisse, where they are said to go 'tiptoeing' through the Dutch tulips (China Daily, 2018). The Chinese millennials are also amazed at the unique architecture, the market(s) and their colourful artworks. Though they mostly want to see the quintessential Dutch attractions and events, some of them also visit the waterworks (Deltaworks), Giethoorn (dubbed "The Venice of the North" is a quaint little village East of Amsterdam) and De Zaanse Schans (another traditional Dutch village).

- The Chinese millennial students, on the other hand, tend to stay closer to the universities where they study. When they venture abroad, they mostly call on other Chinese millennial students who study at universities throughout Europe. They often visit rural areas and seek interactions with the local populations. Chinese millennial students like to try out local cuisine, but in the end, they tend to stick to Chinese food, which they cook together with their (Chinese) friends. These students rely heavily on social media to stay in touch with their family and friends and share pictures and stories about their experiences. In the holidays, they travel through Europe, as their student visas allow them the opportunity to travel throughout the continent. They are very interested in travelling and hence, seize every possible opportunity to travel. They mostly go off-the-beaten path, seeking for new experiences and discovering /rediscovering the culture of Europe.
- The fact that the Chinese millennials study in the Netherlands has implications for the Dutch higher education because the amount of money that each Chinese student pays for tuition is higher than that of a regular Dutch student. This is important, as it helps to maintain the Dutch education system and at the same time assists in improving the academic performance of the Chinese students themselves. These students are also taught by Dutch professors, who have a very different approach than what they are accustomed to in China. Visiting friends and relatives of the Chinese millennial students are vital for the Dutch society as well as the Dutch higher education board. These students could be ambassadors even when studying in the Netherlands, as almost all of them are active on social media. The financial contributions that they make to the Dutch education board help to maintain infrastructural developments in the country. Likewise, they could be ambassadors for Dutch universities if they decide to return home.
- Students who elect to remain in the Netherlands after their study are important for the Dutch society as they could be of benefit to the economy (entrepreneurs, engineers, technology). Most Chinese students return home upon graduation, and some of them cannot find a proper job, as they have been “out of the loop” for a while. Seeing that there seems to be a shortage of proper jobs in China, these students are encouraged to stay on and do an internship in the Netherlands or work with Chinese-related firms in the Netherlands. Hence, for

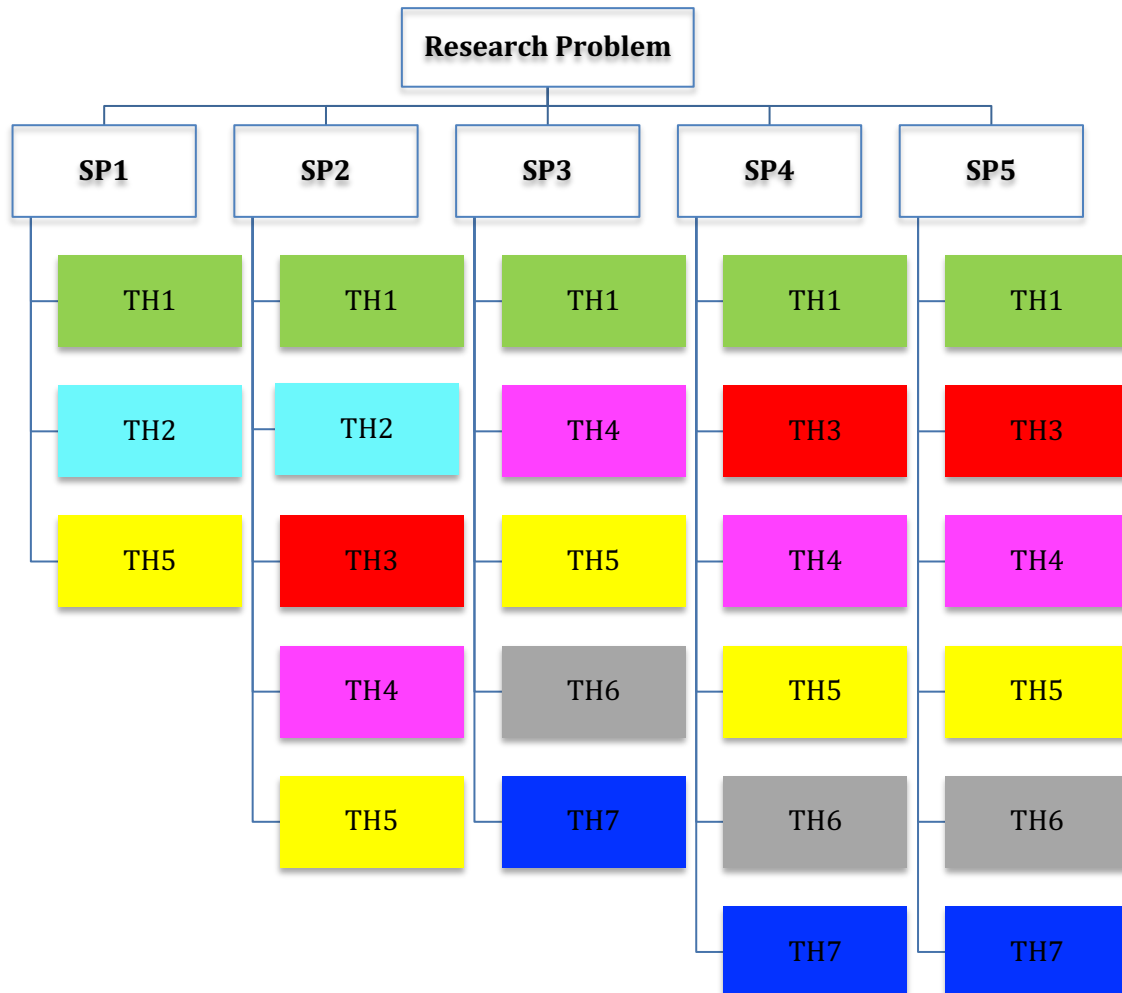
the Dutch tourism board, it fuels growth in international tourism while facilitating in transportation and infrastructural advancements.

Additionally, the themes were apportioned in subheadings in order to organise the information within coherent paragraphs, and furnish the reader with a vivid guideline into the general research findings. Thus, in Table 5.1 an evaluation of these findings derived from the thematic analysis applied is provided, by elaborating on their strengths and weaknesses. This is subsequently followed by Table 5.2, which illustrates the relations of the research problem and sub-problems to the findings of the study.

Table 5.1 Evaluation of the Thematic Analysis of the Data Generated for this study: Explaining the Seven Main Themes, the Strengths and Weaknesses of this inquiry.

Themes of the study	Strengths	Weaknesses
1. The Chinese millennial tourists are shaped by their cultural values . These define their attitudes and behaviour when abroad.	Accessible;	Due to the volume of the data generated, difficulty interpreting vast amount of information
2. Their travel motivations and decisions are based on their culture and values .	Theoretically flexible;	Considerable time spent on preparing the data for analysis;
3. The Chinese millennial students elect to study in the Netherlands due to the low costs, the high rating of the Dutch universities; the feeling of safety that the country alludes; the significant amount of English-taught programme and the high level of English;	Organises and describes data in rich details;	A great deal of the data is not applicable, as at times it was not clear if the participants really understood the line of questioning.
4. The high ranking of the Dutch academic universities and the unique universities of applied sciences are reasons given for Chinese students' decisions for a study in the Netherlands;	The time spent in transcribing is valuable as the researcher gets very close to the data during this process;	
5. Chinese students' try to adapt to the Dutch way of life but they generally stay together in their autonomous 'world'. They do face numerous challenges dealing with the Dutch education system as well as their life in and around the Dutch campuses and their living environments.	This technique works to reflect reality; and unravel the surface of reality.	
6. The travel interests and behaviour of the Chinese millennial tourists are relatively similar to other international tourists . They usually travel in small groups or individually , visiting popular destinations as well as seeking unique experiences.		
7. There are significant implications of Chinese millennials for both the Dutch tourism industry and the Dutch higher education institutes. For the former, this could mean a considerable increase in the inflow of Chinese tourists who are encouraged by the narratives of students who studied in the Netherlands . They communicate positive stories to friends and family via social media platforms. In the latter case, Chinese students could become ambassadors for Dutch universities . There are also Chinese students who elect to work in the Netherlands after their studies. They could play a part in applying their knowledge at multinational companies located in China. They could also stay on and build a life / support in the Dutch economy .		

Table 5.2: An Illustration of the Research (Sub) Problems(s) and Their Relations to the Research Findings



Research problem: The purpose of this study is to examine the key interests of Chinese millennial students as tourists to the Netherlands, and to investigate the implications of their particular visitation for both the Dutch tourism industry and the Dutch higher education board.

- SP1:** Why do Chinese millennial tourists choose to visit the Netherlands?
- SP2:** Why do Chinese millennial students decide to study in the Netherlands?
- SP3:** What activities do Chinese millennial students participate in during their study-time in the Netherlands?
- SP4:** What are the consequences of Chinese millennial students' stay in the Netherlands on their own exhibited interests and behaviours?
- SP5:** What are the consequences of Chinese millennial students on the Netherlands and on the Dutch population and in general.

The **seven main themes**, which were identified during the analysis is presented in the colour codes applied in Table 5.2 in the previous page:

1. **TH.1** the cultural values of Chinese millennial travellers;
2. **TH.2** their motivations for visiting the Netherlands;
3. **TH.3** The Netherlands and its higher educational institutes;
4. **TH.4** Chinese millennial students in the Netherlands;
5. **TH.5** the travel interests and behaviours of Chinese millennial students in/through Europe;
6. **TH.6** the Chinese millennial students and their surroundings;
7. **TH.7** the implications of Chinese millennial students on their exhibited behaviour and on the Netherlands.

The next section presents a summary of Chapter Five which is followed by a conclusion to the chapter.

5.8 Summary of Chapter Five

In brief, Chapter Five presented the findings from the analysis of the data generated in the study. The aim of this study was to examine what the key interests of Chinese

millennial students as tourists to the Netherlands and simultaneously. Likewise, an investigation into what the implications of studying in the Netherlands are for both the Dutch tourism industry and the Dutch Higher Education Board was conducted.

Concurrently, the researcher wanted to learn what the implications of these visits were for the Dutch Tourism Board, as well as for the Dutch Higher Education Board. By applying thematic analysis, seven central themes were identified. These are:

1. The Culture(s) and Values of Chinese millennial travellers;
2. Motivations for visit(s) to the Netherlands;
3. The Netherlands and its higher educational institutes;
4. Chinese millennial students in the Netherlands;
5. Travel interests and behaviours of Chinese millennial students in/through Europe;
6. The Chinese millennial students and their surroundings;
7. Implications of Chinese millennial students in the Netherlands, for the Dutch tourism industry as well as the Dutch higher education board.

Moreover, subheadings were used to further synthesize the themes and structure the information into coherent paragraphs, furnishing the reader with clear guidelines into the research findings. The respondents' names were omitted for the sake of anonymity, as outlined in the ethics section (*see* section 3.7). The main findings are proposed in bullet fashion:

- The activities and interests that Chinese millennial travelers and students participate in while in the Netherlands are influenced by their **culture** and **values**. This is demonstrated in their visits to museums, rural areas, interests in (luxury)shopping, communication style and their travel lust;
- Their motivation for visiting the Netherlands and Europe are based on their cultural values and interests. They are attracted to the country because of its culture and often go to museums and events that highlight the Dutch culture. Chinese millennial students study in the country because of the high level of the

English language spoken and the famous Dutch universities, where most courses are taught in English.

- All Dutch research universities are among the top 200 best-performing universities in the world (THE, 2016). The costs of studying in the Netherlands for Chinese students is relatively cheap compared to other countries in the West. The environment is also seen as clean (lots of blue-skies), its peoples friendly and most importantly, it is considered relatively safe;
- Though the Chinese millennials students face linguistic and cultural challenges while studying in the Netherlands, there are many Chinese communities which provide opportunities for them to meet fellow students and travel around Europe together. They mostly stick to these communities, especially for socializing. Some do interact with the Dutch society and have friends with whom they share experiences;
- For the Dutch higher education, Chinese millennial tourists/students provide economic benefits and stimulate the country's tourism growth. The Chinese millennial students generate job opportunities and help to cement existing Sino-Dutch relations as well as build new ones, in the form of establishing collaboration and stimulating technological advancement;
- Some Chinese millennial students function as ambassadors for the Dutch higher educational board as they promote the Netherlands as “the place to study” when they return to China.

Having said that, the next section features the conclusions that were drawn from these main points of the chapter.

5.9 Conclusion to Chapter Five

In conclusion, the findings section of the data analysed provided the outcome of the data amassed. In seeking to establish a propaedeutic research agenda, seven themes were identified and their relations to the research problem and sub-problems were illustrated in Table 5.2. Based on this, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The culture and values of the Chinese millennial travellers, were evident in all five sub-problems and thus it could be concluded that:

- ...Chinese (millennial) tourists choose to visit the Netherlands particularly because of the cultural experience that the country offers;
- ...one of the key interests of Chinese tourists to the Netherlands is visiting museums, especially where the Dutch Masters are exhibited;
- ...they enjoy shopping especially for luxury items: diamonds, jewelries, souvenirs, among others;

The Chinese student chooses to study in the Netherlands because:

- ...of the international atmosphere, the easy access to other European destinations, and the high-ranking that many Dutch universities have worldwide;
- ...of the high level of the English language among the Dutch is another reason that they choose the Netherlands for their place of study;
- ...the Netherlands has fairly inexpensive tuition-fees;
- ...the air is relatively clean (blue sky) and the environment is safe;
- ...the Dutch are said to be friendly, tolerant and open to other nationalities.

The consequences of their stay in the Netherlands have effects on the community in which they live:

- ... they do appear to get along with the local community; the local are rather helpful and mostly greet them in Chinese (sometimes);
- ...they find jobs at stores that cater for Chinese tourists as they speak the Chinese languages; work as translators for multinational companies;
- ...(food) stores carry Chinese products to accommodate the Chinese millennials;

- ...they are mostly comfortable with their compatriots and hardly integrate into the Dutch/international communities (even on campus).

Many Chinese millennial students exhibit a different behaviour on their return to China:

- ...they become more independent being away from their parents, as they have had to find their way through the Dutch society, and also in the transformative phase they went through during their studies;
- ...their ability to re-adjust to life in China, as being away they have developed skills which are alien to their peers back home - they act differently;
- ...they become more “Chinese” and assume a more nationalistic behaviour than before they left for the Netherlands.

Having provided a conclusion to the findings of this inquiry, chapter Six presents the multi-dimensions of Chinese outbound tourism related to this investigation.

Chapter Six: Discussions of the Multi-Dimensions of Chinese Outbound Tourism.

6.0 Introduction to Chapter Six

In the previous chapter, the major findings of this inquiry into Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe were discussed in details. An analysis was done manually as well as via NVivo, a software program, which categorised the data into seven main themes. These themes were further discussed and interpreted. As a reminder of the emergent nature of this inquiry, the researcher needs to be sensitive to the complexity and flexibility of international matters. Hence there might be adaptations or changes during the investigation. That is why she intends to set up a propaedeutic research agenda due to the fact that finitude cannot be guaranteed on previously stated issues. The purpose of this study was to examine what the key interests of Chinese millennial students as tourists to the Netherlands are; and investigate what the implications of these visits/stays are for both the Dutch tourism industry and the Dutch higher education board.

Chapter Six, now examines the multidimensions of Chinese outbound tourism. Seven relevant dimensions which emerged from this investigation will be explicated. These are: competition, demographic, economic, technological, cultural, natural and political. Then a summary is given of the relations of these dimensions to the research problem. This is followed by the implications for management and/or operational action. Subsequently, the implications for further research, the specific and audience recommendations for management/operational action, and the specific and audience recommendations for further research in the field of tourism are provided. Finally, conclusions are presented of the multidimensionality of Chinese outbound tourism, followed by future research emanating from the current study. The first to be addressed is the Competitive Dimension.

6.1 The Competitive Dimension

A competitive dimension denotes that there are two or more parties acting autonomously to secure the business of a third party by offering the most favourable terms and conditions (Tse, 2009 p. 265). This dimension can be applied in the stimulation of innovative designs and services within the tourism industry, while contributing to efficiency and productivity. Although competition is one of the pillars of a capitalist system it is very prevalent in modern-day China, specifically within Chinese outbound tourism. The various countries who have signed agreements with China face a wide range of competition, as they all struggle to satisfy the desires and demands of the Chinese visitor. In order to do this effectively, destination management companies and tourism providers need to revise their products and services and design novel strategies to compete for a share of the lucrative Chinese tourism market.

6.1.1 Presence in China

One way of doing this is by ensuring that they have a presence in China. Communication flow is crucial in this plan, and so for a free flow of information, most destinations have established offices in China. These offices provide information about their individual destination. Consequently, most of these offices are situated in Beijing, in order to be within close proximity of the central government body as well as the CNTA/MTC. Furthermore, they provide information regarding promotional activities with their home offices, communicate with the local travel industry, participate in consumer and trade shows, and collaborate with CNTA/MTC on government-related matters (Tse, 2009 p.266). A key role is also played by the way destinations are marketed, and in order to do this effectively, it is important to focus on both the rational and emotional factors governing the tourists' decision-making process.

6.1.2 Destination Marketing

Unquestionably, China is one of the world's most vital tourism source markets. What is more, is that there is still massive potential for Chinese tourism seeing that less than ten percent of Chinese citizens have passports. However, Chinese travelers made a whopping 130 million trips in 2017 (ChinaTravel.com, 2018). Even world's most visited destinations have growth possibilities for drawing Chinese travelers, and both local and national governments worldwide are making extensive investments in marketing to China, predominantly in collaboration with destination marketing organisations (DMOs).

Destination marketing, which is the practice of promoting a city, region or country in order to attract more visitors, is an important vehicle in attracting Chinese outbound tourism to Europe. However, the imbalance of regional development in China is causing complications and has implications for its destination marketing and management (Xiao 2013). These days, instead of traditional media such as print, public transportation, and television, destination marketing is increasingly being replaced by social media. TV shows, for example have become a new form of destination marketing (*Beyond Summits*, 2017). A movie watched by millions of Chinese, for instance, can have a long-lasting impact on the viewer. Furthermore, Baidu - a multi-media marketing company which manages cross-border marketing and destination branding, uses new forms of display to assist destination advertisers in raising their advertisements' visibility and click rate, by applying creative writing, graphics, and direct telephone-bookings (*Beyond Summits*, 2017). The reason for this is that travel decisions are not only made based on rational but also on emotional factors.

In addition to this, consumers are now engaging with travel information services during their trip and so destination marketing cannot afford to only promote a brand, it must also add faster and more convenient services to help travellers make informed decisions

before, during and *after* the trip, and propose solutions that meet the wishes of the consumer. Only in this way can they attract particularly Chinese millennial tourists, according to *Beyond Summits* (2017).

Moreover, destination marketing in China is an enterprise of epic proportions. China possesses an astounding 1.25 billion cell-phone user-network and over 850 million mobile internet users, according to the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (2017), so the key to unlock this gargantuan market potential is via social-location-mobile. This is a mobile-centric way of exposing local entries in search engine results, which is generated by the GPS technology built in smartphones and other mobile devices (*Beyond Summits*, 2017). In addition to this, Chen (2015) describes how China's home-grown social media *WeChat* has changed the traditional media landscape. Based on the size of the population it is important to classify the various groups. Hence, the second dimension to be examined is the demographic dimension.

6.2 The Demographic Dimension

With a population of 1,384,688,986 inhabitants, China is the most populous country on the globe, according to Index Mundi (2017). The largest group: 25-54-year-olds, comprise of 48.51 percent of this huge population and include 341,466,438 males and 327, 661,460 females (Index Mundi, 2017). Although there are more male than female citizens in China, women seem to make up the majority of tourists to Europe. Likewise, most of the Chinese millennial students studying in the Netherlands are female, according to one interviewee in the current study.

In order to examine this issue, it is important to consider three demographic factors. Feng Wang of The Brookings Institution, a non-profit-public organisation located in Washington DC, underscores the incredible transformations and immense trepidations transpiring in contemporary China. While the country is expected to relinquish this title to India in a few years' time, China's demographic landscape has, in recent decades, been

meticulously re-designed by unparalleled alterations in the population. There are three chief demographics at work in China today: First of all, the country has approximately 160 million domestic migratory workers, who, fixed on improving their living standards, have delivered copious workforce for the nation's thriving economy. One result of this is massive urbanization, as these workers are forced to relocate to mega-cities mushrooming all over the nation. Secondly, more than 160 million Chinese are 60-year-olds or older and thirdly, more than 160 million Chinese families (mostly in urban areas) have only one child, a consequence of the country's three-decade-old strategy of restricting couples to one child each (Wang, 2016).

Grounded on these factors, things are changing. As a product of the Republic's low fertility rates since the early 1990s, China has started to experience an imminent and unrelenting regression in new entrants into its labour force as well as the number of new migrants (Wang, 2016). The age of incessant streams of young, cheap Chinese labour is over, while the size of the country's 60+ year-olds is rising sharply, leaving the one-child to bear the burden of taking care of them (p.3).

That said, Chinese outbound tourists are becoming more diverse and more sophisticated, as reported by Weinswig (2017) who writes for Fung Global Retail & Technology. Chinese tourists travel more often, and they visit several destinations per year, though most of these travels are within Asia; Chinese tourists from lower-tier cities have become the growth engine of outbound tourism, travelling as often as tier-one cities and Chinese tourists are extremely mobile-savvy and the smartphone is always with them to keep connected to the home-front, as well as to search for travel-related information, whether it is to use online resources to plan their trips or websites and blogs to disseminate their travel experiences (Weinswig, 2017). "Ninety-seven percent of Chinese millennial travellers report sharing their travel experience online, via

travel review sites, personal blogs and more”, according to Jason Dorsey of The Center for Generational Kinetics (Dorsey, 2016).

Another aspect of the Chinese tourism market that appears to be evolving is that group tours concentrated on shopping are being substituted by individual travels which concentrate on experiences. The *China Business Network* revealed that sixty percent of Chinese outbound tourism is currently individual trips. Equally surprising is that approximately 56 percent are female and half of them are between 35 and 50 years old (CTA, 2017).

6.2.1 Market Subdivision

Western Europe accounts for more than half of all arrivals from China to Europe and most of these visitors are from major urban centres of Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen. In fact, it is projected that by 2034, 65% of the Chinese population will live in large cities (Boeing, 2015). One-fifth of Chinese travellers make extensive use of digital technology throughout their travels (Croce, 2016). Due to the current economic boom exceeding that of other emerging countries, the Chinese middle-class has increased massively over the past decades. As described under 6.2, China’s population is ageing and families whose children are economically independent are expected to be one of the fastest growing segments for outbound travel (ETC, 2016). With an estimated age between 35-60, Chinese travellers to Europe are inclined to be older than the average outbound traveller, according to the Intercontinental Hotel Group (IHG, 2015). The Chinese outbound travel market is fragmented into a wide range of sub-segments and niches but given the scale of this market, even a niche segment can offer a relatively large volume of demand (UNWTO & ETC, 2015). Chinese travelling to Europe can be categorised into five tribes or groups as exhibited in Table 6.1 below:

Table 6.1 Tribes of Chinese Outbound Tourists

Tribe	Traditionalist	Wenya Youth	Experienced focused	Connoisseur	Hedonist
Estimated share of travellers*	70%	10%	10%	7%	3%
Why they travel	Prestige	Freedom, uniqueness	Togetherness, curiosity	Aesthetic, knowledge	Pleasure
Mode of travelling	Tour group	Back-packing	Backpacking, independent driving	Independent driving	City travel, shopping
Travel with	Tour group	Alone or with friends	Alone, with family or in 'in-depth travel' tour groups	With partner or family	With friends
Must have on a trip	Camera	Notebook, favourite book, music player, internet device	Guidebook, phrasebook, electronic dictionary	Camera with equipment, specialised guidebook, laptop	Their parents' credit-card.

* estimated to researchers' estimated share of travellers based on the netnographic analysis.

Source: Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs. Virtual Tourism Observatory <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/vto/>

Although above-mentioned analysis was presented more than two years ago, it still provides some evidence of the character of the market segmentation of Chinese outbound tourists to European destinations. However, there are some shifts to be noticed, particularly with the propagation of the social media, the Internet and mobile devices. For example, the use of smartphones and other mobile devices is not all-together represented here. Likewise, the use of social media as a way of posting blogs and information sharing and experiences during the travel are not reflected in this analysis. However, it does indicate that the largest section of the market still remains the traditionalists, who largely travel in groups. They also still represent a huge segment of the Chinese outbound tourism to Europe. Another striking point to note is that many of the current Chinese visitors to Europe are Chinese millennials without siblings: from the so-called One-Child Policy.

6.2.2 The One-Child Policy

The one-child policy has been discussed very often throughout this study, but it is also important to dwell in detail on this comprehensive scheme, which was devised to curtail the Chinese population. China's one-child Family Policy (OCFP) was founded in 1979 to limit the growth of the population. Due to this limitation, families, especially those in the major cities, were penalized, should they decide to have a second child. Because of this policy, an estimation growth of 300 million people was thwarted over the first two decades of implementation. Not surprising, there were more males than females, as Chinese traditionally place more value on boys than girls seeing that boys are considered more productive when it comes to manual labour in the field and it is boys rather than girls who carry on the family name (Tse, 2009). There is also evidence of sex discrimination in attempting to comply with the OCFP regulations, and so female fetuses were calculatedly aborted. Consequently, there are more than 23 million more boys between the ages of 0-19 than girls (p.273). Festini & Martino (2004) contend that such a cohort of superfluous men, who are socially and physically unfulfilled by the

impossibility of creating a family, might be disposed to socially unsettling behaviours including crime and violence.

Consequently, Festini & Martino (2004) claim that the degree of natural increase had dropped from 11.6 per thousand to 8 per thousand in 2001. However, the OCFP has advanced China's economic progression providing more opportunities for women in education, work and careers. The Chinese millennials, or "little emperors" as this cohort is often called, are most likely to receive the best from parents and grandparents, hence family travel is a common leisure activity in which all attention is spent doting on this single child. A trip to Europe is thus a normal occurrence for such a family, signifying the emerging influence of the economic value of the Chinese millennial tourists.

6.3 The Economic Dimension

China has indicated robust and stable economic advance since its implementation of the "open-door" policy in the late 1970s. In 2017, China's economy expanded at an annual rate of 6.9 per cent in the second quarter, exceeding the government's objective in a year of political transition as unexpected strength in the property market kept teeming. If the trend continues, 2017 would be the first year China's growth rate accelerated on the preceding year since 2010 (Financial Times, 2017). The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) argued that this 6.9 per cent growth figure indicated that China's economy had become "more stable, coordinated and sustainable". Whereas per capita is still relatively low in absolute terms, the increase has been impressive, offering the Chinese people high spending power in a nation with a comparatively low cost of living (Xinhua, 2016).

6.3.1 Large Potential Market

Although this does not imply that all Chinese people will have the resources to travel outside of China, it does somehow enable some regions to take trips to places like Europe. These economic factors are positively encouraging outbound tourism and the Chinese are using their increased spending power to include travels to far destinations

like Europe, in their transition from a saving to a consumption society. They are buying (luxury) goods and (unique) experiences, not only domestically but also internationally.

6.3.2 High Trade Surplus

At the commencement of the 21st century, with a plethora of fairly inexpensive land, and labour, China had a proportional advantage in labour-intensive products. It therefore needed high-tech commodities for its emerging economy and luxury products for its increasingly affluent consumer market. Approximately seventy per cent of China's exports which go to the US, Japan and the EU are labour-intensive, while eighty per cent of China's exports are capital-, technology- or knowledge-intensive (European Commission, 2018). Consequently, the nation has been able to uphold a significant trade surplus each year since 1995 and tripling in 2005 (Goodman, 2006). These days, however, among the EU's trading partners, China is the largest partner for EU imports, and the second largest partner for EU exports. Surprisingly, the Netherlands was the largest importer from China in 2017 and Germany the largest exporter to China, according to Eurostat.eu., (2018). Although the EU trade balance with China continues to be in deficit, climaxing at €180 billion in 2015, it dropped sharply to €176 billion in 2017. This was prompted by manufactured goods both in exports from the EU to China and imports from China to the EU, accounting for 85% of the total exports and 97% of the total imports (European Commission, 2018).

China now finds itself in a similar position to Japan in the 1980s, when Japan was under enormous pressure from its international trading partners to reduce the huge trade surplus, resulting from its strong exports of vehicles, machinery and electronic goods (p.277). In addition to appreciating its currency, Japan elected to stimulate outbound tourism, which had a similar effect to increasing imports. However, China, is seemingly more cautious and is committed to preserving the value of its currency in order to regulate inflation, and therefore the encouragement of outbound travel would appear to

be a logical and sensible solution to counter the trade-surplus problem. This could also assist in improving China's image abroad. Having said that, the most important dimension currently influencing Chinese outbound tourism seems to be technology.

6.4 The Technological Dimension

Technology has generated huge transformations within the generic tourism industry. According to the UNWTO (2017), the Chinese outbound tourism market is being transformed by the application and development of new technologies and conventional distribution channels with the advent of online travel agencies and e-commerce platforms. Playing an equally significant role is the growing market for mobile Internet, mobile applications and cashless mobile payment (p.3).

The Internet plays a fundamental role in the Chinese outbound travel experience. Particularly the Chinese millennials who are the forerunners of mobile applications and revolutionary payment methods. These millennials demand their products and services to be "smaller, faster and more flexible", which implies that these are more personalized, mobile, convenient and efficient. Therefore, the internet is an invaluable part of their outbound travel experience as they love to share their stories via their social media channels (for further information, see section 5.1).

6.4.1 Distribution of Travel Products By The Internet

There are numerous portals providing travel information and services in China but most of these are available online thanks to the online travel agencies (OTA) and e-commerce platforms. Every destination these days are distributing their travel products via their country's online website. For example, the Netherlands promotes its destination via: www.holland.com. As a consequence of the rapid dissemination of information combined with the skills of the techno-savvy Chinese millennials, many tourists can easily navigate their way to their destinations of choice. The availability of travel

information, and the convenience of making travel arrangements and transactions online, facilitate access to destinations and stimulate the outbound tourism market.

6.4.2 The Internet And The Free Independent Traveller (FIT)

The Chinese tourist is becoming more refined, especially the Free Independent Traveller (FIT). They increasingly demand varied and individualized services and experiences.

The Chinese millennial make up the bulk of the FIT market and their characteristics are somewhat different from their predecessors: They are fond of travelling and gaining authentic experiences, which they use to brag about to friends on social media. Whereas, pre-millennials prefer Chinese food when abroad, the FIT travellers like to try out local cuisine, especially when in Europe. FIT travellers love shopping and value freedom of self-expression, integral in fashioning their individual styles (UNWTO, 2017).

Furthermore, FIT travellers rely on Wi-Fi to circumnavigate diverse destinations. This is why portable Wi-Fi, portable power sources and selfie-sticks have made it to the top 10 of travellers' must-pack lists. Hence destinations that supply direct air-connections have become more attractive for this cohort. On the other hand, destinations wishing to attract these cohorts of tourists need to promote their destinations through different local media channels, and at the same time, take advantage of novel technologies by establishing an online presence in China with websites (in Chinese) and having an active presence on China's social media networks. The application of the technical dimension largely influences the cultural values of the Chinese millennial traveller.

6.5 The Cultural Dimension

As mentioned throughout the current study, the notion of travel is deeply rooted in the Chinese culture, which is largely inherent in the traditional values of Confucianism, Daoism or Buddhism, three central Chinese philosophies.

6.5.1 Traditional Values

Six cultural values have been identified by Mok & DeFranco (1999) as having an effect on Chinese travel behaviours (*see* section 1.1.9). These are namely; “respect for authority”, “inter-dependence”, “group orientation”, “face”, “harmony” and “external attribution”. These values are also founded in the three-core belief-systems in China: Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism (Tse, 2009). All six cultural values are intricately interwoven into the Chinese travellers’ behaviour and are reflected in their interests and activities when visiting Europe, particularly when they participate in group-travels (*see* discussion under section 5.1).

6.5.2 Contemporary Values

Hsu & Huang (2015) study the Chinese cultural values that exist in contemporary Chinese society, and their tourism implications in focus group discussions with residents in Beijing and Guangzhou. In their study, they identified forty values, which are categorized as, modern, instrumental and interpersonal. These values, they claim, are fundamentally unlike the traditional Chinese values stated in literature. That is why they propose an appropriate adaptation of the existing values system in China.

According to Hsu & Huang (2015), modern values acknowledge that relationships with travel behaviours include convenience, indulgence, leisure, freedom, self-interest, and ostentation, whereas traditional values associated with travel behaviours include the instrumental values of courtesy and morality, honesty, respect for history, and thrift. They further argued that contemporary values include: horizon broadening/novelty, knowledge and education, stability and security, whereas interpersonal values refer to conformity, family orientation and kinship (Hsu & Huang, 2015).

Traditional Chinese cultural values are apparently waning, especially among Chinese millennial tourists, as these travellers evidently do not travel in large groups. Values such as; “interdependence”, “group orientation”, “harmony”, are not often exhibited in

these travellers' behaviours, though this is somewhat different from the behaviour exhibited by Chinese millennial students to Europe, who are seen to prefer travelling in groups for budgetary as well as safety reasons (*see* discussion under 5.1.2). Conversely, respect for authority is part of Confucius's hierarchical relationships, and while this is generally demonstrated in group travel, Chinese millennials normally do not travel in groups, so this is not evident when they travel abroad. It is argued that such behaviours have originally served to control social behaviour in general. "Face", meanwhile, is associated with position, social status and talents; thus, one must be careful to protect the other's face, especially the face of someone 'superior'. Lastly, Chinese millennials are seen to value "harmony", although less stress is placed on this value in contemporary Chinese travel behaviour (Hsu & Huang, 2015).

6.5.3 Romanticism of Travel

Next to Shopping, the Chinese are said to enjoy sightseeing, especially when they are in Europe. The country-side and the rural landscape are favoured objects of their curiosity of the visited destination. This is venerated in Chinese literary works and it is even suggested by Peterssen (1995) that it is a Confucian tenet to pursue ultimate truth from the landscape (Tse, 2009). This travel behaviour preferred by Chinese tourists in general, is said to evoke creativity and provide inspiration; two fundamental pillars for relaxation and escapism from the hectic urban life (*see* 5.1.1 and 5.1.2). Poetry and other literary art-forms are said to be generated by the one's immersion in natural surroundings, especially those that are deserted and secluded. Especially Chinese millennial tourists are seeking out the countryside, and have therefore, romanticized the notion of travel, which explains their thirst for unique and authentic places off-the-beaten-track. They want to escape the "rat-race" of modern-day life in China. In so doing these travellers are seeking authenticity and are increasingly visiting rural areas in order to avoid congestions in the cities. They are also conscious about the environmental challenges that are facing the global population.

6.6 The Natural Dimension

Natural dimension, in this context concerns the environmental sustainability of tourism to and from China and natural disasters negatively influencing the country. The notion of 'climate change' is a well-discussed issue in the current tourism debate and countries worldwide are making considerable efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change on the environment (Peeters, 2017). Some of the causes of climate change that have been identified include: greenhouse gas emissions, agriculture to some extent, and travel. Failure to address these issues could result in change in climate, human settlement, wide-spread extension of species and irreversible damage to the environmental (Peeters, 2017). Therefore, many nations have established programmes to reduce carbon emissions as well as emissions from energy sources. Most forms of travel/transport contribute to global greenhouse emissions, and civil aviation accounts for two per cent (p.61). Due to the significant contribution to climate change taken up by aviation, it is important to continue to address the role tourism plays in this phenomenon.

To this end, Peeters (2017) addresses the effect of tourism on climate change and discusses its mitigation challenges. In his book, *Tourism's Impact on Climate Change and its Mitigation Challenges*, he questions how tourism can become 'climatically sustainable'. He has established that tourism is not developing sustainably with respect to climate change because, as he reasons, the way in which current tourism geography is applied, presents an incomplete picture which is often misleading to policy makers. He further contends that sustainable expansion of tourism is difficult without extensive reduction of global travel distances. Moreover, a strong shift in travel-modes and extra developments in energy efficiency in transport and accommodations are mandatory (Peeters, 2017, p.62).

Natural disasters are occurring worldwide, and these ultimately affect both inbound and outbound tourism, as people are displaced, infrastructures damaged and worst of all, many lives are destroyed or lost. That is why, the natural dimension of the tourism industry needs to be an urgent topic for future tourism development considerations. By paying universal attention to the reduction of carbon emissions the tourism industry could set an example for other industries. However, in order to do this, numerous political issues need to be addressed. This is discussed in the final dimension below:

6.7 The Political Dimension

Despite the appearance that China has become a relatively open country in the past few decades and based on its “Open-door” policy’s business model, the People’s Republic of China is fundamentally a socialist state which means that it exercises political authority from the centre. This is evident in its outbound tourism policies (as discussed in section 6.1). Similarly, Kotler, Bowen & Makens, (2006, p.132) claim that “The political environment is made up of laws, government agencies and pressure groups that influence and limit the activities of various organisations and individuals in society”. The role that the CNTA plays in Chinese outbound tourism is, therefore, a political one, seeing that this organisation supervises the quality of service, maintains legal rights of tourists and operators, normalizes tourism operations and the services of the tourist enterprise and practitioners (OECD, 2016).

According to the Chairman of the Administration, since the implementation of the reform and opening-up policy, China’s tourism development has skyrocketed: The nation has become one of the world’s major tourist destinations and is honing its tourism product. As a result of the new technological revolution and digital information dissemination, China’s modernization is having far-reaching implication not only on its people’s production and their daily life, but also on its outbound tourism industry (CNTA, 2017). The CNTA website is a government-run website, which is seen as a step

taken by the administration to perform its responsibility of information disclosure, release travel policies and guidelines, and functions as a vital window to showcase the latest development of the tourism industry by communicating government information on tourism. Furthermore, the organisation uses various platforms to inform tourism businesses, tourists and the public at large. In so doing, it endeavours to extend its influences and gain both national and international recognition, ultimately creating understanding within the society about the importance of the tourism industry (CNTA, 2017).

On an important note: as of March 13, 2018, the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) and the Ministry of Culture (MTC) has united to form the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (Arlt, 2018). According to the State Councillor, Wang Yong, it "... is aimed at coordinating the development of cultural and tourism industries, enhancing the country's soft power (*see* 1.1.5) and cultural influence, and promoting cultural exchanges internationally". The new MTC will also construct rules, establish surveys, safeguard cultural capital and control the generic tourism market. Likewise, cultural exchanges with foreign countries will be stimulated (China Daily, 2018). This is not only significant for China's outbound tourism industry but also for China's image enrichment through its soft power influence. It further consolidates the Republic's support of its outbound tourism industry, despite the huge amount of expenditure being done abroad by Chinese travellers. The fact that tourism has been elevated to ministerial status, will have a substantial impact on both domestic and international tourism (China Daily, 2018).

6.7.1 Tourism as a Product of Capitalism

Bell (2008) suggests that "The CCP need not abandon the commitment to communism as the long-term goal so long as it recognises that poor countries must go through capitalism (*see* 2.1) on the way." As in the capital mode of production workers are

treated as mere tools in the productive process and technology is put to use for the purpose of enriching a small minority of capitalists. However, it helps to develop productive forces more than any previous economic systems, in that capitalists compete with each other to make profit. Therefore, they have an incentive to develop newer, more efficient means of producing goods. Nevertheless, socialism would not be feasible without creating a large material surplus (p.5). Within the Marxist model, the idea was to liberate the mass from performing menial labour, instead, machine would do the dirty work while people would be free to go fishing, read books, design and create works of art, or partake in other leisure activities (Bell, 2008).

Thus, the Chinese Communist Party, which had been the ruling party in China since 1949 steered by the economic transformation of Deng Xiaoping and sustained by Jiang Zemin, shifted the government from a government-controlled planned economy to a socialist market economy (Qian & Wu, 2000). This implied that, instead of the state determining production and pricing, consumers' demand for goods and their production costs determine the quantity and price, in keeping in line with the economic market model of supply and demand. Despite this shift in model, the government sustains its communist grip on the economy by applying laws and regulations in their self-established market economy. Furthermore, the socialist market economy demonstrates a spread of capitalism in China, where government regulations do not support a completely free market; western-style capitalism will not be fully realised unless government interference subsides (Milillo, 2008).

There is evidence of tourism being seen as a product of capitalism (*see* 2.1). For example, David Jobanputra discusses his opinion on travel as imperialism in a travel blog on *Tourdust*. In his article, he argues that major Western nations engage in a tireless quest for virgin lands on which to sow their surplus capital (Jobanputra, 2018). He further contends that capitalism has spawned more wealth than anyone knows what

to do with, while simultaneously consuming most of the West's natural resources such as picturesque landscapes, pristine nature, etcetera, in which to invest even more capital. While it is assumed that developed countries send tourists to less developed countries, this is not the case with China, where, as a less-developed country, it sends tourists to developed countries.

Furthermore, Fulcher (2004) claims that the significant rise of international tourism is one of the most striking manifestations of the increasing economic connections between nations, and international tourism spreads capitalist practices into parts of the world that have been hardly touched historically by the growth of capitalism. This spread of international tourism drives consumption and spawns a larger demand for food production and transportation, supplying the base for souvenirs manufacturing and replication of artefacts. Consequently, the incomes from tourism can increase currency circulation, and thus, lead to the import of manufactured goods and also the establishment of novel consumption patterns (Fulcher, 2004).

Furthermore, he argues that leisure breathes capitalism, as it demands continuous work, long working-hours and provides non-work activities, such as leisure for all workers. This proves to be more productive than having work disrupted by taking days-offs. Leisure in itself, is therefore not only capitalism but it leads to the commercializing of leisure. Workers pay for leisure activities organised by capitalist enterprises and this in turn creates mass tourism. This ultimately creates new businesses and the new industries which emerge, exploit and develop the leisure market even further producing an enormous source of consumer-demand, employment and huge profits. Hence, making tourism a product of capitalism (Fulcher, 2004).

6.7.2 Tourism as a Product of Confucianism

Confucianism (*see* 2.1) is said to play a significant role in the lives of many Chinese tourists, and the latter is said to be strongly influenced by the teachings of Confucius

(551-479). Kwek and Lee (2010) suggest, that the belief of harmony is intricately related to themes such as ‘respect’ for ‘authority’, ‘relationship building’ or Guanxi and ‘conformity’. Chinese travellers are greatly influenced by the values of Confucianism, as they place emphasis on maintaining not only the correct and appropriate behaviour but also showing respect to authority (*see* 5.6.1). In this current study, however, it was also revealed by participants of the focus group meetings held, that Chinese millennials and free independent travellers somehow do not particularly adhere to Confucian values, especially seeing that they do not travel in large groups. Likewise, values such as “Benevolence” and “conformity” are considered ‘outdated’.

Thus, they are gradually moving away from Confucius values and are more concerned with other more pressing issue of ‘finding themselves’ (*see* 5.6.1 and 5.6.2). They seek freedom to choose their own destinations and prefer to do this either alone or with a chosen friend. They also pursue interactions with the locals, and authentic experiences, which they brag about on their social media page. This is forcing tourism providers to re-vamp their products to match with the interests and behaviour of these Chinese visitors. For some of these providers, this means making major adjustments to their tourism products and services. They also have to do considerable investments and innovations to meet the demands of this new generation of visitors.

So, although most Chinese tourists still demonstrate some Confucius behaviour during their travel experience, the millennial travellers are gradually departing most of these traditional values in pursuit of their own happiness. This is evident in the activities they participate in and the places they visit.

6.7.3 Tourism as a Product of Communism

As demonstrated in the previous sections of this study, tourism is vivid in many areas. Increasingly communism (*see* discussion under 2.3.2) or Red Tourism is spreading, not only among older Chinese tourists but also among young ones. Red Tourism or ‘Pinyin’

in Chinese, is defined as a sub-set of tourism in the PRC in which Chinese people visit locations with historical significance to Chinese communism “to rekindle their long-lost sense of class struggle and proletarian principles” (Zhou, 2010). Though, most of these sites are located in the Republic itself; such as Shaoshan, the birthplace of Mao Zedong; Jinggangshan: the cradle of the Chinese Communist revolution where Mao Zedong and other leading members of the Communist Party of China founded the first rural base for the revolution in 1927; and Nanjie: in the Henan province – a small village where the local residents still live under Maoist ideas and line according to commune principles (Zhou, 2010). Red Tourism offers are also very popular in former Communist countries. Examples are the Czech Republic, which was ruled by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (the former Czech Republic); the birth-places of Karl Marx (Trier, 1818) and Friedrich Engels (Wuppertal, 1820) and Cuba, which officially still has a Communist government.

The Chinese began actively supporting Red tourism to promote the “national ethos” and socioeconomic development in those areas which are typically rural and poorer than East China, and as one Chinese official reported to People.cn.com (2010). “This is a major project that benefits both the Party, the nation and the people, either in the economic, cultural and the political sense.” He also stressed that “It will make people, especially the young people, to further consolidate their faith in pursuing the road to socialism with Chinese characteristics and realizing the great rejuvenation of the nation under the leadership of the CPC.” He further added that, “visiting these sights, will ensure valuable assets of national character-building and independence among young people” (Chinese official in People.cn.com, 21010).

In a critical analysis of China’s viewpoints on Red Tourism, Denton (2014) posits three interesting questions:

'What happens when the visiting of sites sacred to the history of the revolution gets institutionalized into a state-driven commercialized form of tourism?'

'What happens to revolutionary values when they get commodified in the form of leisure-time sightseeing?' And,

'How do real Red tourists, who live in a world so starkly different from the world of the revolutionary narrative, experience that sightseeing?'

(Kirk A. Denton, 2014)

According to Denton (2014), lately, Red tourism has adopted global dimensions as part of Xi Jinping's One Belt, One Road initiative (see 1.1.5), China and Russia have introduced the so-called 'Sino-Russian Red Tourism Large-Scale Exchange Activities.' Actually, since the Chinese leader assumed power, Red tourism has been vehemently propagated as an ideological apparatus. For instance, one new-fangled spot on the tourist trail is the village of Liangjiahe, where Xi spent several years as a 'sent-down youth' during the Cultural Revolution (p.3).

A vast majority of Chinese tourists experience Red tourism as a communal, participatory, performative, and ritualized event (Denton, 2014). In this respect, though, deficiencies are evident in; their holy and deific appeal with previous religious and revolutionary pilgrimages; their desire to connect spiritually with a place of extraordinary significance by means of playacting of conventional performances and ceremonies such as singing and dancing, reciting the Communist Party pledge, dressing-up in Red Army uniform, taking pictures, eating 'revolutionary' food, and so on. Its collective nature manufactures an ideally formidable vehicle for the propagation of shared eccentricities and communal long-gone memories (p. 3).

Many Chinese tourists to revolutionary sites are part of tour groups organized by factories, schools, State and private corporations. For example, Denton (2014) talks of one specific plant that sponsored a tour group to Jinggangshan. There they marched the 'Carrying Grain Path', on which Zhu, De and Mao allegedly, gallantly carried grain for their soldiers. Dressed in Red Army uniforms and caps, these workers wanted to gain a

better understanding of the 'Jinggangshan spirit'. Red tourism is also incorporated into a company's ideological training and so employees are expected to participate in such exercises. Thus, companies sometimes go on excursions like these as an essential part of their educational experience. Chinese entrepreneurs and businessmen also make use of such trainings to stimulate team-building, and creating comradeship in particularly large corporations (Denton, 2014 p.4).

On a more recent note: the city of Trier in Germany will be celebrating Karl Marx's 200th birthday and because of this, it has received a towering bronze statue of Karl Marx as a gift from China's Communist government. Marx, who was a socialist philosopher and one of the founding fathers of Communism, was born in this southwestern German town (DW, 2018). This statue, which was created and manufactured in China, is being welcomed with mixed feelings. Among the many reasons for discontent, is the massive inflow of tourists who will make a pilgrimage to this small town. Similarly, human rights groups and organisations representing the victims of communism have voiced their disapproval of this "Mega-Marx" bronze image, as Karl Marx is a controversial figure, whose writings served as the basis for a whole state-form that later turned into dictatorships (DW, 2018).

"The connection with China has of course a touristic purpose", according to Speitkamp, a history professor at Kassel University (Germany). The same is true for the Engels' statue in Wuppertal. Friedrich Engels is the other co-founder of Communism, and like Karl Marx, he is a controversial figure in Germany. That is why these monuments will attract throngs of Chinese tourists to Germany, particularly to the towns of Trier and Wuppertal. Conversely, in China, Marx and Engels are not only foremost philosophers, they are vigorously studied throughout the nation (Speitkamp, 2018). Thus, the increasing demand for Red Tourism is powering an inflow of tourism from China.

Despite the growing demand for Red Tourism, Chinese millennials are not particularly interested in the ideological and revolutionary ideals of the CCP. Like many international tourists, Chinese tourists travel, (even to revolutionary sites) to have fun, relax, eat and drink, see the sites and maybe come away with some novel insights of the destination. Their relationship with the past, if any, is of a by-gone nature. Most Red tourists are urban while the sites are mostly rural, so there is spatial distance between the consumer and the consumed (p.5). Seeing that the revolution is no longer something to be lived, Red tourism contributes only to the re-making (*see* Worldmaking, p.63) of the revolution as a “tradition”; one that the State ostensibly uses as a historical and sociopolitical platform for generating tourism revenue to drive its socioeconomic plans, as well as to enrich the lives of the rural population (Denton, 2014). Tourism as a Communism product is therefore designed to be consumed.

6.7.4 Tourism as a Product of Consumerism

As discussed in the previous section, tourism is a product to be consumed. Seeing that China’s enormous population has begun to travel and spend more, it will have a significant impact on the world (Lomas, 2017). Despite the debate on China’s imminent economic slowdown, Chinese consumers are expected to spend more particularly on travelling. According to a report by the management consultant firm, McKinsey, by 2020 there will be approximately 400 million “mainstream consumers – with disposable household incomes of roughly US\$ 34,000 per annum. It is this cohort of consumers that will ‘rock’ the world. Additionally, Euromonitor estimates that China will contribute more than any other country to global consumer expenditure growth (Euromonitor, 2016).

The more affluent China’s consumers get, the more dynamic the landscape becomes: price is no longer the only dominant factor. The Chinese consumer focuses more on brand, quality and the status attached to the product purchased. That is why the tourist

destinations wishing to attract the Chinese tourist need to bear this in mind when attempting to lure these consumers.

The Chinese do not trust domestic products as there is a danger that these may be fake (*see* discussion under 5.5.2). Health and safety are of great concern after numerous scandals in China, affecting a number of consumer products. The result of this is that Chinese travellers to Europe, for example, are eager to buy European products, which they consider authentic and cheap. They also trust products bought in Europe more, even make-up and personal accessories are preferred.

Another factor that has been well-documented is the growing number of people over 60. Euromonitor (2016) claims that China will have 345 million people over sixty by 2030. This is significant because with such an aging population, demand for healthcare services and products will soar. Though the State is taking measures to alleviate this problem by increasing healthcare spending, hospitals are said to be “way behind other developing economies like India”, said Towson, co-author of *The One Hour China Consumer Book: Five Short Stories That Explain the Brutal Fight for One Billion Consumers*, and “consumers aren’t waiting anymore... when people get cancer, they’re getting on planes to Singapore and London.” (Towson, 2017). So, this is showing a surge in Health Tourism.

And it is not just the older generation that are becoming more health conscious and are therefore spending more on their health. “Many Chinese consumers have an innate distrust of processed foods and that, combined with the recent food scandals have driven many consumers to seek out what they consider to be safer and healthier foods.” (Euromonitor, 2017). Furthermore, this is creating new health-trends. Yoga, for instance, is one of such trends. Another one is cycling. Whereas the bicycle, which was once considered a cheap mode of transport/travel, has now been elevated to a ‘healthy way’ to go.

Chinese outbound tourism is likewise impacted by the increasing number of young Chinese who are opting to study abroad. Simultaneously, the number of household heads with secondary education in China will be over 1.0 billion worldwide, clearly the highest total in human history. This is important because better-educated heads of households are driving rising consumption in some of the world's most dynamic markets (Euromonitor International, 2016). Education is booming as a new middle-class is able to afford this commodity which was once only affordable to the privileged few, particularly in China. Consequently, Western universities are gaining handsomely from Chinese millennial students. In the UK, for instance, there are more Chinese masters' students studying in the UK, than there are British masters' students (Towson, 2017). Likewise, Chinese students injected 9.8 billion into the US economy in 2014-2015 according to the US Institute of International Education. As China's economy becomes more lucrative to more countries and companies globally, Chinese as a foreign language is in high demand. Many companies are pouring resources into trying to understand the market and the Chinese consumer behaviour. Towson contends that: "If you're a hotel in London, I guarantee you there are blogs in Chinese reviewing you... China's becoming the world's largest entertainment market. Suddenly you have to try and figure out what they want to watch on TV", according to Towson (2017), who claim that due to the consumer dimension of China, the country will be able to set the terms and conditions of trade deals to its advantage. This is also evident in Rachman's book titled: *Easternization: War and Peace in the Asian Century*, in which he describes political and economic conundrum shifting eastwards. "It is economic might that allows nations to generate the military, diplomatic, and technological resources that translate into international political power" (Lomar, 2017). Having said that, the researcher proceeds to state the major findings of this study.

6.8 New Developments (in China): CNTA Becomes Ministry of Culture And Tourism; and Passport Application Facilitation

The coordination of development of cultural and tourism industries was, up until March 21, 2018, a responsibility of China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) (cnta.gov.cn, 2018). Tourism has emerged as an industry where economic, trade and international collaboration as well as cultural relations are both dynamic and encouraging, according to a government spokesman. It is a fundamental component of the government strategy in bridging China's relations with the rest of the world and at the same time, it provides a window of opportunities for constructing new modes of relationships abroad. With the official dissolution of the CNTA, into a new body, the new Ministry of Tourism and Culture (MTC), it is clear that international tourism has become more important than ever (Jing Travel, 2018). According to *JingTravel*, the purpose is "coordinating the development of cultural and tourism industries, enhancing the country's soft power and cultural influence, and promoting cultural exchanges internationally."

Additionally, the Chinese government has made it easier for its citizens to obtain passports, which could see a surge in Chinese outbound tourism internationally. The country is facilitating the passport procedures in its efforts to boost international travel, according to an announcement in *Jing Travel* (2018). In fact, Chinese nationals will no longer need to make multiple trips to the relevant government offices when applying for travel documents, as a section of the application process will be centered on-line, so claimants only need to make a single trip to the State Immigration Administration (SIA). Additionally, those living in a different location than their registered place of residence, can apply from another location (*Xinhua Report*, 2018). The SIA stressed that it will "offer speedy service to those who urgently need travel documents," and add facilities ahead of "busy holidays and travel seasons." Apparently, the organisation is attempting

to make international travels more readily available for the one billion Chinese population who have yet to apply for a passport (Jing Travel, 2018).

Similarly, in an effort to stimulate Chinese visits and tourists' spending, many international destinations are easing the visa requirements for Chinese passport holders. All this could mean an even more gargantuan growth in Chinese outbound tourism worldwide.

6.9 The Major Findings of this Study

The aim of this study was to examine what the key interests of Chinese millennial tourists as students to the Netherlands are, while investigating what the implications of these visits are for both the Dutch tourism industry and the Dutch higher education board. Using the interpretive approach three specific methods were applied: semi-structured interviews, focus group meetings and discourse analysis. Data was collected and thematically analysed by using NVivo (a computer software programme) to classify the data and manual examinations to identify the themes. The research problem and sub-problems form the foundation for the construction of the major findings of this study and these are summarised in the following sections:

6.9.1 Sub-Problem One:

'Why do Chinese (millennial) tourists choose to visit the Netherlands (Western Europe)?'

The significant increase in Chinese outbound tourism of the past decades, has left tourism providers scrambling to deal with the effects of this 'descent' of Chinese travellers on their destination. It is vital to first make a distinction between the pre-millennial tourists and the millennial tourists. Whereas the former usually travel in large groups the latter are generally free independent travellers, who tend to book their own trips. When travelling to Europe, the pre-millennials generally book through a travel agency, which takes care of all the necessary paper-work. Itineraries are fixed,

and this group make use of travel guides at the destination. The reason for this is that, they do not speak English and so communication is very difficult when in Europe. Besides, they usually visit six to ten countries in a single European trip, therefore, the visa formalities are generally taken care of by the travel agency in China. The Netherlands has an excellent image abroad, it has a long and rich cultural heritage, which is exhibited in many of its famous museums which lace the country but are concentrated in the bigger cities. In these museums, the Dutch also portray their trading era in the many Dutch Masters' collections exhibited in these well-known museums. There are also 'unique' exhibitions or museums such as the *Redlight District* and the Sex museum, where 'live-exhibits' are brazenly on display. This unusual 'spectacle' is a 'must-see' for most Chinese visitors to the Netherlands.

A foremost desirability for the Chinese tourists is "Museum Europe". In China, Europe is chiefly treasured for its fascinating sceneries, cultural inheritances and chronicled pasts. The sites which are significant for Chinese history, for instance, the places where Deng Xiaoping studied and worked in France, are of particular interests to the Chinese visitor. Apart from cultural motivations, a holiday to Europe offers the Chinese visitor a significant boost to his or her reputation on social media back home, consolidating status within that particular social environment. Hence, this is another primary reason for a European travel for the Chinese millennial tourist in particular. What also adds prestige to the home-front is their tendency to purchase high quality gifts and souvenirs on their European tour for friends and relatives at home and colleagues at work. Not only has the number of Chinese travellers increased considerably over the past decade, but also their eagerness to spend.

Shopping has become a top event and visiting outlets in Europe is a standard feature on a European tour. They like to shop at the many shopping outlets throughout Europe, as the prices are fairly reasonable compared to China. The affluent Chinese millennials, for

example, not only like to shop for luxury items, but they prefer to stay in exclusive accommodations during their trip to Europe. They value the authenticity and novel attributes of a destination, providing them with unique experiences which are likewise published on social media for friends, relatives and business associates to see.

Finally, when en-route to Europe the Chinese tourists want to sight-see. They visit the established attractions, the ones that are quintessential to the place visited. Likewise, most of these visits are documented and placed on social media to 'show-off' to friends, relatives and business associates back home.

6.9.2 Sub-Problem Two:

“Why do Chinese millennial students decide to study in the Netherlands?”

In addressing the second problem: “Why do Chinese millennial students decide to study in the Netherlands”; five chief reasons were provided. Firstly, all academic universities in the Netherlands are ranked among the top 200 best universities in the world. In addition to this, their universities of applied sciences universities, which provide practical education for the industry, are also well established globally. Secondly, the cost of studying in the Netherlands is relatively cheap in comparison to similar institutions world-wide. The third reason is the vast number of English-taught programmes available at tertiary level. The country is famous for its multilingualism, and most Dutch speak at least four languages at a reasonable level. The fourth reason why Chinese millennial choose to study in the Netherlands is the excellent level of English within the general Dutch society. What is more, is that the Dutch researchers are among the best performing in the world. They are innovative, highly skilled in water-management. The Dutch also produce some of the most outstanding artists, writers, philosophers, scientists, DJs and fashion-designers on the globe. That is why, the Netherlands is the second-best choice with regard to English-speaking universities world-wide.

And finally, there are numerous career opportunities that are provided upon graduation from a Dutch university. In most cases it is possible for an international student to extend her or his stay for a maximum of twelve months, in case (s) he cannot find a suitable job position. During this time, the graduate is provided with the chance to perform an internship or to seek jobs. In case a job is found, the status of the graduate is changed and (s) he can have a resident permit to the Netherlands. Meanwhile, the graduate is free to travel around Europe without visa concerns. Every Dutch multinational cooperation has an office in China. This means, with a degree acquired in the Netherlands, the graduate is able to find employability at a Dutch cooperation back in China.

6.9.3 Sub-Problem Three:

“What activities do Chinese millennial students participate in during their study-time in the Netherlands?”

During their study-time in the Netherlands, the Chinese millennials participate in numerous activities. First and foremost is their love for travel through Europe. They mostly visit the famous cities like, Paris, London, Rome and Prague, but they also like to visit smaller cities and towns. In Chapter Four, it was explained that the Chinese millennial travellers are subdivided into three main categories: The Adventurous Influencer, the Follower of Fashion and the Culturally Curious. Of the three groups, the Chinese millennials fall under the category: *The Adventurous Influencer*, which is coincidentally the smallest yet the most dominant of the subsets. Due to the fact that they are very active on social media, they are opinion leaders; they are mainly interested in culture, food, art, music and outdoor activities. They are also keen on leisure travel and so they spend most of their (long) weekends and holidays travelling through the Netherland as well as through Europe, in search of famous places, and seeking out new and unique experiences. Very often they visit museums, which according to them, provides a window to the cultural heritage of the local populace. They are also willing to

dabble in local cuisine, but usually revert to traditional Chinese food. They like to cook and eat with their compatriots. They consider dining together as a social event. Some students are not used to taking care of themselves, as they are single-children and have never been given the opportunity to be independent while in China. However, together with their peers, they explore the novel notion of “cooking” while in the Netherlands.

Chinese millennial students also visit (national) parks and take part in other cultural outdoor events while in the Netherlands. Attending special Chinese exhibitions staged by the City, is also a welcome activity for these students during their stay in the Netherlands.

6.9.4 Sub-problem Four:

“What are the consequences of Chinese millennial students’ stay in the Netherlands on their own exhibited interests and behaviours?”

The fourth sub-problem is: What are the consequences of Chinese millennial students’ stay in the Netherlands on their own exhibited interests and behaviours? The results of the Chinese millennial student’s stay in the Netherlands has significant consequences on the exhibited interests and behaviours of the student. First of all, being a single-child, most of these students are on their own for the first time. When they come to the Netherlands they not only have to learn to arrange everything for themselves, they are also responsible for their entire studies, making important choices about how to deal with cross-cultural differences between their culture, the Dutch culture as well as the international cultures on campus. Additionally, their interests and behaviours when they go abroad is defined by this One-Child policy and they are faced with numerous challenges, one of which is growing up without a sibling and she or he faces the burden of taking care of aging parents as they grow old. This also affects the child, who has been sent to study in the Europe, seeing that a great deal has been invested in the education and the future of this single child.

This weighs heavily on the conscience of the student and so, there is a feeling of guilt when considering their studies and their future careers in the Netherlands or in China. Moreover, the student sometimes suffers from distress during their time in the Netherlands, and they are of the opinion that their parents are constantly “interfering” in their lives. There is great frustration, and this has an effect on the exhibited behaviour of the student, because they contend that they do not have a life of their own, seeing that they are supposed to obey their parents. Furthermore, everything is arranged for their future and the student is expected to marry and pro-create on completion of her or his study.

Thus, the parents are continuously trying to manage the life of their single child and because of this, sometimes conflicts occur, especially when the student sees how their fellow Dutch classmates live. The Dutch, for example, mostly have siblings with whom they can share issues regarding “parental interference”. Moreover, they are very individualistic and like to do as they please, particularly without intrusions from parents. This does not help the Chinese student, who becomes insecure about what to make of such behaviour, especially when they return home. The Netherlands have transformed them somewhat. This is experienced as truly problematic.

Another impediment is the fact that it is difficult to find and retain a proper job on their return to China. This is because they have been away from their social sphere for some time and on their return, it is rather challenging to fit into the society they had left behind. Though they had maintained some kind of contact with their friends and family, they have ‘changed’ and they display some sort of anxiety because of this.

What is being questioned here is the value of the hard-earned foreign degree. Studying in Europe and adjusting to the Western lifestyle is a major challenge for most Chinese millennial students, yet after considerable sacrifice, sometimes brought on by their parents, many of whom use their child’s study in Europe as a form of prestige among

their own social network. Travelling around the Continent and visiting famous places boost the social status of the parents as well as the students. And so, this puts pressure on the student not only to perform, but also to see as much of Europe as possible. One student stressed that she travels because, then she can send pictures to her parents. Her parents would, in turn, use these pictures to boost their own social networks.

Furthermore, the education system is quite different compared to back in China. The student is encouraged to make his or her own decision regarding the chosen study. Most of them are empowered by this freedom of choice and want to maintain this newly acquired independence on their return to China. Students develop skills, which initially were practically nihil in the beginning but were significantly improved during their studies. The difficult experiences during an international study period abroad, assist in shaping the student, enabling her/him to achieve personal growth and independence during her/his life and study in the Netherlands.

6.9.5 Sub-Problem Five:

“What are the consequences of the presence of Chinese millennial students on the Netherlands and on the Dutch population in general?”

The fifth and final sub-problem regarding this study is: What are the consequences of the presence of Chinese millennial students on the Netherlands and on the Dutch population in general? When students go to study in a different country there are different kinds of issues they are faced with despite their nationality. For the Chinese millennial students, the case is somewhat similar to other international students, however, there are some cultural as well as societal differences. Chinese millennial students very often live in student accommodations or in private dwellings close to the university where they study. While they reside in these areas, they often interact with their direct surroundings, and thus come in contact with not only the local population but also with other millennials. It was shown that the Dutch are making some

adaptation to their societies to accommodate the Chinese millennial students in that amenities are being provided in supermarkets, and stores to make them feel more 'at home' in the Netherlands: supermarkets are carrying more Chinese products and Chinese eateries are popping up in shopping outlets. Efforts are being made to provide information in places where Chinese visit. However, there are still many public areas that lack information in Mandarin. This is an area of attention that needs to be addressed, as a number of participants suggested.

Besides, complimentary shopping trips are being organised for students wishing to visit popular outlets and Chinese millennials/students are organising group tours for visiting friends and relatives because they themselves do not have time to take their 'guests' around. There is a special Chinese online network that caters for particularly Chinese students in the Netherlands. This group provides valuable information and is a widely used source for finding friends from the 'Homeland'.

The Dutch themselves are learning the Chinese language, as this is seen as a necessity with the current flow of Chinese visitors/students to the Netherlands. This is also an asset for Dutch students who want to have an added advantage during the job application process. Mandarin is being offered at many Universities of Applied Sciences these days, so this is basically a consequence of the increasing collaboration between the Dutch and the Chinese. So, the Chinese millennials' visit/stay in the Netherlands has consequence on the Dutch culture.

Evidently, the Chinese have a totally different culture from the Dutch. As discussed by Hall (1977 p. 91-131) seeing that there are significant differences between the Dutch (low-context culture) and the Chinese (high-context culture), it is vital for both the Dutch and the Chinese communities to get acquainted with each other's cultures in order to "harmoniously" co-exist. This is the case not only on the campuses of the universities but also within the entire Dutch population. The Chinese are allocated

specific dormitories, and most of them do not mix with other international students. This has advantages and disadvantages; while living together in the same quarters helps to prevent students from feeling homesick, it does little towards integration into the Dutch or international environment. Except for when the Chinese student is in a general lecture on campus or at other facilities on campus, they are always with other Chinese students. Therefore, they do not learn to be among other international students and hence do not make new friends from other countries. One respondent questioned the purpose of doing a study outside of China if the intention is to always be among other Chinese nationals.

However, there are some Chinese students who do have Dutch-friends. They seemed satisfied with the relations they have with other international students from all over the world. Some even segmented their network of 'friends' into categories: Chinese friends, Dutch friends and international friends. This is important, as the activities they do with each group varies.

Although, some of the interviewees questioned whether or not the Dutch should bend-over-backwards to the Chinese tourists, the fact still remains that a visitor likes to feel welcomed to a place. There are attractions such as museums that are trying to lure Chinese tourists to Dutch museums. They do this by adding facilities such as audio tours in Chinese, as well as signage throughout their establishments. Special themed exhibitions have been lined up, particular works of "Imperial China and "Asia in Amsterdam – Exotic Luxury in the Golden Age. These exhibitions are established on trade between Asia and European countries during the Golden Age (roughly throughout the 17th century). There is also a permanent collection in some museums charting a distinct area featuring Asian Art and Chinese exhibits from 2000 BC. A collaboration with museums from Mainland China offers international talents the opportunity to work at the museum. The Rijksmuseum, for instance, has been one of the chief cultural

centers in the Netherlands, having recently been conferred the esteemed, long-running European Museum of the Year award presented by the European Museum Forum. Other museums in Amsterdam have followed their example with their China-friendly services, according to Tourism-Review.com (2017).

Thus, Chinese tourists to most of the major cities in the Netherlands are offered a warm welcome, and incentives are given to make their visits to the country extra special. For example, at a sales mission that was organised by the Netherlands Board of Tourism and Conventions (NBTC) with the intention of luring tourists from China, Chinese travel agents and tour operators were invited on a Familiarization Trip, to acquaint themselves with the museum's rich collection (Tourism-Review.com, 2017).

Dutch museums are further increasing their promotion strategies due to the further growth of Chinese tourism to the country. These tourists have displayed more than twice the spending power of other international tourists, and the NBTC argues that each Chinese spend over €1250 on each visit while the average international visitor spends approximately €600 (NBTC, 2016). Though most of their budget goes to shopping, Art Galleries and museums also feature high on the list of interests displayed by the Chinese visitor. Chinese students are also keen on shopping and complementary bus-services are being offered from big cities like Rotterdam, taking Chinese students to the large shopping outlets in Roermond and Maas-Mechelen from the Central Station in Rotterdam. This is organised by students in collaboration with the shopping outlets, who are keen on welcoming these affluent shoppers.

Besides, major department stores and famous jewelry stores in the main cities of the Netherlands are hiring Mandarin-speaking staff to facilitate Chinese tourists. Most of these sales persons are Chinese millennial students, who are eager to earn some extra money during the weekends and at special shopping events, when these stores are open

for business. Students also function as interpreters during events for Chinese business partners of large Dutch companies who are entertaining their Chinese visitors.

In 2015, there was a large group of Chinese tourists visiting the Netherlands. As the city is not designed to entertain such large groups of tourists at once, there were many complaints from both the local population of the city as well as the accommodation and service providers. This placed huge stress on the city and the policy makers decided that there would not be a repetition of such an occurrence in future. Cities like Amsterdam are therefore, putting measures in place to try and dissuade these large Chinese visitors. Coincidentally, there has been a “dramatic shift” to attracting younger independent travellers rather than busloads of sightseers, tagging along with chaotic umbrella-wielding tour-guides. The city is welcoming Chinese millennial visitors, who travel in small groups or individually. They are easier to manage and seem to blend into the normal tourist *mélange* in cities (interview with Koerts, 2017).

Generally speaking though, Chinese travellers are kaleidoscoping away from shopping and are increasingly choosing for unique and authentic local experiences. “Seeing the Northern Lights is the Number one wish for young people from China”, says Silvia Wong, a former exchange-student to Finland, who co-founded an agency that organizes tours above the Arctic Circle for Chinese tourists. “They want to stay in an igloo, go on an icebreaker, go on animal safaris, to see reindeer”. They therefore rely heavily on services such as the mobile messaging app WeChat and the microblogging site Weibo to research and book their trips – and tell their friends about their adventures. “They are seeking special adventures, novel experiences, something their friends have not seen or done before, something to ‘brag’ about online”, according to Zhang, a travel blogger from Yunnan province. “They are living the dreams of their parents” (Bloomberg Businessweek, 2018). This was corroborated by one Chinese millennial student who stated that she was mandated and sponsored by her mother, especially, to tour Europe

and see all the famous sites: the ones her mother herself had always dreamed of seeing but had never been able to see. She wants her daughter to 'live this dream' and then it would be as if she too had lived it. This, too, has an influence on the country and its population.

Regarding societal aspects, one of the consequences of the presence of Chinese millennial students on the Netherlands is that Higher educational institutes welcome the Chinese millennial student because of the financial benefits for the institute. A Chinese student tuition fee for a Bachelor's degree ranges from €6,000 - €12,000, while a Master's degree costs the Chinese student a whopping €20,000 - €30,000 per annum at a top Dutch Research university. The Chinese are therefore perceived by the Dutch population in general to be affluent. Though this is sometimes the case, especially at research universities, it is not always so. There are students who depend on the support for financial support of their entire community back home, and so the student is obliged to work hard and succeed so as not to disappoint the parents or the whole community for that matter. This also has an impact on the student's behaviour and attitude while studying in the Netherlands, and so the student's only focus is to study. There are also those who need to have a part-time job in order to pay this tuition fee. Very often, the job they are able to do are mostly in hotel, restaurant or catering establishments which would require that they work outside of their school-hours. Nevertheless, they are able to work and gain experience and extra money to finance their studies and travel around in the weekend.

The affluent Chinese millennial also likes to travel around when they are not attending classes, particularly on long weekends and holidays. They spend lots of money on luxury items as well as other goods such as make-up and jewelry. For the local stores and shops these are welcomed customers. Some big stores hire Chinese-speaking personnel to take care of their Chinese clientele. The smaller stores cannot afford this and so sometimes

miss out on the Chinese patronage. In most cases, though the population is happy to have the Chinese visitor seeing that they usually spend more than the average tourist.

However, there are instances where the local population is not very happy to accommodate the Chinese tourists. This is especially true with the large groups who come in herds, especially to certain small locales. The local population is overwhelmed with these 'strangers' and very often do not understand them: they act differently, they are loud, they want different food and basically they do not have the same behaviour as other tourists. The Chinese millennial students also visit these particular destinations, and they do notice the resentment of the locals on their visits. While this does not seem to have an effect of their perception of the place, the local population are sometimes very angry at these visitors who are obviously not the same behaviour as the generic Chinese tourists who come in the large groups. The locals appear to treat all Chinese tourists in the same fashion and claim that all Chinese tourists consider the visited town to be an 'open museum'.

Furthermore, the Netherlands Education Support Office (NESO), a Dutch educational organ in China, stimulates attracting Chinese students as they are said to be vital to creating long-lasting relationships with both Chinese institutes of higher education and Dutch higher educational institutes. These students act as ambassadors in the Netherlands and via social media they offer word-of-mouth promotion for their place of study. They help to promote their university to their friends and networks back home. They share their (positive) experiences via popular social media channels. This is good for the Dutch government as well as Dutch businesses in China. Most major companies in the Netherlands have offices in China. And so, not only do these Chinese students help the Dutch population in the Netherlands but they also help them in China. The Chinese millennial student also helps Dutch industries by translating and interpreting documents and marketing literature.

The millennials, likewise, help to promote their place of residence during their studies, to visiting friends and relatives. When friends and relatives visit these students, they are guided around the city and shown places that are preferred by the student. This way, the student plays host to these visitors and very often these places are different from the usual tourist hotspots. In so doing, the visitors are presented with unique and authentic experiences, a much sought-after commodity among Chinese millennial tourists.

6.10 Deductions From The Major Findings of This Study

The interpretations of the major findings have been discussed in details in the above section. The sub-problems are now re-addressed, followed by other interpretations from this study.

First of all, Chinese millennial tourists choose to visit the Netherlands because of its outstanding image in China. Although it is a small nation, The Netherlands has an excellent image abroad, it has a long and rich cultural heritage, which is exhibited in many of its famous museums that lace the country. Its people are friendly, innovative, creative and tolerant. The clean air, open-space and blue skies are also attributes that draws Chinese tourists to the Netherlands. Shopping at outlets are also preferred activities. Secondly, Chinese millennial students choose to study in the Netherlands because of most of the universities in the Netherlands are ranked high on the Times Higher Education ranking list. Most of the programmes are taught in English and almost every Dutch speaks English quite well. The country is also perceived as safe and it has a very good infrastructure compared to other European countries. Tuition fee is considered cheap compared to other western destinations like the US and Canada, and the visa formalities are less complicated in the Netherlands. Finally, there are opportunities to do an internship in the country upon graduation. Thirdly, the Chinese millennial students participate in numerous activities during their study-time in the Netherlands. Foremost activity is travelling throughout Europe. They also enjoy

shopping and visiting museums, especially in the weekends and on (short) holidays. Fourthly, their stay in the Netherlands has consequences on their own exhibited interests and behaviours in that, they are exposed to a different way of life that is unlike their home-country. They apparently have become more independent, more vocal and their English language level has improved considerable. Though they largely tend to stick to their Chinese network, some of them gain new friends during their studies. Finally, the consequences of the presence of Chinese millennial students on the Netherlands and on the Dutch population is significant in that, certain stores and shops have adapted their products to meet the needs of the Chinese visitors. Numerous educational institutes are offering lessons in Mandarin and shops also hire Chinese-speaking personnel. Educational institutes are also making China an area of focus in their strategic plans, and so Chinese staff-members are being hired. Having said that, the following section presents the implications for Management / operational actions.

6.11 The Implications for the Dutch Higher Education Board and Tourism Management / Operational Action

The implications of Chinese millennial tourists' visits to the Netherlands have important ramifications for both Tourism Management as well as the Dutch Higher Education Board. These are illustrated in Table 6.2 below:

Table 6.2 Implications for Dutch Higher Education Board and Tourism Management

Implications for the Dutch Higher Education Board	Implications for (Tourism)Management / Operational Action
<p>An increase in demand for Chinese-friendly services on university campuses; - offer Chinese language courses - offer 'survival' course about living in the Netherlands;</p>	<p>A need to place English-signage in public spaces – train stations, libraries, museums, shops etc. allowing for Chinese millennials to navigate these places. These should be extended to rural areas, as these students travel to the countryside as well.</p>
<p>A targeted promotional campaign in China (in Chinese) aimed at potential students from <u>2nd tier cities</u> in China should be constructed;</p>	<p>Translation of websites into English, so that they are accessible to Chinese millennials students.</p>
<p>Increase of English language courses in cross-cultural studies on campus - Dutch/international students (to stimulate cross-cultural relations), and make students aware of cultural differences; a supply of courses on the Chinese culture;</p>	<p>Provision of cross-cultural courses for employees in the tourism and hospitality fields to learn about issues relating to the Chinese tourists – their evolving interests, culture, values, travel trends, etc.</p>
<p>An establishment of diplomatic collaboration (embassies in China and the Netherlands) involving the Chinese alumni, the Dutch education board and the Dutch Tourism Board. Student and staff exchange programmes (Dutch/Chinese) to further consolidate cross-cultural relations/understanding among students and staff.</p> <p>Encouragement of students to become ambassadors on their return to China; devise incentives (job positions at Dutch companies in China) means more job for graduates from Dutch universities.</p>	<p>A provision of not only Chinese related attractions and activities, but also 'authentic' experiences. Create novel experiences, build on the 'unique' features of the destination – the strengths rather than 'bending over backwards'.</p> <p>Incentives for Chinese millennials to construct enterprises (spa, health-centres, restaurants, tea-shops, tourism-related businesses – travel companies, transportation, etc.) for Chinese visitors.</p>

6.12 The Recommendations for the Dutch Higher Education and the Dutch Tourism Industry/Management

Table 6.3 provides an illustration of the recommendations suggested for the Dutch Higher Education Board and the Dutch Tourism Industry / Management.

Table 6.3: Recommendations for the Dutch Higher Education Board and the Dutch Tourism Industry and / or Management.

Recommendations for the Dutch Higher Education Board	Recommendations for Dutch Tourism Industry/ Management
Promote universities to 2 nd -tier cities in China;	Place signs in English in public areas/spaces, especially those used by Chinese millennials
<p>Spread Chinese students in international dormitories rather than together with other Chinese students: this encourages the development of cross-cultural (communication) skills;</p> <p>- incorporate the Chinese culture in all study programmes for all students;</p>	Provide Chinese courses for (store) personnel and managers. Also, to those business outside of tourism. International companies have a competitive edge when they have a better understanding of the Chinese culture.
Organise events on Chinese public holidays: Chinese New Year, and other main holidays on (university) campuses;	Have <u>Chinese students</u> design promotional instruments / via social media for attractions (and events) rather than merely translating Dutch into English.
<p>Have Chinese students serve as ‘ambassadors’ on their return home;</p> <p>Create partnerships with universities from 2nd – 3rd tier cities in China;</p> <p>Create student/staff exchanges from all tiers in China;</p> <p>Design courses with China in mind.</p>	Create unique ‘experience’ rather than providing “Chinese” experience. Offering “authentic” experience is more desired and appreciated. Organise Dutch Days in 2 nd and 3 rd tier cities in China: cultural exchanges, networking and facilitating political diplomacy.
<p>Encourage Chinese students to participate in ‘internship’ programs upon graduation; provide jobs at universities for graduates (to teach Chinese language and culture);</p> <p>Make use of the Dutch Days organised in major cities in China to promote Dutch educational institutes in China.</p> <p>Promote Dutch Days in second & third-tier cities in China. Use these to promote Dutch culture and history, as well as to network. Likewise, to allow the Chinese audience to experience the Netherlands in a variety of fields as well as to give a ‘piece of Holland’.</p>	<p>Make use of trends and social media platforms used by Chinese millennials to follow developments in Chinese outbound tourism.</p> <p>Provide “small luxuries” to create (extended) meaningful experiences.</p> <p>Facilitate online payments, and provide faster and better services particularly at local government levels student-visas, work-permits, housing, etc.</p> <p>Make use of trends and developments in tourism: culinary, experiential, spa/wellness, health, nature, authenticity etc. to create unique and meaningful experiences for Chinese millennials.</p>

6.13 Summary of Chapter Six

This chapter discussed the main findings of the study. Seven major themes were identified after analysing the data collected from semi-structured interviews with key players in the (Dutch) tourism industry as well as from Dutch higher education institutes. Discourse analysis was also used as a research method. The five focus group meetings conducted with Chinese millennial students also provided rich data for analysis. Seven dimensions of Chinese outbound tourism were explicitly revealed; and these together were shown to have a significant impact on the interests and behaviour of the Chinese (millennial) visitor to destinations in Western Europe, particularly the Netherlands. After this, some interesting information was revealed regarding emerging developments in the status of Chinese National Tourism Association (CNTA). It was announced that a merger had taken place between the Ministry of Culture and the CNTA, forming a new Ministry: The Ministry of Culture and Tourism. This has elevated tourism to ministerial status, which implies that it now plays a vital role within the People's Republic of China. Then the major findings of the study and their relations to the problem and sub-problems were discussed and illustrated, followed by a conclusion of these findings and the implications for both the Dutch higher education board and the Dutch tourism Management. Final recommendations for the Dutch higher education and the Dutch tourism industry in general were proposed. After presenting the summary of this section, the final conclusions and future research arising from this study.

6.14 Conclusions to Chapter Six

The multi-dimensions of Chinese outbound tourism focus on seven distinctive dimensions that form the emics and etics of the Chinese people, namely: competition, demographic, economic, technological, cultural, natural and political. These consequently have impacts on the interests and activities of these tourists during their

travels through Western Europe. Hence, the following conclusions were drawn from the data analysed, and illustrated in bullet-fashion below:

- In order to successfully satisfy the desires and demands of the Chinese visitor, destination management companies and tourism providers need to revise their products and services and design new strategies in order to effectively compete for a share of the Chinese tourism market. In so doing, it is not only necessary to have a presence in China, but also to apply different destination-marketing strategies;
- In the demographics dimension, there are three demographics that need to be studied: the 60-plus; the Chinese millennials (One-child policy) and the migratory workers;
- Within the economic dimension, it can be deduced that because of the increase in disposable income, Chinese people have more money to travel/spend and so, they are able to make trips to long-haul destinations such as Europe. It is also due to the high trade surplus in the country and the need to explore destinations that never before was so 'cheap' to them. However, China is under pressure from the international community to decrease its trade surplus. One way that is suggested is for the government to do this, by limiting the imbalance via outbound tourism;
- The technological dimension, which is the most significant of all, is mainly thanks to the advent of new technologies and different payment modes, Chinese outbound tourism has been drastically transformed. The internet is the foundation of this change, especially the distribution of travel products sparking mobility, and a novel information generation of independent travellers;
- The cultural dimensions and its reflection on the Chinese visitor elucidated traditional values and contemporary values. Though traditional Chinese cultural values are apparently waning among Chinese visitors, beliefs such as "harmony" and "face" are still prevalent among this population;

- The effects of natural dimensions were mentioned before examining the political dimensions. These were placed in four groups: Capitalism, Confucianism, Communism and finally Consumerism, as the researcher thought that these categories played an important role in understanding the Chinese millennial tourist/student in the 21st century;
- All four elements provide the foundation for understanding why these tourists visit Western European destinations and also help to understand why these visitors their key interests and thus undertake certain activities when abroad;
- The major findings of the study were summarised, and the implications for both the Dutch tourism industry and the Dutch higher educational board were indicated;
- Recommendations for future tourism studies and tourism providers were given. Chinese millennial travellers are keen on small luxuries as these are seen to provide a more meaningful experience;
- Though it is imperative for tourism providers to understand the desires and behaviours of the Chinese millennial traveller, caution should be applied in doing so, as this could be seen as “trying too hard”, which could spark an aversive reaction.

6.15 Further Research Emenating from this Study

A fresh contribution to knowledge is presented by drawing up a research agenda which will explore future research possibilities. In so doing, the researcher wishes to adopt a propaedeutic (*see* 1.9) approach, in other words, to assume a grounded strategy in trying to understand the Chinese outbound tourism phenomenon. Due to the increasing number of Chinese tourists visiting destinations all over the world, the amount of research in this particular field is expected to rise significantly. As mentioned in section 3.0, most research carried out on Chinese outbound tourism are quantitative in nature. Nevertheless, there has been a gradual increase in qualitative research methodologies

that are founded on reflexive and interpretive perspectives as opposed to positivist research perspectives. From a preparatory platform, a propaedeutic research agenda is vital when looking ahead at the future of Chinese outbound tourism. Based on this emergent study the following suggestions and considerations are projected for further research relating to Chinese outbound tourism. The proposed topic is followed by an elaboration (in different font) of the ideas surrounding this proposition:

What are the impacts of the *Quadruple-C Gaze* (Confucianism, Communism, Capitalism, and Consumerism) on Chinese outbound tourism?

It is clear from the current study, that *Confucianism* is still fundamentally engrained in the lives and travel customs of the Chinese traveller (see 6.7.2). Likewise, it has been illustrated that Neo-Confucianism, which refers to the broad revival of Confucian thinking that emerged in the early Song Dynasty (960-1279) (Yao, 2000; Oxford Bibliographies, 2018) is a current practice still evident among Chinese millennials. For example, Kwek and Lee (2010) claim that the belief of harmony is intricately related to themes such as a ‘respect’ for ‘authority’, ‘relationship building’ or *Guanxi* and ‘conformity’. Additionally, the country has shifted from a government-controlled planned economy to a socialist market economy, however, the government sustains its communist grip on the economy by applying laws and regulations in their self-established market economy (Wang, Y. & Wang, Z., 2014). Given this knowledge, it would, thus, be interesting to see how (Neo) Confucianism, first of all, influences outbound tourism from China.

Likewise, *Communism* is spreading not only among older Chinese tourists but also among younger ones (see 6.7.3). As explained by Arlt (2016) Communism is entwining itself into another segment of contemporary Chinese culture: international tourism. He argues that the past ten years has seen a sharp increase of more than four billion domestic trips made to sites meaningful to the history of China’s Communist Party—also known as “Red Tourism.”

However, these trips are no longer restricted to China. The past years have seen numerous tours emerging that retrace the footsteps of Lenin. For example, the Chinese Outbound Tourism Research Institute (COTRI), which spearheaded a research on behalf of the Engels House in Wuppertal, Germany established that from 2011, Chinese tour operators had already been arranging “red”-themed excursions through various destinations in Europe. These include Germany, the United Kingdom and the former Yugoslavia. Such visits featured locations linked to individuals related in some fashion to Communism. Marx, Engels, Lenin and Tito were some of the famous leaders who practised Communism (Arlt 2016). Furthermore, Denton (2014) argues that Red Tourism has adopted universal dimensions as part of the Government’s One Belt, One Road Initiative. It is proliferated as a sociopolitical machinery, and is largely practiced as a shared, performative and ritualized occasion (Denton, 2014).

Furthermore, the impact of *Capitalism* is visible in the Chinese tourists (see, 6.7.1). As in the capitalist mode of production, workers are treated as mere tools in the productive process and technology is put to use for the purpose of enriching a small minority of population (Bell, 2010). In an interview, Professor Dean MacCannell, addresses the issue of Capitalism. According to him, “Capitalism is desperately trying to re-make all of tourism in its own image. But it has not yet fully succeeded in doing so.” For example, though recent visitors from China are said to be travelling more in smaller groups or independently, the majority of the Chinese tourists are still travelling in groups. Besides, a significant portion of their annual earnings goes into international travels and this is having an impact on the visited destination. Hence further study on the impact of Capitalism on destinations could assist in learning more about this phenomenon.

Finally, Tourism is a product to be consumed, (*see* discussion under 6.7.4) and seeing that China’s enormous population has just started to travel and spend

more, *Consumerism* will have a global impact, according to Lomas (2017). China's huge population has just begun to travel, and they are also spending more as they go, providing a significant boost to global economies. Disposable incomes among the middle-class are expected to continue their growth, and it is this group that will have an enormous impact on the world economic growth. Moreover, the more affluent Chinese consumers become, the more dynamic the landscape develops. Price is no longer the only dominant factor, as these consumers place emphasis on brand, quality and the status of the goods purchased. What has become clear from the current study is that Chinese do not trust domestic products due to the numerous scandals in recent years. One effect of this is that the Chinese traveller has become keen on health and safety. Another factor is the ageing of the population. Health tourism to India, for example, has become a lucrative business. As China's population age, they are seeking help to its health issues in countries like India and the United Kingdom (see 6.7.4). Furthermore, new health trends, such as yoga and cycling are now commonplace, both among the younger generation and the older ones. Finally, education is booming since the new middle-class is now able to afford this product, which was once only affordable for the privileged few. It is, thus, the drive for study-abroad programmes, that is partly responsible for the increasing Chinese consumption market.

That is why, these four Cs could have implications not only for the destinations visited but also for Chinese outbound tourism, seeing that at the planning of such travels, the wants and needs of each segment need to be taken into consideration. The current study demonstrates (see section 1.6.1) that it would be detrimental for destinations to simply employ conventional tourism marketing strategies to reach this target market. Instead, tourism providers should bear in mind current trends and developments occurring

within this emerging market. This could be done through a deeper examination of the Quadruple-C Gaze: (Neo) Confucianism, Communism, Capitalism and Consumerism.

In sum, the above-mentioned topic is suggested for further research arising from this study on Chinese outbound tourism as well as the broader tourism field.

And so, this concludes a multidimensional inquiry into Chinese outbound tourism to Western Europe: the visitation of Chinese millennial students as tourists to the Netherlands. From the “Open-Door” policy to the “One-Child” policy and the Chinese millennials, three principal areas explored that define the Chinese millennial cohort. They are rapidly proliferating the (international) (tourism) world and generating waves as they travel. Tourism providers and operators need to re-design their offerings if they want to sustain their (tourism) growth by coming up with novel products /strategies that are in line with the wishes of these dynamic travellers. At the same time, the higher education board (in the Netherlands) in particular ought to step up its efforts to attract Chinese millennial students from second and third-tier cities in China. They could do this by creating (Chinese student) ambassadors, as well as increasing their social media presence on Chinese social media platforms. As the renown Chinese teacher, editor, politician and philosopher once said, “Education breeds confidence. Confidence breeds hope. Hope breeds peace” (Confucius, 551 - 479).

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BOX 4: A REFLEXIVE REPORT ON THE METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The notion of “methodology did not quite ring home before starting on this research journey. Yes, of course, I had heard of it and even used it in previous researches but hadn’t stopped to think of what it really means. I often confused it with “methods”. Ultimately, I found this section to be most difficult and I believe this was due to the fact that I did not quite understand it.

However, after studying numerous literatures on methodology: Silverman (2000), Lincoln and Guba (1985, 2005), Flick (2014), (Patton, 2002) among others, I started to get an idea of the concept of methodology. I realised that this section particularly is concerned with the suitability of the strategy/tactics used to accomplish the indicated objective of the study. In other words, it is the scheme or approach that is taken to justify the chosen research method(s) and describes the process and participants of the investigation. What I also realised is that this section was often very chaotic and confusing, maybe because different authors’ interpretations vary and I found it very difficult to discern from these different interpretations. To this regard, the quantitative methodology seems less complicated as this is rather straightforward. Whereas in quantitative research one talks about ‘statistical analysis’ or ‘research instruments’, in a qualitative study the theoretical foundations of methodologies are discussed; the provisional nature of the data chosen and the non-random character of the population studied, are pertinent to deriving interpretations. And so, at times I regularly questioned if I had made the right choice in the methodology.

I was advised to split this section into two parts as this would enable the reader to discern the exercise of methods from the strategic decisions taken. It was often very difficult to know what to place in these sections and in what order. I am usually not a very organised researcher/person, and so I have had a great deal of struggle with this section. I am, therefore, still uncertain about chapters three and four regarding organisation of the sections. I will re-read this section and make some alterations so that things become clearer for the reader.

Nevertheless, I now have a better understanding of Methodology section, especially within qualitative research, and hope this will help me in my future research efforts.

BOX 5: A REFLEXIVE REPORT ON THE EXERCISE OF METHODS

At the commencement of this section of this study, I was greatly confused as to what subjects are required under this heading, as I had been led to believe Chapter Four was set in stone and should therefore include the findings of the study. However, my Director of Studies duly informed me that this was not the case, and that this was a choice made by the researcher: it is a more constructive way of dividing the strategy/methodology and the methods sections. So, this is why I elected to have two separate chapters.

In the end, it proved a wise decision, as during the process of writing up these sections, I also learnt more about the differences between 'Methodology' and 'Methods'. In chapter four, I was able to explicitly describe the analysis process of the study, which also helped me to understand and organise the data in a much more structured way. I realised that it is much easier and quicker to interpret the data, once the categorization has been properly done. After I had done the NVivo analysis, I went over the data and the analyses manually in an effort to triangulate the analyses. By combing through the data, the themes identified became even clearer. I also noticed information that I had not picked up in the computerized analysis. In this way, I had a better understanding of the data.

Though this was the shortest chapter, it was the most intensive one, as analysing such a fairly extensive amount of data, both manually and digitally, was very time consuming. It was also the most rewarding, as it became clear how the themes were emerging / had emerged. There were also some surprises, which reveals the dynamic nature of the topic being explored. One of these was the news that the Chinese government has decided to create a new Ministry of Tourism. The CNTA was transformed into the new Ministry of Tourism and Culture. This is a major development, as this indicates that the Chinese government is placing considerable importance on the business of tourism. In so doing, there will be a more focused effort also to boost China's soft power via tourism. The entire effort indicates that the government is not only serious about the role of domestic tourism but also about international tourism. For the domestic market, it means a collaboration with cultural heritage and tourism administrations about establishing mutual goals, instead of each organisation setting its own goals. For outbound travels, it implies that China can go about enriching / expanding its soft power and cultural efforts in promoting China abroad.

BOX 6: A REFLEXIVE REPORT ON THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This was the largest chapter and I must admit the most exciting to write up. In chapter five the findings from the analysis was drawn up. In this section, it was not so easy to define the most relevant themes that were identified during the analysis. Anyway, seven major themes pertinent to answering the research questions were identified. Chinese outbound tourism is such a dynamic topic, that even during this investigation, numerous events were transpiring that had consequences for the study: for example, the volatility of China's relations with the United States, and the trade agreements which are being forged as a result. China's position on the world stage has risen significantly, as the nation emerges as a world leader regarding the sustainable and global warming issues being addressed and seeing that the US has pulled out of the Paris agreement. I have realised the enormous political influence that is being exhibited in and through tourism. Chinese outbound tourism is an important tool that is applied in the distribution of Chinese tourists throughout the world. With the establishment of the newly formed Ministry of Tourism and Culture, a major step is made by the government to show its commitment to boosting the tourism industry, not only in China but throughout the world. Another important factor is the change in the new wave of Chinese travellers, particularly the millennials: they are becoming very much like other international travellers: they like to shop, go to unique places, and travel like the locals. They are also becoming more conscious of their environment. This is something that I personally was not aware of before starting this study. I was also amazed at their interests in learning about the lives of the local population. They have a rich history of which they are incredibly proud, but they also seem to be interested in other cultures and histories, particularly that of the Dutch.

It is also the students who study in the Europe who seem to play a substantial role in the research findings. These students are 'walking billboards' wherever they go to study: they live, study and travel throughout the Netherlands and Europe. They also share their experiences on social media. Two ways are seen to be crucial in increasing Chinese millennial students to the Netherlands: one is to elect ambassadors who could recruit students from particularly second and third-tier cities in China. The other would be to have them entertain visiting friends and family during their study-time in the Netherlands. Providing them with Dutch experience is preferred than bending-over-backwards to make them feel at home, during their time in the Netherlands.

BOX 7: A REFLEXIVE REPORT ON THE MULTIDIMENSIONALITY OF CHINESE OUTBOUND TOURISM

This is the central focus of the study: the inquiry into the multidimensionality of Chinese outbound tourism, with a focus on the Chinese millennial student to the Netherlands. Here again, it was exhilarating to examine the many dimensions of the Chinese millennial traveller. These are competition, demographics, economics, technology, culture, nature and politics. What struck me most of all though, were the remarkable influences of economics and politics that countries employ in dealing with (international) tourism, especially from China. The country which used to discourage tourism, and whose citizens were not allowed to travel away from Asia, were now even being stimulated to travel the world. They are big spenders and therefore many countries are welcoming them en masse, mostly for the potentials they present for business generation. Many Chinese students are also opting for a study at European universities and most of these universities are doing a great deal to attract these students. I was sometimes amazed at the advanced measures being taken to lure Chinese students. These students are also seemingly happy to be in the Netherlands and want to be treated like an average international student. Some of them plan stay on staying on after graduation and are thinking about taking up positions or doing an internship in the Netherlands or in some European country. There are many programmes specially set up for these students within the Netherlands and these provide an interesting second choice for students who fear returning to China. It is not so easy for students who have studied in Europe to find jobs on their return to China. They have lost most of their contacts during their stay away. Moreover, they have been out of the loop for potential employers. Nevertheless, there are many Dutch multinationals who have offices in major cities in China. They are familiar with the Dutch way of life and some of them even speak Dutch. Their English language level would also have increased, so they are better able to find jobs with multinational companies on their return home. Having said that, the other dimensions identified are also crucial regarding Chinese outbound tourism and all of them define the Chinese millennial traveller as having similar traits to other international millennials. They seem to blend in, though when they are travelling through Europe. I was surprised to see that most of the Chinese millennial students studying in the Netherlands were actually Dutch students. Most of them were girls, trying to find and learn about their roots. These were some of the surprises that were revealed during the analysis of the data collected.

BOX 8: A REFLEXIVE REPORT ON SETTING UP A PROPAEDEUTIC AGENDA

One of aims of this inquiry was to set up a propaedeutic vision for tourism studies. Though this was not the initial aim of the study, it ultimately seems like an appropriate way to expand on knowledge regarding Chinese outbound tourism. Most of the studies conducted on Chinese outbound tourism are approached from a quantitative research methodological perspective. Many are also focused on the economic values, and very few examine the social and cultural aspects of the Chinese travellers themselves. The Chinese millennials are also a fairly novel cohort and therefore very little is known about them. That is why it was important to examine these Chinese millennial tourists themselves, their interests, their (travel) behaviour, and their physiognomies.

There are numerous areas that can be explored in this respect but I have selected a few that I believe would be crucial to the (Chinese) tourism industry. I also believe it is important to focus on the Chinese millennials as they are a growing force within the Chinese population. Since they are from the single-child policy, they feel a sense of responsibility to take care of their parents, who have invested heavily in them. Most of them believe they do not have a life of their own, as their parents are overbearing and arrange everything for them. They do like the independence they are suddenly given when they arrive in Europe to study. As a student, they are visited by friends and family and they act as host to them, showing them their new they way of life, and introducing them to their newly adopted home. They can thus be interesting for tourism operators / providers in promoting the destination. It is also important for these tourism operators and providers to learn more about these Chinese millennial tourists / students. They could help to promote the destination and the destination can help to make their study/standard of living at the destination more enjoyable.

I believe there is a need for more research in this field and therefore, it is necessary to set up a propaedeutical research agenda that addresses these issues. I also think new methodologies should be applied in such studies, especially those using new technologies, as millennials are techno-savvy.

Much work needs to be done particularly using new approaches and new methodologies. I will also play an active part of this vision and I plan to take on some of these projects myself.

BOX 9: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL REFLECTION ON THE STUDY

This research study has been a priceless learning experience for me. Not only have I achieved a richer understanding of the nature of research and of the recurring and sometimes shambolic nature of the research practice, it has made me value the overwhelming generosity of my participants and all those who assisted me in this explorative voyage. I have learned that there is a great deal of fogginess, especially regarding the different categories that were initially thought to be orderly and candid. This sometimes proved frustrating, confusing and tedious. Consequently, I have made countless changes on a daily basis and even as I am in the concluding stages of my writing, I find myself making alterations to my work. This might be due to the emergent nature of the study, but it could also be because of the dynamic topic that I have elected to study. Nevertheless, it is from these muddled conditions that one tends to learn the most. It is from these moments of 'darkness' that I truly saw the light. At the same time, this research journey has supplied me with some key notions which caused me to examine my own professional principles and generic standards. They have helped me in constructing my personal guidelines for possible changes to my future practices. Starting with the review of literature; this was rather expansive and I realised that I could have focused more on the major literature on the Chinese culture as by understanding this, it could, first of all, have been more useful to comprehend the activities that this group undertakes when abroad. Furthermore, philosophical assumptions which I had concerning Chinese outbound tourists, that they were largely interested in Europe because of its ancient history and its shopping facilities, have taught me that although these are still activities that are practiced by this group, they are no longer the sole reasons for Chinese tourists to visit Europe. The cohort of Chinese millennials and the Free Independent travellers, are increasingly choosing to go off-the-beaten-track, in search of unique experiences, and are re-making their world, and gaining novel 'worlds' as they travel. One way of doing so is by interacting with the locals and trying out local cuisines. I have also gathered that Chinese millennial tourists are not all the same regarding habits and customs. They are roughly divided into three cohorts who seek for different experiences when travelling through Europe. I have provided a reflexive report for most chapters. These, I hope will provide the reader with clear insights into my research journey.

BOX 10: VIDEOS AND MOST RELEVANT WEBSITES USED IN THIS STUDY

Video on Chinese millennials by Jessica Sun. Jessica is married to Ed Sanders and together they promote the Netherlands to/in China. Here, Jessica gave a presentation at the China Meet-Up at the NHTV University in Breda, the Netherlands, where she shares her experiences of living in the Netherlands. Ed Sanders was also very helpful in providing valuable insights into this study and is sourced accordingly under Sanders (2016).

Important videos:

The Story of China by Michael Wood and directed by G. Branigan (2016) Motion Picture and YouTube video-clips.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=the+story+of+china+with+michael+wood [Retrieved May 2017].

Giethoorn: a tiny village in the North of the Netherlands where Chinese tourists flock each year.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eROzMwtIeNA>

Giethoorn video-clip: Giethoorn, North Holland close to Amsterdam, Netherlands – a must-see for Chinese millennials:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5uX00vH_YQ

Makers of Ni Hao film about the Chinese visitors to Giethoorn:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vr7QW8CNmrw>

video-clip: interview with Gabrielle, founder of the magic “Giethoorn”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFbkwZjwQ3Q>

Bloomberg media on China’s millennials are driving World Travel Growth:

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-09-21/china-s-young-globetrotters-are-driving-world-travel-gains>

videos: the image of the Netherlands

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FwkfsqGp3qo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNCSTVOcSq8>

N.B. Appendices: see *thesis supplement* attachment.