First Generation Chinese Migrants and their Association with the Development of Liverpool's Chinatown

FIRST GENERATION CHINESE MIGRANTS AND THEIR ASSOCIATION
WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIVERPOOL'S CHINATOWN

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by

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Contents

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Abstract

My research aims to provide an in-depth understanding of first generation Chinese migrants and their changing connection to Liverpool's Chinatown. Liverpool's Chinatown is used as an angle from which I study the Chinese community, a holistic appreciation of the evolution of Liverpool's Chinatown is first warranted. There are therefore two components to my research. For the historical portion, research driven by archival sources from the 1700s to date was conducted. For the contemporary portion of the research, 68 in-depth qualitative interviews with first generation Chinese migrants across the socio-economic spectrum were undertaken. In the historical part of my thesis, I will show that the construction and re-constructions of Liverpool's Chinatown is a product of white political domination and context-specific economic factors underlie the power assertions. In the contemporary part of my thesis, I will show that Liverpool's Chinatown, as characterised by Chinese associations and Chinese cuisine, will persist but not flourish. Liverpool's Chinatown is currently associated with a Chinese community that is fragmented within itself and segregated from mainstream society. This fragmentation and segregation are accentuated by technological advancements in our contemporary world. In studying the developmental pathways of Chinatowns, scholars have argued that they will eventually die out (Lee, 1949) or become theme parks manipulated by hegemonic social groups (Laguerre, 2000; Lai, 2009). These conclusions are drawn without considering the agency of *first generation Chinese migrants*. With a focus on first generation Chinese migrants and especially on the ordinary Chinese for the contemporary part of my thesis, the primary aim of my research on the Chinese community will supplement studies on ethnic minorities in Britain as Chinese is a relatively less studied group compared to South Asian and Black populations in Britain. As a secondary objective, my research will also plug a gap in the academic discourse on Chinatowns.

<u>List of Tables</u>

List of Figures

List of Acronyms

BBC	**British Broadcasting Corporation**
CASE	**Collaborative Doctoral Awards**
CICC	**Chinese Immigration Concern Committee**
CMC	**Computer-Mediated Communications**
CV	**Curriculum Vitae**
DVD	**Digital Video Disc**
EIC	**East India Company**
ESRC	**Economic and Social Research Council**
ICT	**Information Communications Technology**
IT	**Information Technology**
LCBA	**Liverpool Chinese Business Association**
MAC	**Migration Advisory Council**
MCCDA	**Merseyside Chinese Community Development Association**
MNC	**Multi-National Corporation**
MSN	**Microsoft Network**
PRC	**People's Republic of China**
QQ	**Tencent QQ**
UCAS	**Universities and Colleges Admissions Service**
UK	**United Kingdom**
UKHTC	**United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre**
US	**United States**
XJTLU	**Xi'An Jiao Tong-Liverpool University**

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Chapter One – Introduction

My thesis undertakes an in-depth study into the state of the first generation Chinese migrants in Liverpool and their role in the development of Liverpool's Chinatown. Although my primary focus is on the first generation Chinese migrants in Liverpool, I am scrutinising the group from the angle of their association (or lack of) with Liverpool's Chinatown. Therefore, a secondary parallel emphasis is thus the evolution of Liverpool's Chinatown. There are two portions – historical and contemporary – to my study. For the historical portion of this thesis, I will show that the construction and re-constructions of Liverpool's Chinatown is a product of Western political domination driven by economic factors. For the contemporary part of this thesis, I will show that a persisting Liverpool Chinatown is associated with a fragmented Chinese community[1] that is also segregated from mainstream society[2]. This fragmentation and segregation are accentuated by the advancements in Information Communications Technology (ICT) and air travel.

Fundamental to the analyses is the socio-spatial relationships first generation Chinese migrants have with other individuals, the rationale for which I will explicate subsequently. Constrained by the archival materials, the historical part of the thesis focuses only on the relationship between first generation Chinese migrants and the host society. Especially in the more recent stages of Liverpool Chinatown's development as retrieved from archival records, there is an emphasis on the relationship between persons in positions of power from both the host society and the Chinese community. To supplement the archival analysis beyond the perspectives of authority figures, the contemporary portion of the thesis focuses on the

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[1] Unless specified otherwise, the terms, 'Chinese community / migrants', throughout this thesis, are used to refer to first generation Chinese migrants.
[2] Mainstream society and host society are used interchangeably.

relationships first generation *ordinary* Chinese[3] migrants have with members of the host society, with ethnic Chinese in Liverpool and with family and friends back in their home countries.

Specifically for the contemporary part of the thesis, I use the ascriptions of Liverpool's Chinatown, given by my interviewees, as lenses with which to analyse their everyday experiences and draw conclusions about what these mean, primarily for the first generation Chinese migrants and, as a secondary objective, the development of Liverpool's Chinatown. By combining extensive archival research analysing materials dated from the 1700s to 2011 with in-depth one-on-one interviews with 68 first generation Chinese migrants across the socio-economic spectrum, this research bridges the past to the present. With regard to my primary objective of studying the first generation Chinese migrants, there have been relatively fewer studies on this ethnic group compared to Asian and Black populations in Britain. This research will thus complement studies on ethnic minority groups in Britain. With reference to my secondary aim of studying Chinatown in this research, no studies on Chinatowns have attempted to marry historical with contemporary studies. My approach will thus be the first in providing a holistic portrayal of Liverpool's Chinatown across time periods.

Today, a few Chinese restaurants and associations in derelict buildings as well as an iconic Chinese arch, lion statues and street names that have traditional Chinese characters transliterated from the English language, line the street designated as 'Chinatown'. Visually, Liverpool's Chinatown may not seem exciting, and may even seem 'dead' in comparison to bustling ones such as those in Manchester, London, Vancouver and San Francisco. However,

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[3] People not in positions of authority and / or leadership in community organisations or wielding political influence.

a lacklustre Chinatown does not mean that it is an uninteresting subject for study. In fact, the dullness of Liverpool's Chinatown today attracts my attention and stirs my curiosity especially since Liverpool's Chinatown represents Europe's oldest and historically most significant Chinatown (International Institute for Transcultural and Diasporic Studies, 2007). Liverpool's Chinatown has evolved very much since its heyday. Originally a thriving seaport from which the first direct steamship from Europe to China sailed and the only base from which some 20,000 Chinese seamen serving in the British Merchant Navy were deployed during the World Wars, the Chinese community in Britain is without doubt intimately related to Liverpool. It is from Liverpool where early perceptions of, and interactions with, the Chinese community proliferated across the Anglophone world.

Going ahead, the fates of Chinatowns worldwide are deemed pessimistic. Lee (1949), in her study of 28 Chinatowns in the United States (US), argued that Chinatowns would eventually die out with the combination of restrictive immigration policies, intergenerational upward mobility into mainstream society and cultural assimilation over time. Her predictions came about based on her observations of second and subsequent generations of Chinese people. Although Lee (1949) also acknowledged the role of first generation Chinese people in influencing the development of Chinatowns, she argued that Chinese immigration into the US was decreasing so this group of individuals would slowly not become a factor in influencing the development of Chinatowns. She overlooked the fact that with a tightening immigration policy, a rising momentum of irregular migration would also result.

This brings me to the discussion of the definition of the 'Chinese community'. As highlighted in the preceding paragraph, apart from first generation Chinese migrants, second and subsequent generations of Chinese people, as well as mixed race Chinese people

(although it can also be argued if the definition of a Chinese person applies to this last category) constitute a 'Chinese community'. Given the non-homogeneity of the 'Chinese community', it is thus worthwhile to focus on a group – i.e. first generation Chinese migrants – for purposes of my study. The rationale for doing so is two-fold. Firstly, a more robust study and analysis of the research findings can be undertaken. Secondly, there have been fewer studies on first generation Chinese migrants and this research seeks to address this gap in academic discourse.

More recently, scholars such as Laguerre (2000) and Lai (2009) shifted away from a focus on the perspectives of Chinese people to study the perspectives of members of the host society and their relationships with the Chinese community in influencing the development of Chinatowns. They put forth the argument of themeparkisation being the eventual fate of Chinatowns. In other words, Chinatowns will become an artificial construct that is manipulated by members of the host society. First generation Chinese migrants do not feature at all in these more recent works on Chinatown. My thesis focuses on first generation Chinese migrants. Specifically for the contemporary part of my thesis, the focus is on ordinary Chinese in order to give a realistic portrayal of Liverpool's Chinatown. My principle of giving sufficient attention to Chinese agency is inspired by academics such as Chen (2000). Chen (2000), in his account of the Chinese in San Francisco, warns against viewing "Chinatown simply as a segregated urban ethnic enclave created by a hostile environment" (Chen, 2000:47). This perspective does not give sufficient weight to the agency of the Chinese actors who have a stake in shaping their community. Discounting Chinese agency will result in overlooking the intricacies and vibrancy of the non-homogenous community and of Chinatown.

This brings me to the question of what exactly is Chinatown? From the literature review, it has been found that defining Chinatown is fraught with many difficulties. Essentially, there is an abstract dimension and an actualised dimension. For the abstract dimension, academics such as Anderson (1995) portray Vancouver's Chinatown as an ideological construct. Chinatown is argued to be a product of White cultural supremacy. In the latter, there are also many angles. Chinatown is at times defined by its geographical boundaries, at times by individuals who engage in Chinatown, and at other times by its functions – commercial and / or residential. I feel that the abstract-actualised dichotomy is not robust because there is a two-way causality between the two dimensions. For example, something abstract can manifest into something concrete and similarly, something real can influence the imagination that results. I feel that more importantly, we should scrutinise the relationships between individuals instead and this is the approach taken for my research.

In not defining Chinatown at the outset, firstly, this thesis will avoid the issue of stereotyping. The Chinese catering industry, typified by dire work conditions and environments as well as being marred by accounts of illegal entries and human smuggling syndicates, characterises Chinatowns throughout the world and it may seem natural to begin an inquiry on Chinatowns by studying the ethnic catering industry and the individuals who work in that industry. However, the Chinese community changes over time. As long as the momentum of migration has not ceased, the changing waves of Chinese people coming to the United Kingdom (UK) will persist. For example, in Britain, Chinese people came as seamen who then went on to dominate hand launderette businesses and subsequently Chinese food enterprises. Although ethnic cuisine is still the main business of the Chinese populace in present day, many Chinese people who do not necessarily work in Chinese food establishments are also coming to the UK. The rise of asylum seekers from the People's

Republic of China (PRC) and the enhanced socio-economic and educational backgrounds of Chinese migrants are not sufficiently accounted for. Additionally, with educational institutions pursuing the high fees from international students, many developed nations such as the US and the UK have become top destinations for individuals pursuing overseas education. International students who were once an insignificant category within the first generation Chinese migrants are now a major presence that is difficult to ignore. Therefore, another study on Chinese catering would only perpetuate stereotypes of the Chinese community being associated only with ethnic cuisine.

Secondly and more importantly, by recruiting participants across the age band and socio-economic spectrum for the contemporary part of my research, I maximised the opportunity to study the contemporary first generation Chinese migrants in the UK. Apart from health and social care areas in which grounds that have been covered are acculturation, emotional well-being and health needs issues of Chinese immigrants (Broady, 1952; O'Neil, 1972; Wong, 1989; Yu, 2000; Au, 2004), there is relatively little focus on the Chinese community in the UK. In contrast, with regard to Asian and Black populations in the UK, much work has been done. An example is a study on the effects of immigration on the host nationals (Heath and Tilley, 2005; Leong and Ward, 2006; Stone and Muir, 2007). Another dimension that has been covered is family formation and ethnic minority women's labour force participation (Holdsworth and Dale, 1997; Dale et al, 2001; Dale, 2002; Lindley, Dale and Dex, 2006). Studies on minorities and housing abound too (Purdam et al, 2003). Regarding economic performance of immigrants in the UK, research that has been conducted encompasses unemployment (Blackaby et al, 1997), labour market performance (Bell, 1997), its correlation with language proficiency (Dustmann and Fabbri, 2002; Shields and Wheatley Price, 2002), discrimination in minorities' earnings (Denny, Harmon and Roche, 1997) and

self-employment (Borjas, 1986; Clark and Drinkwater, 2000). Particularly on identity, examinations of the flux and fluidity of immigrants' identities over time concentrated on Muslims (Baxter, 2006) and Bangladeshis (Salway, 2008) in Britain. The Policy Studies Institute and former Social and Community Planning Research (now known as the National Centre for Social Research) conducted a Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities in 1994 which was used by Nazroo and Karlsen (2003) to look into patterns of identity among ethnic minority people. However, Chinese were excluded from the study due to the small numbers recruited. In line with my primary objective of studying the first generation Chinese migrants, a greater understanding of the less scrutinised Chinese community in Britain will therefore supplement the studies of minority groups in the UK.

In analysing change over time periods, sufficient attention must also be accorded to the wider structural developments over the years. More recently, Liverpool's orientation towards the PRC is of interest. Other than London, Liverpool was the only other British city to be represented in the inaugural 2010 Shanghai World Exposition that brought together more than 200 nations to pursue commercial opportunities. Xi'An Jiao Tong-Liverpool University (XJTLU), opened in 2006, is also the first UK University that is established in mainland China. This development will result in rising numbers of PRC students coming into Liverpool. In addition to greater PRC student inflows, Liverpool City Council also targeted efforts to boost tourism to the city. One of these initiatives was the successful bid for the 2008 European Capital of Culture. Winning the title was instrumental for many areas in Liverpool to be in receipt of urban regeneration projects, Liverpool's Chinatown being one of them. Apart from geo-political and domestic developments, a quantum leap in the improvement of technology has been achieved. The way ICT is being used has not only radically changed over the years, the usage of ICT has greatly intensified too. These transformations will have a

significant impact on the Chinese community and the landscape of Chinatown. By considering these exogenous developments that connect people across continents in a rapid and timely fashion, I will be able to provide a more realistic representation of contemporary Liverpool's first generation Chinese migrants and Liverpool's Chinatown.

My research thus aims to contribute to the fields of migration, ethnic and transnational studies by combining historical and contemporary analyses to secure a holistic understanding of the evolution of Liverpool's Chinatown as a secondary objective and as a primary goal, an in-depth look into the state of the first generation Chinese migrants in Liverpool. The questions guiding my research are as follows:

(1) How is the development of Liverpool's Chinatown situated within the wider, Western-dominated culture of the city?

(2) What are the roles of 'traditional' Chinese activities (e.g. Chinese community centres, catering industry) based in and around Liverpool's Chinatown in Liverpool's contemporary Chinese community?

(3) Given Liverpool's changing relationship to the People's Republic of China, how are these patterns changing over time?

Chapter Two covers the literature review that has been conducted and which has resulted in the formulation of the research questions. An evaluation of how Chinatowns worldwide are defined and how their evolutions are determined were first carried out. As mentioned earlier, in defining Chinatowns, there are the abstract and actualised dimensions. Chinatowns are

argued to die out eventually or to become artificial constructs. However, these lines of reasoning come about by analysing the perspectives of second and subsequent generations of Chinese and of the host society respectively. With my focus on first generation Chinese migrants, topics such as Chinese migration and the Chinese community were reviewed. It is pertinent to recognise the importance of not essentialising the community when studying a particular group. Apart from nationality differences, there are many other differentiations based on age, gender, generation, legal status and socio-economic backgrounds. With this awareness, understanding the motivations for and obstacles to migration are key for contextualising the migratory decisions which have a significant impact on migrants' coping strategies in host societies. Migrants' coping strategies in host societies are also affected by their transnational relationships. Given the realities of the information age in which we live, a review of transnationalism-related studies is inevitable as migrants continue to maintain, if not strengthen, ties with their home countries. Moreover, as Chinatowns worldwide are dominated by the ethnic catering industry, literature that has been reviewed also includes works on the catering industry, ethnic entrepreneurship and family businesses. Although the topics may seem disparate, I will show that it is crucial that they be addressed given my grounded theory approach of starting with as few pre-conceived notions as possible.

In *Chapter Three*, the methodology that has been designed to carry out the research will be elaborated. Being a piece of qualitative research that aims to document an in-depth scrutiny into the Liverpool's first generation Chinese migrants and its changing connection to Liverpool's Chinatown, an account of the evolution of Liverpool's Chinatown has to be detailed. However, due to the many theoretical and technical difficulties in defining Chinatowns, this thesis is not concerned with its definition as such. Instead, the focus is on the Chinese community, specifically the socio-spatial relationships of first generation

Chinese migrants and what these mean for the first generation Chinese community and the development of Chinatown. This study thus utilises two main techniques – archival as well as one-on-one in-depth interviews with 68 individuals from a diverse cross-section of the population. Whilst archival research can document how Chinatown has developed since its inception, contemporary empirical research is equally important to understand how Liverpool's first generation Chinese community's association with Liverpool's Chinatown is changing and how the latter is projected to evolve.

In that chapter, I have also documented my research journey of which a key component is the reflexivity on the research process in order to yield empirically robust research findings. Furthermore, the difficulty with penetrating the Chinese community in Liverpool and the time and effort needed to build rapport and establish relationships are highlighted. It is important to note that although the actual fieldwork of interviews began only in early 2010; in-roads into the community and relationships building began much earlier in 2007. Although the 'work' from 2007 does not constitute actual fieldwork, they are nonetheless vital for the interviews actually taking place in 2010 and a brief reflection on the fieldwork-related issues between 2007-2010 is presented. Another key section which I have included in the chapter is the ethical considerations and issues, as well as moral dilemmas that I was confronted with and the decisions that were subsequently made.

As a Chinese person, I initially thought penetrating the Chinese community in Liverpool would be easy because of similarities in cultural backgrounds amongst the various Chinese ethnic groups. Although to a certain extent, being of the same race as my research participants did open doors to some groups, gaining acceptance and trust of my research participants happened only after much work in relationship building was done. I sometimes

wondered if the fieldwork would have been easier if the research had been undertaken by a complete outsider, i.e. a non-Chinese person. The outsider could have the advantages of being eased into the various groups via gatekeepers. However, as a community researcher who has successfully gained entry into the community, the findings would most likely be richer although there is the potential to miss blind spots and take certain observations for granted. Therefore, I consciously bear in mind, the need to triangulate in my methodological approach and analyses.

The different types of Chinese dialects and Mandarin spoken by the disparate Chinese people aside, nationality is another factor contributing to the divisions amongst the Chinese community. I was born and bred in Singapore and although I spent my undergraduate years in the UK, I did not know of the historical injustices and mistreatment of the Chinese people until after I completed my archival research that is detailed in Chapter Four. The new knowledge inspired my passion for this piece of research, and was one of the driving forces for helping me stay the course throughout my doctoral research.

The subsequent four chapters expound the research findings. The findings from archival research from the late 1700s to 2011 form the bulk of materials in *Chapter Four*. This chapter is inspired by Kay Anderson's 1995 seminal work in which she utilised archival materials to chart out the development of Vancouver's Chinatown. Similarly, four main phases of Liverpool Chinatown's evolution were identified – the beginning era of Chinatown, the growing period, the maturing stage and finally, the stagnating phase in the present day. As a consequence of analysing the dialectical interactions between host and minority groups amidst global and national environments, we see different constructions of Liverpool's Chinatown over time. Although Liverpool's Chinatown is a product of White political

domination, I diverge from Anderson's argument that it is attributed to Western cultural hegemony. Instead, economic factors that are specific to the socio-political climates of the day are the primary motivators for the manifestations of White supremacy[4]. Furthermore, because sufficient weight is given to Chinese agency, we see the reactions to the assertions by the White community. Their actions are contested, negotiated and embraced by the Chinese community at varying points in time. This chapter will then go on to explain the visual realities of Liverpool's Chinatown given recent efforts to regenerate the area and parts of the city. Next, to set the scene for the contemporary analyses that will occupy the subsequent three chapters, I elaborate the definitions of Liverpool's Chinatown provided by my research participants. As the literature review exposed the difficulties of defining Chinatown, I used my interviewees' ascriptions of Chinese food and Chinese associations for Liverpool's Chinatown as lenses to examine their everyday experiences, the findings which will occupy the subsequent three chapters.

Contemporary empirical research findings dominate *Chapter Five* and the following two chapters. Based on my interviewees' opinions, *Chapter Five* touches on Chinese associations, one of the connections made with Liverpool's Chinatown. Through the lens of Chinese associations, I explore contemporary first generation Chinese migrants' migration objectives and why they are / are not engaging in Chinese associations. My argument is that the first generation Chinese community today is increasingly fragmented compared to the community in the past. Many of the first generation Chinese migrants have sojourning mindsets and possess neither stake in, nor ownership of, the Chinese associations. Therefore, in line with Lee's (1949) hypothesis that Chinatowns will die out eventually, my argument is that Chinese associations in Liverpool will be confronted with a similar fate. Moreover, although there is a

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[4] White supremacy refers to a sentiment of superiority because of cultural and phenotypical factors.

group of migrants who want to make Liverpool their permanent home, they have created a support network that exists outside the physical confines of Liverpool's Chinatown. The implications of this occurrence with regard to Liverpool's first generation Chinese community and Chinatown will be detailed.

Chinese food, the other connection with Liverpool's Chinatown as articulated by my interviewees, is the lens with which I analyse migrants' everyday experiences in *Chapter Six*. Chinatowns have been said to be ethnic enclaves offering employment opportunities and protection of the minority group against the inhospitable host society. To understand if the industry and the community are segregated from the host society, an appreciation of the dominant catering industry in terms of its business operations is important. This chapter probes actors' intentions in wanting to integrate as well as factors inhibiting their integration with mainstream society. In doing so, a thorough analysis of their lifestyle choices, decisions and rationales is undertaken. I argue that the migrant Chinese community is segregated from the host society. This segregation is in part attributed to the Chinese cuisine – firstly as an employment industry with structural imperatives inhibiting integration and secondly, as a socialising tool that Chinese use when seeking cultural familiarity in a foreign land. As a result of the enduring catering industry, in contrast to the conclusion in the preceding chapter, Liverpool's Chinatown will thus persist.

Chapter Seven takes us beyond the physical boundaries of Liverpool's Chinatown and considers the socio-spatial relationships between individuals in the transnational realm against a backdrop of emerging global realities. Technological breakthroughs have not only been rampant but many quantum leaps have taken place within a very short time frame. The ease of maintaining links with fellow friends in a foreign land as well as with family and

friends back in their home countries will affect migrants' coping strategies in a host society. Furthermore, frequent contact with familiar news and people from home would impact migrants' sense of belonging. Continual maintenance of links with their home countries will modify what it means to be away from home and tempers migrants' reliance on Chinatown for familiar cultural tangibles and intangibles. Even though voyages across continents have taken place, with the technological tools readily available to them, migrants may not feel dislocated from their respective homes in the destination countries. Transnational flows of people, as well as the utility of information and goods will be evaluated in respect to migrants' coping strategies when they are overseas. I therefore argue that ICT and air travel have intensified the fragmentation of the first generation Chinese community as well as its segregation from host society.

First generation Chinese migrants have an impact on the evolution of Liverpool's Chinatown. Opposed to the pessimistic vision of Lee's (1949), my argument, then, is that Liverpool's Chinatown will persist but it will not flourish. Although Chinese associations may decline over time, the Chinese catering industry will continue to be the mainstay of Chinatown as it offers not only employment opportunities for some Chinese migrants, it is also a provider of goods and services desired by the Chinese and non-Chinese communities. From the perspective of the catering industry, Liverpool's Chinatown will thus persist. However, the non-progressive nature of the catering industry and the ease with which familiar cultural tangibles and intangibles can be accessed due to technological advances moderate the flourishing of Liverpool's Chinatown. More importantly, the endurance of Liverpool's Chinatown is associated with a first generation Chinese community that is fragmented within itself and at the same time segregated from mainstream society. The

fragmentation within the first generation Chinese community and segregation from host society are accentuated by the advancements in ICT and air travel.

Having here, in the Introduction, detailed the theoretical framework for this research, outlined the separate chapters and stated the overarching arguments in this thesis, *Chapter Two* reviews the literature that forms the basis for my research design on Liverpool's Chinatown.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

The grounded theory[5] approach for this literature review is one of casting a wide net given the lesser-researched nature of the Chinese community in the UK as well as of Chinatowns in the UK as compared to Chinatowns in the US. Starting with as few pre-conceived notions and assumptions as possible, this literature review will begin with an assessment of the developmental pathways of Chinatowns and how Chinatowns are defined. In Lee's 1949 study on American Chinatowns, she hypothesised their eventual demise. However, Liverpool's Chinatown, instead of dying out with the passage of time, continues to persist and similar to many Chinatowns worldwide, is dominated by the ethnic catering industry. An assessment of Chinese catering is thus inevitable. However, Chinatown is not only about ethnic cuisine and the Chinese community is not only involved in the catering trade. Against a backdrop of global changes over time, the profile of Chinese coming into Liverpool is changing. Compared to a Chinese community comprising mainly sailors, the Chinese community today consists of individuals across the socio-economic spectrum. After Lee's (1949) scrutiny on the development of Chinatowns from the perspective of second and subsequent generations of Chinese, more recent scholars shifted away from a focus on Chinese people to look at the relationships between members of the host society and the Chinese community. Scholars such as Laguerre (2000) and Lai (2009) put forth the idea of themeparkisation. Again, first generation Chinese migrants do not feature at all in these more recent works. The focus of my thesis is thus the first generation Chinese migrants because unlike Lee's (1949) argument, the momentum of Chinese migration has not subsided. As the

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[5] According to Byrne (2001), 'Grounded theory, a mode of inductive analysis, can be thought of as a theory that is derived from or "grounded" in everyday experiences. The foundations of grounded theory are embedded in symbolic interactionism, which assumes that one's communications and actions express meaning.

primary focus of my research is first generation Chinese migrants, understanding Chinese migration – the flows, migrants' motivations and coping strategies in host societies – and Chinese migrants' connection (or lack of) with Chinatown will be paramount. Particularly in our contemporary digital age in which technological advancements have progressed rapidly, key to this socio-spatial paradigm is the transnational dimension. As migrants move to destination countries, they continue to sustain, if not foster, their relationships with families and friends back in their home countries. Cultivation of these relationships has been greatly facilitated by technology. Although technology has always existed, the way it is being harnessed today, compared to yester-years, is vastly different. These transnational relationships will have a bearing on migrants' sense of belonging, their coping strategies in host society and how Liverpool's Chinatown features (or not) in their everyday lives. Although the themes of the literature reviewed may seem diverse and disparate, the topics fit in with one another providing me with a holistic theoretical framework for my research project.

2.2   Development of Chinatowns

In 1949, Lee put forth the hypothesis that Chinatowns will decline over time. She noted the demographic decline of Chinatowns in the US and their eventual dying out through the combined effects of restrictive immigration policies, intergenerational upward occupational mobility into the mainstream economy and cultural assimilation over time. This vision regarding the eventual demise of Chinatowns in Britain is also shared by Luk (2008). However, the autopsy report on Chinatowns is written through understanding Chinatowns from the perspectives of second and subsequent generations of Chinese. More recently, academics have shifted the focus of understanding Chinatowns from the perspectives of

second and subsequent generations of Chinese towards that of the host society's and their relationship with the Chinese community.

Laguerre (2000) highlighted the phases of enclave development over time from the entrance of a community, confrontation by the dominant group with the newly-arrived, incorporation of the new community, maturity of the groups' organisations and eventually to the theme-parkisation of the site. Although it should be stressed that enclave development may not necessarily be linear nor uni-directional, Laguerre's observations of Chinatown, Japantown and Manilatown in American society had a tendency to trends of a similar developmental pathway. More importantly, the notion of a theme park suggests artificiality and that it is a 'playground'. This playground, utilised by non-Chinese, is a place where oriental stereotypes are manipulated (Lai, 2009). However, Chinese may be the patrons of this playground too, especially those who have an interest in leveraging upon ethnic emblems for their cause such as restaurant owners. Additionally, the argument of whether Chinatown becomes an artificial construct or not may be inconsequential just as long as there continues to be a demand for the goods and services that are offered in Chinatown and that these goods and services meet the needs of the non-Chinese as well as Chinese populations who desire them.

In the development of Chinatowns, it is also appropriate to consider the role of urban regeneration. Chan (2004) uses the Chinese quarter in Birmingham as an example, to carry out a critical review of the planning process in relation to Chinatowns. He described the planning priorities surrounding the Central Area District Plan and examined the monument of the Inner Ring Road to understand the emergence of the city's official cultural quarters in the late 1980s. Although the regeneration efforts of the Chinese quarter in Birmingham was positioned as a model of multiculturalism, the planning discourse heavily emphasised issues

of aesthetics, dereliction, and objectives of attracting business tourism and financial investment. It is worthy to note that ethnic minority enterprises are not new to Birmingham. Some of these businesses were opened prior to 1960 and ethnic minority businesses existed in the city as early as the 1930s. To propel the planning agenda, these ethnic minority businesses have become "enlisted and rationalised as a node of regional regeneration and, furthermore, served as a means to re-visualise the city's connection to different international circuits of capital" (Chan, 2004: 181). Chan therefore argues that the urban regeneration efforts of Birmingham's Chinese quarter are in fact, pursued with little interest in celebrating multiculturalism.

Apart from non-Chinese who also engage in Chinatowns for business or leisure, continuing waves of first generation Chinese migrants will have a bearing on the Chinatown landscape. Additionally, at the same time as immigration policies are increasingly restrictive, we are also simultaneously witnessing a rise in irregular migration, a phenomenon that has always existed. If we shift our perception to scrutinise the impact first generation Chinese migrants have on the landscape of Chinatown, Chinatown's longevity may well be guaranteed for as long as migration is on-going. With a focus on first generation Chinese migrants for this thesis, it is thus essential that we review literature related to migration and the ethnic Chinese group. However, before I do that, it will be useful to address the question of what exactly defines 'Chinatown'.

2.2.1   Defining "Chinatown"

Basically, Chinatown is defined as having abstract and actualised dimensions. I will first discuss the definitions of Chinatown in the actualised sense. Benton and Gomez (2008) report

that the term Chinatown is of American origin, and it first appeared in text in 1857. The estimate of its first mention in a British context was when journalist George Sims was describing London's Limehouse in 1902. In describing a place, it is thus assumed that there is a geographical location for Chinatown. Different groups of individuals may have different starting premises with regard to its physical extent. Indeed, there are distinctions between the Chinese and non-Chinese with regard to the perception of the geographical extent and scale of Chinatown. The Chinese generally prefer to call 'Chinatowns' 'Hua Bu' (华埠) or 'Tang Ren Jie' (唐人街) (Luk, 2008; Benton and Gomez, 2008), transliterally meaning 'Chinese Place' or 'Chinese Street' respectively. In contrast, the more common reference of 'Chinatowns' as a 'town' is used extensively by the White community.

Secondly, as with many other Chinatowns throughout the world, Chinatowns are not isolated quarters but are present in the middle of metropolises; and the urban landscape – physically and functionally – is always changing. Ambiguously defined by Light (1972), Chinatown could best be described as a high concentration of Chinese population and business in a delimited geographical area. Defining the physical scale of Chinatown according to its functions or types and numbers of residents is, therefore, fraught with much difficulty, as Chen (2000) discovered in his attempt to demarcate the boundaries of San Francisco's Chinatown.

The connotation of Chinatown as a physical place is further exemplified by Luk (2008). Even though Luk did not identify or define the area bordering Chinatown at the outset, he went on to introduce the concept of 'broader Chinatown' to express the residential sprawl to adjacent neighbourhoods as well as the transformation of Chinatown from the traditional residential to the economic enclaves. He also designated a 'local' Chinatown status to

Liverpool as compared to 'national' (London) and 'regional' (Birmingham and Manchester) based on the scale and sizes of the local Chinese community being served by Chinatown. It should however be noted that Chinatowns also serve Chinese tourists as well as non-Chinese groups.

Underlying Luk's definition of Chinatowns is thus the Chinese population size in the city or town, geographical boundaries of Chinese businesses and residents as well as its functional aspects. Functionally, Chinatowns serve different core purposes. Academics such as Lee (1949, 1960), Yuan (1963) and Anderson (1995) view it as chiefly residential quarters that dwell in an urban area outside China. Others perceive Chinatown as a business enclave affording socioeconomic opportunities (e.g. Luk, 2008). As compared to Chinatowns in North America and South-East Asia with a dominant residential function, Christiansen (2003) argues that Chinatowns in Europe are symbolic centres with a commercial focus. In other words, the Chinatowns in Europe do not have ghetto functions and serve more as a focal point for ethnic identification. It is said that British Chinatowns are primarily commercial with the exception of Liverpool's, which still retains its residential purpose (Benton and Gomez, 2008).

Presently, the economic function of contemporary Chinatowns has tended to be dominated by the ethnic catering industry. Chinese cuisine is without doubt a key feature of Chinatowns worldwide today. Although justified, such a view is narrow and disregards the increasingly diverse occupations the Chinese go into in host societies and who may or may not engage in Chinatown. Additionally, Luk's approach towards the definition of Chinatowns stems largely from a statistical outlook. By basing his definition on Chinese population sizes, their places of residence and the number of business entities, he under-estimates the role that members of

the host society play and more importantly, the influence of relationships that are established between the Chinese and host communities as well as within the Chinese community in impacting the development of Chinatowns. A quantitative approach, though useful, will not be able to reveal a sufficiently detailed comprehension.

Moreover, apart from the economic and residential functions of Chinatown, other aspects such as Chinese associations and Chinese religious organisations have not been given due deliberation. Chinese associations that have always existed have not been identified as a feature defining Chinatown. The prevalence and importance of associations (Callaghan, 1981; Bonner, 1997; Liu, 2000) in serving the Chinese migrants' emotional and survival needs especially in the early days cannot be dismissed. Chinese associations are historically linked to triads. 'Triad' comes from the symbol 'triangle' which represents heaven, earth and man and are, in present day, associated with illegalities. In Imperial China, they were principal instruments for the expression of popular grievances. In their resistance to the state and officialdom, triads often took up the cause of poverty-stricken peasants. Triads were established in 1674 in the reign of the Manchu emperor, Kang Xi, as a political force dedicated to overthrow the Manchus (Callaghan, 1981). However, the triads' present control of vice is a far cry from their original aims. With regard to many of the long-standing Chinese associations, they cater specifically to the needs of members from the same geographical region and membership is exclusive by lineage. For example, people from the San Yi areas (Nanhai, Panyu and Shunde counties in Pearl River Delta Region) are considered more gentrified as compared to those from Si Yi counties (Taishan, Kaiping, Enping and Xinghui counties in more mountainous regions) and elements of rivalry between the two have been known to prevail (Christiansen, 2003).

The preceding paragraphs in this section define Chinatowns in the actualised dimension. Chinatowns can also be defined in the abstract dimension. Chinatowns, according to Christiansen (2003), are identified as possessing dimensions of an abstract space and a concrete space. In the concrete, it "is an urban space for people from different Chinese backgrounds at the same time it is a miniature replica of an imagined 'China'" (Christiansen, 2003:5). Similarly adopting an abstract dimension for defining Chinatown is Anderson (1995) who argues that Vancouver's Chinatown is a product of an ideology – specifically Western cultural supremacy. I will go into further details on her study later. Returning to the dichotomous approach in defining Chinatown, Christiansen is of the view that the abstract and concrete spaces of Chinatown are mutually exclusive. By premising his book, *Chinatown, Europe*, on the imaginary realm, Christiansen (2003) disregards the reality that the abstract and concrete spaces are in fact, not mutually exclusive and are not distinct. In fact, the abstract-concrete dichotomy is closely inter-twined because it is from analysing the manifestations in the concrete space that one can derive arguments about Chinatowns in the abstract space. By choosing one over the other, Christiansen ignores the dialectical process by which something imagined can manifest its concretisation and vice versa. For example, racist stereotypes are abstractions but they are also in every sense very concrete and real when manifested as acts of discrimination.

Whilst Christiansen (2003) focused on the Chinese community in his study of European Chinatowns, Anderson (1995) chose to concentrate on evaluating the relationships between the Chinese community and the host society. This approach was taken to derive arguments about the development of Chinatowns in her seminal piece on Vancouver's Chinatown. She based her work on archival research. Many other works since have also adopted an archival approach (e.g. Anderson, 1995; Bonner, 1997; Lai and Madoff, 1997; Lai, 1998; Li, 1998;

Lin, 1998; Ng, 1999; Tchen, 1999; Chen, 2000; Laguerre, 2000; Lee, 2001; Guest, 2003; Lee, 2003; Wilson, 2004). While most of these studies are relatively descriptive and emphasise the ethnic industries that the Chinese are concentrated in, some of them provide accounts of the developments of Chinatowns over time, with emphases on host-minority group tensions.

By examining period journalism, parliamentary debates and official documents, Anderson (1995) evaluated the impact of Canadian federal immigration restriction laws as well as of municipal slum clearance policies. Anderson concluded that Canadians' evolving representations of Chinatown as a physical place and the Chinese as a separate 'other' were associated with the continual exercise of White political domination. Political power was projected by various groups – the three federal, provincial and local levels of government – which resulted in the framing and reproduction of a divisive and hierarchical structure between the Chinese and White Canadians in which Chinese status was peripheral. In essence, Anderson postulates that Vancouver's Chinatown is a cultural construct of European imagining.

In examining the evolution of Chinatown, Anderson's book was segmented into chapters, each covering certain time periods apart from chapters one and eight which delved into racial and cultural hegemony concepts and conclusions respectively. Between 1875 and 1903, the different levels of Canadian government initiated and reacted to the different measures in shaping the definition and status of Chinese immigrants. Comprised largely of British-born persons, the provincial parliament was driven by an imperialist responsibility to build a 'British' British Columbia. At the federal level, political motivations to control Chinese entry prevailed over economic interests of an open immigration policy. The state was thus paramount in perpetuating divisions along racial lines throughout all levels of government,

for example as evidenced by Vancouver City Council's support for the eradication of Chinese at the local level. From 1886 to 1920, Chinatown was constructed as a slum, ridden with vice and unsanitary conditions. This portrayal was partly facilitated by a state that sponsored White domination and partly driven by the majority's desire for and belief in White supremacy. The implications of heightened abuse of the race idea were discussed during the period between 1920 and 1935. Restrictive immigration legislations, economic sanctions and racial discriminations reinforced the isolation of Vancouver's Chinatown and the Chinese. Through a description of events during the Depression years of 1935-1949, Anderson showcased the solidification of typifying Chinese as an exotic 'other' albeit with more amiability. Incidences of resistance and international political tensions tugged at the racial hierarchy which was further challenged after the war.

Against a backdrop of a flourishing Chinese catering industry, certain Chinese engaged in strategic essentialism to comply with the imagination and tastes of European customers. Resistance movements by the Chinese residents became more pronounced in the years 1950 to 1969, especially during the state's efforts to erase Chinatown from Vancouver's landscape. To circumvent hegemonic control, the Chinese leveraged on tourist Chinatown as a saving grace but this was plausible in part due to non-Chinese champions of the cause as well as a government of the day that was amenable to differences and not assimilation. The remaining phases of urban regeneration were axed and Vancouver's Chinatown became designated as an ethnic neighbourhood. In the final decade, with a policy of multiculturalism, all three levels of Canadian government wooed Chinatown with planning policies that served to recognise and celebrate ethnic diversity. However, these measures were executed with a frame of reference of a Chinese as a monolithic out-group which Anderson warned could easily give way to negative racialisation witnessed in history.

Similarly, a theorising of Chinatown beyond a material place is expounded by Susan Craddock (2000) in her work on the interpretation of smallpox in nineteenth century San Francisco as a Chinese disease. In at least three out of four epidemics in the years 1868, 1876, 1881 and 1887, smallpox originated outside Chinatown (i.e. from within the White community). Furthermore, although Chinese people died from the disease in rates proportional to their numbers, the disease was interpreted as a Chinese disease. Chinese bodies were constructed as disease-ridden, and the spaces that the Chinese people inhabited were pathologised. Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, Chinatown was not simply associated with the disease; the physical place was constructed as actually becoming a part of the disease. The framing of smallpox by public health officials and the public was set within a context of the 1870s and 1880s during which there was an anti-Chinese movement in San Francisco based on the perception that Chinese workers were taking jobs away from working class Whites. Smallpox thus served a strategic role in extending the discourse from labour practices and the control of a minority group to the control of a racialised area of the city.

In shifting the status of Chinese people and Chinatown from different to pathological, the construction legitimated numerous public health intrusions into the community. The formation of a committee of physicians and businessmen in the 1880s culminated in a 1885 report which recommended intervention into Chinatown's everyday functioning through repeated sanitary purges or to demolish Chinatown entirely and relocate it outside the city boundaries. "Chinatown existed before the smallpox epidemic, but it was subsequently reproduced through a combination of symbolic iconographies, physical intervention, bodily inscription, and institutional oversight" (Craddock, 2000: 247).

Having reviewed literature on Chinatowns, I find that defining Chinatowns is laden with many theoretical and technical difficulties. This thesis is therefore not concerned with defining Chinatowns as such but rather, this research focuses on the socio-spatial relationships of first generation Chinese migrants – a group of individuals that has been neglected when examining Chinatowns – and what these mean for the state of the Liverpool's Chinese community and the development of Liverpool's Chinatown.

2.2.2   Praxis of Ordinary Chinese in the Construction and Re-Constructions of Chinatown

Anderson's work is without doubt illuminating. It is a rigorous piece of research that scrutinises the agency of the White populace, especially of those in positions of power. Although she takes into account the actions of Chinese leaders in manoeuvring the continual power negotiations, this is considered to a much reduced extent. It could be the factor of Anderson not having access to Chinese sources thus preventing her from delivering a more comprehensive appreciation of Vancouver's Chinatown. As a result, Anderson puts forth that the internal struggle within the Chinese community to become the representative of Chinatown comes about because of the state's manipulation of 'Chineseness'. This suggests that the Chinese community is passive and reacts to developments imposed upon them. In other words, the role of Chinese leaders in Vancouver is not pro-active in the re-construction of Chinatown.

This line of reasoning is flawed. For example, more recently, given the economic gains to be made from the growing economy of the PRC, there is a tendency for the formation of win-win partnerships between Chinese and non-Chinese communities. When a common interest

prevails or when interests are aligned, we will witness both groups – Chinese and White communities – coming to work together. A case in point is the former Exposition '86 site in downtown Vancouver. Amidst an economic downturn, Hong Kong capital from the likes of property tycoon Li Ka Shing's was sought by the British Columbia Provincial government after 1984 in the latter's privatisation bid to revive an ailing economy (Olds, 1998). Wealthy Hong Kongers' widening presence in Vancouver initially caused uneasiness amongst the host members of the Canadian society. However, after the Canadian economy went into decline, a Can$3billion Pacific Place urban mega project in Central Vancouver was implemented and rich Hong Kong individuals such as members of the Li group were approached for their investment to arrest the ailing economy.

In contrast to Anderson's (1995) ascription of passivity to the Chinese community, Christiansen's (2003) view of Chinatown is "an emblem of Chineseness constructed and manipulated by the overseas Chinese, an emblem that mobilises cultural stereotypes" (Christiansen, 2003:5). Deviating from Anderson's focus on White elites, Christiansen accords greater weight to the agency of Chinese leaders and business owners in the Chinese catering industry. These are the individuals who are more likely to leverage and invoke cultural exoticism in order to captivate the imagination of a Western clientele. Christiansen (2003) goes on to argue that there are nevertheless competing groups amongst the Chinese elites, each possessing self-interests and each seeking to maximise their gains. In their quest for individual power and dominance, the Chinese elites deliberately shape the local identity in an on-going process. Echoing the necessity to focus on Chinese agency, Chen (2000), in his account of the Chinese in San Francisco, warns against viewing "Chinatown simply as a segregated urban ethnic enclave created by a hostile environment" (Chen, 2000:47). This

perspective does not give sufficient weight to the agency of the Chinese actors who have a stake in shaping their community.

Discounting Chinese agency, not only of those in the upper echelons of society but also of ordinary Chinese people, will result in overlooking the intricacies and vibrancy of Chinatown. Whilst acknowledging that Anderson may not have access to Chinese sources, a further flaw preventing a more comprehensive evaluation of Vancouver's Chinatown is neglecting the perspectives of ordinary Chinese people. Ordinary Chinese people are numerically greater than Chinese leaders and the former's actions need to be given due recognition. Although it can be argued that their voices are represented by the Chinese leaders and thus addressing the latter is sufficient, it can also be said that the Chinese leaders may not necessarily be representative of all the Chinese in Vancouver. The extent of diversity amongst the Chinese community is especially pertinent in the contemporary context as I will show in a later section in the literature review. The importance of the agency of ordinary Chinese people in understanding the development of Chinatowns cannot be underestimated.

In the past, Western imperialist sentiments have sought to reinforce their superiority over inferior 'others', at the same time exoticising and demonising the Orient (Said, 2003). Apart from political and / or economic agendas that intentionally skew the representations of Chinese people / communities and Chinatowns, Western imaginings of Chinese people / communities and their associations most likely did not arise out of thin air. They could have been based on limited, if not misinformed, references to Chinese culture and identity. While primordial cultural / racial differences may feature prominently during first encounters between the races, subsequent familiarisations may displace the idea of an enduring supreme race / culture amongst the White community. Therefore, the Chinese themselves have a part

to play in contributing to the formation of Western sentiments. The contributors are not restricted merely to the Chinese leaders and those in positions of wealth and power. Ordinary Chinese men and women have an equally significant role in influencing how they are being perceived by the Western society. Chinatowns are thus spaces of interrelations between the Chinese representations of themselves and Western representations of them (Gregory, 1995). In the appreciation of Chinatowns, it is therefore very important that we also give a voice to ordinary Chinese people which leads me now to the topic of Chinese migration.

2.3 Unpacking Chinese Migration

Chinese migration is not a recent phenomenon. Migration from China was documented as early as the Tang Dynasty (618 – 906AD) during which the first wave of international Chinese migration took place with the establishment of seasonal agricultural movement between the mainland and Formosa (Taiwan), and Pescadores. The second wave was during the Ming Dynasty (1368 – 1644) during which Chinese explorers and traders ventured further to Africa and Madagascar. The 1840s heralded a new era in migration, as Chinese people left for plantations and mines in Spanish America, Indonesia, Malaysia, North America and Australia.

2.3.1   Context of Migration and Coping Strategies

It is essential to contextualise peoples' migratory decisions historically as Anderson espoused (1995). Using the example of China, over the century 1875-1980, the changes that have taken place include the abolition of the Civil Service Examination system in 1905, the Cultural Revolution during Mao's rule, as well as the implementation and reforms of the

household registration system during the Socialist state (Buoye, 2003). This latter system classified China spatially and occupationally into four categories – rural, urban, agricultural and non-agricultural. In doing so, it established a situation whereby geographical mobility directly influenced social mobility (Oakes and Schein, 2006), with relatively more adverse consequences to poorer citizens in the rural areas. Put simply, one's parentage and place of birth determines one's social position in society. Unless a meritocratic system is religiously practised, it will be hard for individuals to progress and move out of the social standing that they are born into. Such immobility will be one of several other factors contributing towards the desire to emigrate and look towards greener pastures. The historical developments have a great bearing on the present day social, economic and political contexts of migrant-sending countries and which will thus affect not only the socio-economic profiles of emigrants leaving the countries, but also the methods of migration as well as the adaptive strategies some of these individuals undertake.

Indeed, economic opportunities and constraints in the home country should not be overlooked – according to neoclassical economic theory, one of the reasons why people emigrate is because they are earning very little in their home countries (Harris and Todaro, 1970). Arising from this is the new economic theory of migration which proposes that families or households, not individual actors, make migration decisions in order to maximise expected household income (Stark and Bloom, 1985). The new economic theorists also suggest that one, or more, members of the family go overseas to work, not only to increase income in absolute terms, but also to improve income relative to other households in the country of origin. Due to a phenomenon of "relative deprivation" (Stark, 1996:223), neighbouring households in the migrant-sending country will be spurred to emigrate according to the theory of cumulative causation (Taylor, 1992). As a result of wanting to

accumulate more wealth than their neighbours, these individuals migrate with the hope of improving their economic situation in relation to their neighbours'. Consequentially, a vicious cycle results as the comparisons are never ending. Unless there is an appreciation of self-sufficiency, envy and greed will inevitably drive people to make comparisons and embark on a course of action to ameliorate the imbalance between the haves and the have-nots.

Although one can insist that understanding the motives for migration is inconsequential to one's actions in a host society, the factors associated with the move and a person's prior socialisation and experiences will shape his / her aspirations and the strategies he / she adopts throughout life, all of which will have an impact on the development of Chinatowns. For example, if the migrants' pre-occupation is with accumulating wealth for his / her eventual return to his / her home country, his / her coping strategies in the host country may be vastly different from someone who migrated with the intention of settling down and integrating into the host society.

On a global level, world systems theorists suggest that transnational migration is a result of the expansion of capitalism from its core in Western Europe, North America, Oceania and Japan to other countries. The incorporation of these economies into the global market results in domestic changes that lead to migration. Associated with this theory is the dual market theory of international migration suggesting that pull factors in receiving countries are more important than push factors in sending countries (Cohen, 1996). Furthermore, according to network theory, migration increases when people believe they are going to destinations where a circle of friends, relatives and community of shared origins already exist. Indeed, according to Crissman (1967), emigrants tended to go to places where others from their own villages or

small localities were already established. The notion of familiarity aside, it is the belief that the network will be able to provide some form of mutual help and support. These issues bring forth the importance of considering the contexts of host societies into which migrants enter as the situations will influence the coping strategies migrants adopt.

In destination countries, a relevant dimension is the emotional well-being of individuals in relation to their coping strategies. The phenomenon of 'home-sicknesses' and 'nostalgia' has its roots in organic medicine and later in psychiatry with the former first appearing in sixteenth century Swiss literature in connection with the Greek concept of melancholia (Zwingmann, 1973). The success of migrants' coping strategies which are also partly affected by host countries' policies (e.g. of citizenship and participation policies) will determine the sense of belonging and this will ultimately determine the extent of integration into host societies (Samers, 2010). As Siu (2005) finds out in the study of Chinese in Panama, diasporic consciousness is manifested most clearly at points of tension regarding boundaries of belonging. Apart from host society's policies, migrants' resources are key factors influencing the extent of belonging and integration into host societies. Because of their mobility, Saxenian's (2006) research on highly-mobile professionals in Silicon Valley shows a tendency for in-group social congregations and exemplified desires to return as well as actualised contributions back to their countries of origin.

The topic of migrants' sense of belonging brings in literature on transnationalism. Transnationalism is defined by Basch, Schiller and Blanc (1994:7) as "the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement". Basch, Schiller and Blanc (1994:7) go on to say that immigrants tend to "develop and maintain multiple relationships – familial, economic, social,

organisation, religious and political – that span borders". The transnational space is further made complex due to the fact that people from various backgrounds enter it momentarily or for a lifetime (Jackson, Crang and Dwyer, 2004).

2.3.2   Information Communications Technology Bridging Distances

With the advancement in ICT, the cultivation of ties is facilitated and real distances are deemed to have narrowed. Although ICT has always existed, the way technology is being harnessed today is vastly different compared to the past. For instance, in the past, migrants kept in touch with their family via letters. Today, we can engage in real time visual conversations with another individual across continents over the internet. This was observed by Salih (2002) amongst Moroccan women in Italy. The family in Morocco continues to retain its importance and relevance to the women residing in Italy. The desire to sustain the familial bonds, through continually reworking the functioning of the networks, occurs even though dispersal of members causes disruptions to the network (Yeoh, Huang and Lam, 2005). As Parrenas (2005) discovers in her study on mothers and children in Filipino transnational families, intimate relations between members are maintained via information technology. Even within a country, the internet in China has bridged provincial distances through the establishment of a focal platform such as on-line parenting discussion forums for net-moms in Wang's (2006) study.

In another large qualitative study of transnational families, conducted in Australia, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Iran, Singapore and New Zealand to examine how and whether kin maintain contact across time and space, Wilding (2006) found that the introduction of ICT did create more opportunities for keeping in touch with those kin, and for creating a stronger

sense of shared social field. However, it was also found that the regular communication served to intensify rather than diminish the sense of distance. Due to the heightened awareness of physical distance between these individuals, long-distance communication makes the relationships feel much more intimately connected and thus contributes to a stronger sense of connectedness between them.

As Cemalcilar, Falbo and Stapleton (2005) found in the study examining the role of computer-mediated communications (CMC) [6] for international students during the early stages of their cross-cultural transition, CMC facilitates increased contact and contributes to the solidarity of relationships. The findings suggest that internet-related technologies are used frequently by international students as communication tools to correspond with people and keep up with the daily life at home. The findings suggest that this continuous contact has a positive effect on the sojourning individuals' maintenance of home identity and perceptions of available social support (even when these support sources are not present physically), which combine to affect the students' adaptation to the new culture. Their research indicates that the existing social networks individuals had before migrating continue to act as social support mechanisms even when the parties are not physically together and contact takes place online.

Virtual connections aside, advancements in telecommunications have made air travel much more affordable and thus more accessible to a greater market as compared to yesteryears. Astronaut families in which parents and children are geographically separated for employment and education reasons respectively is not a new phenomenon (Bonney and Love, 1991; Halfacree, 1995; Li and Findlay, 1999). Another emerging trend is that of the trailing

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[6] CMC is broadly defined as communication that occurs between two or more people with the aid of computer software and a computer interface, including text, audio, and video exchanges.

spouses – a partner usually accompanies his / her partner when relocating to another country, usually for work purposes (Mincerr, 1978; Markham and Pleck, 1986; Bonney and Love, 1991; Bielby and Bielby, 1992; Cooke, 2003). Depending on the most viable familial strategy, families may therefore not necessarily be situated in the same place at the same time or they may be subjected to frequent moves throughout their lives. In most instances, these trailing spouses are women and they have a key role in transmitting cultural values to their children and in keeping their children connected to their cultural roots.

In addition to Information Technology (IT) and tele-communications, remittances have a critical role in keeping the connection between home and host countries alive for migrants. Remittances are generally defined as the portion of migrants' earnings sent from their destination to origin countries for families and their communities (Sorensen, 2004). Remittances encapsulate the array of money, goods and gifts (Adams, 2007). Other definitions that have emerged include Social Remittances such as ideas and cultural practices (Levitt, 1998) and Technological Remittances such as knowledge and skills of technology and the technology itself (Nichols, 2002). Although literature on remittances sent from destination to home countries is expansive, there are limited studies on 'reverse remittances' (Burrell, 2008) – remittances sent from home countries to the migrants in the host societies. These resources play a crucial role in the migrants' adaptive strategies in host societies which will affect their sense of belonging.

Transnational practices such as remittances, maintaining links with families in the countries of origin, and relying on flows of goods and information that traverse national boundaries are thus critical in shaping the adaptive strategies of Chinese migrants overseas. These individuals are increasingly more independent given the greater access to transnational

resources and they thus have a reduced reliance on the goods and services offered within Chinatown to provide them with a resemblance of cultural familiarity to alleviate home-sickness. The meaning of a place has without doubt been increasingly impacted by the transnational realm. Lin (1998) illustrates how transnational social and organisation networks are utilised in the construction and reconstructions of New York's Chinatown. Samers (2010), in his book, provides a review of the various readings on the ideas of space, related spatial concepts as well as the notion that space does not exist in isolation but are tied to social relations. He is of the view that socio-spatial concepts are useful for analysing migration issues and these frameworks should be more proactively invoked in contemporary studies, especially with the advancements in ICT. Recognising the proliferation of ICT, this thesis will also explore the transnational dimension in analysing the Chinese community and the development of Liverpool's Chinatown.

2.4   Spectrum of First Generation Chinese Migrants

Even amongst first generation migrants, caution should be exercised against painting immigrants with a broad brush. Similar to Jackson (1969) and Heer (1985) who highlighted the spectrum of migration, Hedetoft (2004) reinforced the distinctions between migrants, travellers and cosmopolitans. Cosmopolitans and travellers are considered movers and they are different from migrants. Migrants, Hedetoft (2004) highlighted, resettled at their destinations, often abandoning their previous homes, networks and possessions. Movers, a distinct group as compared to the migrants, on the other hand, often add on homes, networks and possessions and this is a lifestyle in its own right. This process is infinite and is constantly occurring. I disagree with this dichotomy. Although this can be considered the case for movers, migrants though settling in their host countries, may not necessarily abandon

all their prior tangible and intangible assets. This is especially so with the advancements in telecommunications and IT. The main distinction is whether the individual "chooses" to permanently settle at a place or not. This brings us to yet another debate on the definition of permanence and choice. It is assumed that Hedetoft refers to voluntary movement in this case and that choice is made at the point of resettlement. Therefore, a migrant in this thesis is as defined if he / she chooses to resettle in a particular country, regardless of whether future uprooting and resettlement occurs.

In talking about the Chinese migrants, it is often assumed that 'Chinese' is a homogenous ethnic group. However, the differentiations within the community are varied. If one starts from the premise of essentialism in which discourses group human populations into 'races' on the basis of biological signifiers (Rattansi, 1992), one would run into difficulties with regard to the myriad differentiations within the racial / ethnic group. The danger of generalisation aside, there is also a lacuna with regard to certain sub-groups within the community. For example, there are very few studies of Chinese people in lower-skill jobs in the UK. The exceptions are Pieke's (2002), whose work focuses on Fujianese immigration from China, Pai's (2008) covert ethnographic research in illuminating the plight of these labourers, and Wu, Sheehan and Guo's (2010) work on the employment of Chinese workers. Furthermore, while most countries can furnish statistics on irregular border crossings, asylum applications and refugee status, there is little detailed information on trafficking and smuggling. In the US, Chin (1999) has done some empirical work on the issue and in Europe, apart from survey-based studies conducted in Hungary, Poland and Ukraine that also covered the Chinese community, no in-depth study of Chinese immigrants has been performed for any Western European country (Salt, 2000). With regard to studying a relatively under-researched

area, starting from a premise of as few preconceived notions as possible is preferred. This is the stance undertaken in this research.

2.4.1   Differentiations Based on Place of Origin

One differentiation within the ethnic group is based on Chinese people's place of origin. China has a diverse Chinese populace originating from various provinces and speaking starkly disparate Chinese dialects (Yu, 2000). To name just a few, some of these dialects are Hokkien, Teochew, Cantonese, Hainanese, Hakka, Fujianese, Shanghainese. Secondly, there is the differentiation of Chinese people by nationality, as there is a significant proportion of Chinese people overseas who are born and bred in parts of the world other than in China (Li, 1998). Countries, especially in South-East Asia, are made up of mostly migrant communities. For example, Singapore is a migrant nation. The majority of first generation Chinese migrants in Singapore, are from China. Today, Singapore is a country with a population of which a majority (74.1%) are ethnic Chinese (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2010).

Finally, there are 'half-Chinese' people who are of mixed racial parentages. Over the years with immigrants sinking their roots in host societies coupled with a gradual integration of other ethnic groups into mainstream society, inter-racial marriages have become more common. The argument of 'race' as an artificial social construct aside, if we talk of Chinese migrants as a unitary community, we are essentialising. It imputes "a fundamental, basic, absolutely necessary constitutive quality to a person, social category, ethnic group, religious community, or nation. It is to imply an internal sameness and external difference or otherness" (Werbner, 1997:228). Furthermore, it ignores the analyses in relation to gender, generational and class differences.

2.4.2   Differentiations Based on Socio-Economic Profiles

Not only has the number of origin countries from which Chinese migrants to other nations expanded, the profile of contemporary Chinese migrants is also changing. Baker (1994) remarked that the nature of Chinese migration in the 1990s was different, compared to that of earlier periods'. For example, of some 60,000 Hong Kongers who emigrated in 1991, 21,000 were individuals in 'professional, technical, administrative and managerial occupations'. They make up part of the 'new overseas Chinese' (Skeldon, 1994). With regard to British-born Chinese people, in more recent years, they may have climbed to the top of the educational ladder and are earning more than any other group in the UK (Barry, 1997; Chan, 1998). This is an achievement compared to the Chinese children in the 1970s who were severely alienated from British school environment which educationalists termed the 'failure' of Chinese schooling in Britain (Garvey and Jackson, 1975).

More recently, a development worthy of note is the increasing inflows of Chinese students to the UK, especially with the economic rise of the PRC. In 2008, students from China and Hong Kong accounted respectively for, the highest and third highest percentage of accepted international applicants into the UK [Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), 2010]. The University of Liverpool's opening of a new University in China is the first such innovation in the UK (University of Liverpool Press Release, 2005). Launched in September 2006 with 1,500 undergraduates presently in XJTLU in Suzhou, the student numbers are expected to rise to 10,000 over the next five to eight years (University of Liverpool Annual Report, 2008). In academic year 2009-2010, the first wave of XJTLU's students came into Liverpool to complete the latter part of their studies and graduate with a full University of

Liverpool degree (University of Liverpool, 2009). The profile of Chinese people in Liverpool has indeed changed tremendously over the years. Previously, there were only sailors. Now, the community is very diverse with professionals and students as well. Especially for looking at the change of Liverpool's Chinatown over time (from the perspectives of first generation Chinese migrants), it would be interesting to look at students who were once not a significant category of immigrants within the first generation Chinese migrants. The rise in importance of education in recent years will thus drive a new dimension of migration and frame transnational household strategies (Waters, 2005). As mentioned earlier, in an era during which we are witnessing advancements in IT and telecommunications, the transnational dimension with regard to migrants' coping strategies in host countries is thus an aspect that cannot be ignored.

2.4.3   Differentiations Based on Legal Status

In addition to not generalising about the Chinese community, the definition of a 'migrant' itself throws up much for discussion. As at 2012, any person who has resided continuously for five years in the UK can apply for permanent residency in the country. Although this may provide a neat definition of who is a 'migrant' and who is a permanent resident, one would encounter other difficulties of individuals possessing dual identities, for example, the categorisation of first, second and subsequent generations of Chinese migrants. There are also ambiguities with regard to legal status. We might neglect groups such as undocumented workers, refugees, asylum seekers, over-stayers (formerly on student visas or working visas) and students working full-time. Furthermore, there is the factor of fluidity with which migrants may change their legal status.

Although migration has existed for a long time, migration is not a process that is unregulated. Britain's immigration policies are increasingly restrictive (Commission for Racial Equality, 1985; Layton-Henry, 1990; Anthias, 1992). Immigration to Britain was not subject to control until some Commonwealth citizens had to apply for employment vouchers under the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act. Further constraints on immigration took place with the passage of the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act requiring all Commonwealth citizens to pass through immigration controls. The 1971 Immigration Act tightened immigration controls and ended the distinction between Commonwealth citizens and aliens; as well as the 1981 Nationality Act which limited the definition of a British citizen. More recently on 29 February 2008, a new immigration system was launched and that was intended to ensure that only those ("third country nationals") with the right skills or the right contributions can come to the UK to work or study (UK Border Agency, 2008). The Points Based System is intended to control migration more effectively, tackle abuse and identify the most talented workers.

"As receiving countries implement restrictive policies to counter rising tides of immigrants, they simply create a lucrative niche into which enterprising agents, contractors and other middlemen move to create migrant-supporting institutions, providing migrants with yet another infrastructure capable of supporting and sustaining international movement" (Chin, 1999:xii).

A case in point by Laczko and Thompson (2000) is in their observations of Fujian province in China where smugglers and corrupt officials use community networks established abroad to facilitate their human smuggling activities. Recent studies on the Chinese community have tended to focus on a gradual and widespread problematisation of Chinese migration based on 'key events'. In the US, there was the 'Golden Venture' sinking in 1993 (Chin, 1999); followed by the moral panic in Canada in 1999 when large numbers of Chinese stowaways

were detected (Mountz, 2004). In the UK, tragedies of the human smuggling trade such as the twenty-three deaths at Morecambe Bay in 2004 and the fifty-eight deaths in a lorry at Dover in 2000, as well as police raids in Chinese restaurants suspected of harbouring undocumented workers (BBC, 2008a) allude to the presence, if not upward momentum, of irregular Chinese migration. The mainstay of these migrations, and most migrations to date, is socio-economic opportunities (Shang, 1984).

There is also a thin line demarcating smuggling and trafficking: "[t]hey blur the boundaries between forced and voluntary movements and between legality and illegality" (Salt, 2000:35). According to the Europol Convention of 1995, "illegal migrant smuggling" comprises "activities intended deliberately to facilitate, for financial gain, the entry into, residence or employment of an alien in the territory of the State, contrary to the rules and conditions applicable in such a State", whereas trafficking relates to the "subjection of a person to the real and illegal sway of other persons by using violence or menace, by abuse of authority or by deception, particularly in order to engage in the exploitation of prostitution of that person, forms of exploitation, of sexual violence in relation to minors or trafficking in children given up by their parents". However, propounding the notion of undocumented workers as 'victims' will severely limit our understanding of the agency of actors and the dynamics involved in migration decisions and experiences. Although someone may not be fully aware of what they are committing to when going through the process of becoming undocumented workers, they may have deliberately made the choice at the outset prior to embarkation on the journey.

Since the mid-1980s, Chinese migration into Europe has been greatly facilitated by professional human smugglers (Pieke, 2002), leading to anecdotal evidence suggesting that

Chinese refugees and asylum seekers comprise the main workforce for the Chinese catering industry. Similar to Ardill's (1988) observation that most unauthorised employment takes place in labour intensive sectors such as hotel and catering, garment and cleaning industries, Pai (2008) reported that the number of workers from Fujian province in China had been increasing since 1990s to ameliorate labour shortage in the Chinese catering as well as construction industries. In London's Chinatown, Fujianese make up 70-80% of the catering workforce. The recent influx of Fujianese, noted by Pieke (2002), provided a source of unskilled and cheap labour in Britain's Chinese catering industry that is dominated by Hong Kong, Malaysian and Singaporean Chinese and is stereotyped as being exploitative.

2.5 The Dominant Catering Industry in Chinatown

With regard to studies of the Chinese community in the UK, the ethnic catering industry has featured prominently (Howard, Ward and Waldinger, 1985; Waldinger, Aldrich and Ward, 1985; Chan, 2005; Pai, 2008). This is unsurprising given that Chinatowns, especially in Europe, have been dominated by the ethnic food business since the end of the World Wars. Historically within the UK, from a major presence in seafaring, Chinese people went on to dominate hand launderette services in the early 1900s with the first shop opened in London in 1901 (Jones, 1979). Mechanisation subsequently brought the decline of this trade. The 1905 Aliens Act further exacerbated the stagnation of the numbers of Chinese immigrants. It was not until 1945 that a significant influx occurred. Leveraging upon an emerging consumerist society hungry for new tastes and lifestyles post-war, the Chinese people diversified into restaurants which continued to grow until the 1970s (Shang, 1984). This outcome was partly attributed to the Government's urban redevelopment plans resulting in the dispersal of Chinese communities, such as in London and Liverpool, as well as immigration control

procedures since 1948 (Commission for Racial Equality, 1985). With the introduction of Value-Added Tax and Selective Employment Tax, Chinese people responded with the more economical 'Chinese takeaways' – again drawing primarily on family resources. The Chinese catering trade has since persisted in dominating the Chinatowns in Britain.

2.5.1   Catering and Ethnic Enterprises

Immigrant entrepreneurship first gained prominence in the academic circle with Light's (1972) discourse on business operations of Chinese, Japanese and Black populations in the US. Research into the supply side of Chinese entrepreneurship focused on the role of social capital (Light, 1972; Modood et al, 1997; Jacobs, Belschak and Krug, 2004; Ma, 2005; McCabe et al, 2005; Belchem, 2006) that encompasses cultivating social networks and relationships, 'Guan Xi' (关系) (Krug, 2004; Chung, 2005). These components are crucial in the negotiations and dynamics of ethnic business agreements which have a greater likelihood of being formed with business partners that one is familiar with and has trust in. Class resources are subsequently distinguished from ethnic resources (Light, 1984) and can also be viewed as a subset of the latter. This cultural approach indicates that all immigrant groups have cultural-specific traits and characteristics with a propensity towards succeeding in small businesses (Waldinger, Aldrich and Ward, 1985). In other words, it is argued that some groups by nature have greater affinity towards entrepreneurial success.

This line of reasoning is flawed. The cultural approach ignores the fact that the proliferation of immigrant entrepreneurship in host societies is not solely a Chinese occurrence and that leveraging upon kinship ties and social networks is observed in other communities too (Braadbaart, 1995). In the UK, Asians, Africans and Caribbeans have an entrepreneurial

propensity too. However, although the cultural perspective is a valid consideration, it is insufficient for analysing ethnic enterprises (Brown, 1995). It ignores analysis from the angle of structures in host societies that impede ethnic minorities and immigrants from fully participating in mainstream society.

Demand side analyses are therefore necessary to provide a holistic understanding of the environment within which immigrant entrepreneurs operate. Innovating towards a more interactionist approach, Kloosterman, Van Der Luen and Rath (1999) espoused a more holistic concept of 'mixed embeddedness' in their study on the rise of immigrant entrepreneurship in the Netherlands. While recognising the significance of community networks in the formation and operation of immigrant businesses, this concept requires that the wider economic and political contexts be incorporated in explanations of the findings. Greater emphases on laws, regulations, institutions and practices that condition how markets operate are duly addressed. Other than studying dual frameworks, socio-cultural on the one hand and transformation processes in (urban) economies on the other, the interplay between these two different sets of changes taking place within a larger, dynamic framework of institutions on neighbourhood, city, national or economic sector levels is equally important. A crucial component of mixed embeddedness is thus the opportunity structure which is the whole context of social, economic and political circumstances within which entrepreneurs live. These circumstances refer to the welfare system, national / international policies, rules and regulations, immigration enforcement, housing policies, market organisation, business associations, business practices etc.

2.5.2   Ethnic Entrepreneurship, Racial Disadvantage and Segregation

  Purely labelling a high rate of ethnic entrepreneurship as being indicative of success / achievement amongst a community is thus erroneous. Aldrich, Jones and McEvoy (1984:209) call this 'an exercise in deglamorisation' and conclude that Asian business activity in Britain "represents a truce with racial inequality rather than a victory over it" (Aldrich, Jones and McEvoy, 1984:209). Barrett, Jones and McEvoy's (2003) work on immigrant entrepreneurship in the UK is rooted in a political economy standpoint and stresses the adverse implications of contemporary structural changes on the incidence of entrepreneurship. Economic restructuring, demographic pressure and a discriminatory job market have displaced large numbers of South Asians from employment into self-employment. Similarly, for the Chinese people in Canada, Li (1998) mentions that present institutional racism against the Chinese people is a structural imperative rather than a result of cultural misunderstandings. The injustices done to racial minorities are embedded within the context of social and economic developments in Canada that discriminate against the Chinese people, resulting in a community that is segregated from the host society.

  In the UK, greater participation in mainstream occupations is assumed to lead to upward social mobility which then suggests an amelioration of 'disadvantage' for these minority groups (Modood et al, 1997). Mason (2003) found that although African, Asian and Chinese men were more likely to be professional workers than White men, the former were considerably less likely to be represented at senior managerial levels in large enterprises. This phenomenon, coupled with statistics suggesting that a third of the Chinese immigrant population living in Britain have a degree, compared to sixteen percent of UK-born Whites in 2000 (Dustmann et al, 2003), insinuates the perpetuation of a colour bar (Weiviorka, 1994).

This means that institutional racism is present and that minority groups are disadvantaged when participating in mainstream society.

In pursuit of participation, Barth (1969) articulates that groups may choose between the strategies of assimilation, denuding its internal diversification to remain a low-articulating ethnic group or taking advantage of their ethnic identity to carve out a niche for themselves. As a result of turning towards ethnic businesses by playing up their ethnic differences, the enclave's prevalence is sustained, if not tightened. The ethnic enclave's dominance is thus framed within the context of a backdrop of discriminatory obstacles (Light, 1972; Dummett and Lo, 1986; Archer, 2007) and a society that accords the Chinese, minority status hence signalling not only lower social status, but exclusion from full participation in the British economy (Krausz, 1972). Before I discuss how the persistence of a dominant catering industry impedes a minority group's upward social mobility and integration into mainstream society, I will first highlight the challenges facing the catering industry in the present day context as this is related to the profile of immigrants who come into the UK as well as the progression prospects for the catering industry.

2.5.3   Challenges Confronting the Catering Industry

Presently, the catering industry is threatened by a shortage of labour. In September 2008, the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) published its first recommended shortage occupation lists in which skilled chefs were identified on the shortage occupation list for Tier Two of the Points Based System (Migration Advisory Committee, 2009). This list was developed in response to the UK's Points Based System to restrict immigration. Current debates surrounding the effectiveness of such a system were primarily referenced to a

shortage of chefs in British Asian restaurants. There was discussion about getting restaurants and takeaways to recruit skilled cooks from people within the UK or the European Union (EU) but many of the second generation British Asians do not wish to work in the catering industry (BBC, 2008b; BBC, 2009). The problem is further exacerbated by employers being unable to get sufficient overseas workers who are able to pass the points system of which English language proficiency and educational qualifications are essentials.

The situation in Chinese restaurants is similar, as captured in a report submitted to the MAC (European Union Chinese Journal, 2009a). A critical factor accounting for a shortage of workers in the catering industry is because higher educational levels and higher aspirations have resulted in many second and subsequent generations of British Chinese shying away from the unsociable and unattractive lifestyles associated with their forebears' catering trade (Shang, 1984). Adding on to the undesirable list characterising the ethnic cuisine industry is the increasingly highly competitive retail market. Intense competition has made the once lucrative industry less appealing in today's context. A combination of arduous work and meagre pay mean these jobs are generally shunned by the general public (Ram, Deakins and Smallbone, 1997). Compared with the Chinese catering needs that are identified to be around 100,000 by the Chinese Immigration Concern Committee (CICC) (2009), the Chinese catering industry has a labour shortage in excess of 60,000. It was highlighted in the report that this acute labour shortage is threatening the survival of Chinese catering and undermining the British economy's well-being.

2.5.4   Internal Exploitation within the Catering Industry

   Within an institutionally-racist environment, Chinatowns may be perceived as defence mechanisms to shield newly-arrived immigrants against psycho-socio-economic distress. Especially due to xenophobia in the past, one would often witness the formation of majority-minority relationships that are very tense. Exemplifying this is New York's Chinatown. Its development was rooted in a hostile environment of racism and deliberate extermination of 'otherness' (Tchen, 1999). In positioning Chinatown as an enclave, we thus see the formation of a segregated community in which Chinese people are perceived to exhibit a desire for in-group proximity and a reluctance to mix with wider society. The minority Chinese group in the UK has remained a relatively closed and tight-knit community. Their strategy to remain 'invisible' may be to avoid 'standing out'. Previously, Asian migrants tended to "keep their heads down, a strategy supposedly more likely to succeed in a 'hostile' (read: 'racist') environment" (Rattansi, 1992: 18). To deal with systemic and institutionalised discrimination, Chan (2005) argues that the minority Chinese migrant develops a defence mechanism by choosing to subject themselves to internal exploitation within the community rather than face discrimination in the mainstream labour market.

   Segregation is not peculiar only to Chinese and Asian communities in the UK. Racialised and marginalised ethnic Mexican communities in the United States came up with defensive strategies of adaptation and survival in an intermediate 'third space'. "Serving as relatively safe havens where ethnic Mexicans could communicate in Spanish, continue to practice most of their family customs, maintain their religious practices and rituals, teach their children, and otherwise symbolically express themselves by enjoying distinctive cuisines, styles of music, and forms of entertainment, these social spaces became the primary sites for the transmission

of distinctive regional variants of Mexican culture and are also seedbeds for the emergence of new forms of ethnic identity and solidarity" (Guetierrez, 1999: 488-489). These spaces are leveraged not only by marginalised communities but also by expatriate communities who have greater resources. Nevertheless, as Ackers and Gill (2008) found in their study of highly mobile scientists, this group of individuals has a lesser need to rely on the defence mechanism given their enhanced financial and social statuses.

There is another view, however, that migrants allow themselves to be subjected to internal self and group exploitation within their supposed defence mechanism protecting them against the mainstream society (Gomez and Hsiao, 2004; Barrett and McEvoy, 2005; Chan, 2005). To deal with systemic and institutionalised discrimination, Chan (2005) argues that the minority Chinese develops a 'defence' mechanism by choosing to subject themselves to internal exploitation within the community rather than face discrimination in the mainstream labour market. Put bluntly, it is an evaluation of which is the lesser of two evils. As Panayiotopoulos (2006) noted of 1980s trafficked / smuggled persons from Northern Fujian province, this labour force was paramount in restructuring many Chinatowns in the US and throughout Europe. They symbolised a pool of reserve entrepreneurs, especially for the take-away businesses with a very high turn-over rate. Although upward socio-economic mobility for some individuals may be realisable over the long run, they were technically 'imprisoned' in the enclave economy.

Granted that internal exploitation will continue, the inflow of labour will meet the needs of restaurateurs thus ensuring the sustenance if not proliferation of the catering trade. According to Lin (1998), Chinatowns' persistence is predicted by the enclave thesis. On the one hand, in a zero-sum game, bosses gain at the expense of workers who labour in jobs that afford

limited, even no, opportunities for upward occupational mobility. On the other hand, these

employers may be the only ones who might provide marginalised migrants lacking expertise,

investment capital, and knowledge about the host society or legal status, with chances to earn

a living in such environments (Li, 1999). Nevertheless, employers' benevolence in providing

jobs for these workers can be challenged by arguing that selfish profiteering considerations

are the paramount underlying reasons. They may provide jobs for migrants with the hope that

employees' earnings will circulate back into the enclave, kick-starting the multiplier effect

and hence resulting in overall positive economic effects throughout Chinatown businesses.

2.5.5   A Suppressed and Persisting Industry

  However, the opposing thesis would be that the more dense and standardised an enclave

economy becomes, the more intense the competition, the higher the likelihood of internal and

self-exploitation and hence, the greater the limitation to the sector's flourishing growth,

subordinating the niche to the fringe of the economy. Situated in a highly competitive retail

market, cutting costs such as in labour is one of several strategies businesses undertake to

raise their profit margins. As a result, the use of illegal / irregular workers who command

lower wages is known to occur, especially in the ethnic catering trade. Despite the

implementation of the Employer's Sanction Act in 2008 to penalise employers who

knowingly use undocumented workers, these workers in reality, mitigate the labour shortage

in the catering industry because an ethnic restaurant's fundamental operational cornerstone is

the ethnicity of its staff (Shelley, 2000).

  Notwithstanding, tapping the irregular labour workforce is not an ideal solution. Not only

are civil penalties imposed on employers during immigration raids, the detention and

deportation of irregular workers disrupts the smooth functioning of the businesses. The situation is aggravated without sufficient local supply of skilled workers to fill the vacancies. Losses in earnings, financial troubles and / or the prospect of business closures would destabilise the enterprise's economic viability and sustainability. Even though employing undocumented workers brings about many risks not only to the employees but also to the employers, Jan (2003) stresses that irregular migration occurs only if there is a market for irregular migrants' services and if employers are willing to carry the risks of employing them. A smuggler and / or trafficker can thus be seen to make the labour market more efficient by channelling labour to where it is most needed. On the other hand, the continual supply of irregular migrants will retard the overall transition from labour-intensive to capital-intensive industries in the host societies (Skeldon, 2000). Within the labour-intensive catering trade, wages will be depressed. With a continual supply of low-waged Chinese migrant workers, the overall employment prospects and outlook for this enduring industry will be adversely affected.

2.6   Conclusion

It is not easy to give Chinatown an explicit definition because it is sometimes viewed as an ideological construct, at times considered as a physical place, sometimes described as the composition of the Chinese community, and at other times, defined by its functions. A more useful framework would thus be to analyse the relevant socio-spatial relationships and what they mean for the Chinese community and the development of Chinatown. In studying the development of Chinatowns over time, the focus has tended to be historical, concentrating on the dynamics of the social relationships between individuals who are either leaders or persons in power from the host society and the Chinese community. There is no attention paid to the

experiences of ordinary Chinese migrants across the socio-economic spectrum. It must be acknowledged that first generation Chinese migrants will also have a bearing on the Chinatown landscape as they will have needs for the goods and services that are offered only in Chinatown. My research thus focuses on the perspectives and actions of first generation Chinese migrants. Inevitably, with a focus on the Chinese community, ethnic studies are a key component in inquiries on Chinatowns. In Britain and elsewhere, Chinatowns are strongly associated with the ethnic catering industry in which notions of self / internal help as well as victimisation and / or exploitation (voluntary or not) of labour in low-skilled positions are surfaced. Whether it is a cultural propensity towards ethnic enterprises or structural factors that sustain the prevalence of the ethnic enclave remains an issue of on-going debate. Discrimination and segregation are variables in a circuitous relationship in which the direction of causality is difficult to establish. Additionally, whilst we pay attention to ordinary Chinese migrants, we must also not neglect the shifting momentum of Chinese migration across the socio-economic spectrum. The varying number of immigrants aside, we are also witnessing changing profiles of migrant flows in our present day context resulting in an increasingly fragmented community. Influencing the processes and dynamics of migration, and hence the evolution of Chinatowns, is also developments in ICT. Remittances from destination to origin societies have always been a key indicator of links between migrants in host societies and their families back home. Technological advancements are increasingly facilitating such flows of information and goods, making the world seem much smaller and more connected. The advancement in ICT has greatly enabled migrants to continue to sustain, if not deepen, a sense of connectedness to their home countries. Their coping strategies in host nations have thus been modified and this transformation has a bearing on the development of Chinatown. By weaving these themes together, my study will marry a historical analysis of Liverpool's Chinatown with a bottom-up approach by analysing

contemporary actors' everyday experiences and what these mean for the Chinese community and the development of Liverpool's Chinatown, ascriptions of which are given by my interviewees.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Chapter 3 – Methodology

3.1　Introduction

This research aims to provide an in-depth understanding of Liverpool's Chinese community and its changing connection to Liverpool's Chinatown. As Liverpool's Chinatown is used as an angle from which I study the Chinese community, a holistic appreciation of the evolution of Liverpool's Chinatown is warranted. There are therefore two parts to this research – the historical and the contemporary portions. The more recent stages of Chinatown's development in the historical analysis is heavily slanted towards the voices of individuals – be they members from the host society or from the Chinese community – who are commonly either in positions of power or leadership. This is inevitable given that historical records usually capture voices, especially of leaders / authority figures. These individuals are presumed to represent a certain segment of society and are thus frequently approached for interviews and views as captured in the archival materials. Complementing the leaders' perspectives in the historical portion of this thesis, is an in-depth exploration of the perspectives of ordinary Chinese in the contemporary portion of this thesis. The scope of the Chinese community is further narrowed down to scrutinising first generation Chinese migrants. As highlighted in the literature review, scholars such as Lee (1949), Laguerre (2000) and Lai (2009), in examining Chinatowns, have focused on groups such as second and subsequent generations of Chinese migrants as well as on members of the host society. There are no studies analysing the development of Chinatowns from the perspectives of first generation Chinese migrants. This thesis will therefore concentrate on this group of individuals in filling a gap in the academic discourse. To reiterate, the questions are as follows:

(1)   How is the development of Liverpool's Chinatown situated within the wider, Western-dominated culture of the city?

(2)   What are the roles of 'traditional' Chinese activities (e.g. Chinese community centres, catering industry) based in and around Liverpool's Chinatown in Liverpool's contemporary Chinese community?

(3)   Given Liverpool's changing relationship to the People's Republic of China, how are these patterns changing over time?

  To address question (1), archival research will chart the historical inception and subsequent developments of Liverpool's Chinatown. Questions (2) and (3) will be answered with semi-structured and biographical qualitative interviews. The interviews will explore the everyday lives of different groups of Chinese migrants across the socio-economic spectrum, and what these mean for the Chinese community and the development of Liverpool's Chinatown.

3.2   Situated Knowledge and Reflexivity

  This research is a qualitative study. It can be argued that the findings compromise objectivity, a trait strongly upheld by the positivistic tradition. Positivism, according to Kolakowski (1972, in Bulmer, 1984) has four elements. Firstly, phenomenalism which asserts that there is only experience and rejects all abstractions. Secondly, nominalism which asserts that words, generalisations and abstractions do not give us insights into the world. Thirdly, facts and values are distinct and finally, the scientific method is a unified process.

Natural science is a progression towards accumulation and predictability of knowledge which is context independent (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Positivism was thus the highest expression of scientism and social science was to be a value free, explanatory, descriptive and a comparative science of general social laws.

Whilst the positivistic tradition espouses the domain of objectively existing facts which exist in their own right external to human beings, it can be argued that the natural sciences are not totally objective to begin with. As Kuhn pointed out, the ever-evolving paradigms that came about through consensus building amongst those in positions of power shaped the pathway of how natural sciences developed. Arguing that the natural sciences sought causal explanation while human sciences sought understanding (Verstehen), Dilthey (1988) stressed the importance of 'Erlebnis'[7].

Lived experience refers to "the world of social meaning which is embodied in history and is pre-reflective, for it is rooted in the hermeneutics of everyday life" (Delanty, 2005: 49). Weber (Delanty, 2005: 51-52) too, believed that social sciences must combine explanation and understanding. "The world of nature as explored by the natural scientist does not 'mean' anything to molecules, atoms and electrons. But the observed field of the social scientist – social reality – has a specific meaning and relevant structure for the beings living, acting and thinking within it. By a series of common sense constructs, they have pre-selected and pre-interpreted this world which they experience as the reality of their daily lives. It is these thought objects of theirs which determine their behaviour by motivating it" (Schutz, 1962 cited in Seale 2004: 215).

In reality, we cannot escape the fact that *homo-sapiens* are a reflexive species. In social sciences, the actors themselves are in constant interaction with fellow beings and with the overarching structure they live in. The behaviour and choices are constantly shaped by their evolving value systems, judgements and preferences, which are in turn shaped by them.

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[7] Erlebnis refers to lived experience.

In interpreting actors' experiences, Wittgenstein (Anscombe, 1968) provided the theory that representations of reality were a linguistic construction. This school of thought was furthered by Gadamer (Held, 1980) who put forth that the act of understanding was framed in a cultural context peculiar to the interpreter. There will forever be a gulf between the worlds of the researcher and the researched which can be minimised but never closed by engaging in dialogue with each other. Furthermore, there is another issue of what Giddens (1993) calls 'double hermeneutics' – interpretations of interpretations. Human beings are motivated by a spectrum of factors which are shaped by the world- and value-systems they have and which are in turn influenced by their respective cultural and structural contexts derived from society and by individual cognition. Similarly, researchers when choosing our research topics, questions and methodology, may already have pre-formed perspectives and preferences. These judgements are based on prior knowledge, values, beliefs, theories and even feelings and intuition. In a sense, we are approaching our understanding of the world with our own set of culturally and socially determined constructs shaped by our own on-going cognitive reflexivity.

Situated knowledge, knowledge that is derived from a particular standpoint (Haraway, 1991; Harding, 1991; Rose, 1983), is thus a useful concept for my qualitative study. The idea of situated knowledge is one of the central tenets of feminist epistemologies. This knowledge is thus contextual and circumstantial and does not have universal applicability or generalisability properties. Delanty (2005) identifies three kinds of standpoint epistemologies: radical, reflexive and postmodern. Radical epistemology views women's experience as the starting premise and contends that only women can study other women. On the other hand, the reflexive standpoint recognises the distinction of women as a subject and feminism as an

approach. This epistemology stresses the need for researchers to deliberate their roles when carrying out research to achieve objective and critical interpretations. Finally, Hartsock (1983) warns of the problems of minimising differences amongst women located in different social positions; thus the postmodern approach denies the existence of a single standpoint. The potential to focus the study on gender divisions so that I can illuminate the plight of Chinese women is appealing from a woman's social location (Rose, 1983). Going one step further to ascertain if there are issues of gender disadvantage is attractive as that may bring about changes in society to recognise the discrimination and limitations women face because of their sex. However, further considerations made me decide not to pursue that route. Pitting men against women, I may inadvertently push our understanding of women's economic position in a different direction from that of men's to a greater extent than is warranted or I may run the risk of marginalising or minimising differences amongst women (Hartsock, 1983). Instead, it would be more useful to take into consideration the various positionalities a researcher can adopt. Positioning is a matter of being able to interpret the complex and multi-layered world from actors' points of view. Therefore, the idea of situated knowledge and hence feminist standpoint epistemologies are very useful and served as a reference for me when I carried out interviews, analysed my data and wrote-up my findings.

As Madge (1993) postulates, the role of the self is multiple as it is influenced by variables such as race, nationality, age, gender, social and economic statuses. These properties affect the data collected and hence the information that gets coded as knowledge. This situated knowledge's incongruity with objectivity is defended by feminists by drawing upon the notion of a socially situated objectivity. Proponents such as Haraway (1991) and Harding (1991) argue that situated objectivity is based on a 'partial perspective' that captures the reality of actors' experiences as lived. By articulating the assumptions, limitations and

positionality in the research (McDowell, 1992; Mattingly, Falconer-Al-Hindi, 1995), the knowledge can be strongly objective as it makes the processes and findings of the research open to scrutiny and reflexive questioning. Moreover, summarised by Moss (1995) as the double reflexive gaze, reflexivity is not restricted only to the positionality of the researcher but also to the research's association with the wider knowledge community and power balance. By critically reflecting on and navigating their multiple positionalities when conducting a study, researchers can achieve objective knowledge that is situated and successfully negotiate this knowledge in a world of power relations.

Another standpoint issue is my race. Being of the Chinese racial group, it may seem that I am well-placed to study Chinese communities in Britain. Linguistically, I have the advantage of engaging my participants in a language other than English. Speaking to them in their mother tongue may facilitate and accelerate my establishing a rapport with them. My interviewees may be more comfortable with someone who speaks their language and may thus be more forthcoming with their knowledge and opinions. Culturally, I am attuned to Chinese customs and practices. I am also familiar with unspoken cultural sensitivities and may find penetrating the Chinese community easier. However, there are stark internal diversities within the 'Chinese' group so much so that Ahmad (Ahmad, 1993, cited in Dorling and Simpson, 1998) has warned against painting them with broad brush assumptions such that findings that are yielded are neither significant nor reliable. Although I am Chinese and my cultural socialisation has contributed to the worldview and value systems which I have built up over the years, these may be different for a Chinese person who is from Malaysia, China, or Singapore.

Another factor causing a further division amongst the various ethnic Chinese groups is nationality. For example, as a member of the majority group in multi-racial Singapore, I have never understood what it felt to be a member of a minority group until I came to the UK for my undergraduate studies in 1998 – 2001. Some early unpleasant incidents I encountered affected me for a while and modified my future actions. These experiences also made me more acutely aware of how fragile racial and religious relations can be. However, I did not know of the historical injustices and mistreatment of the Chinese people until after I came to Liverpool for my postgraduate studies and after having gone through the archival resources in the Liverpool Record Office in 2009. The new realisation made me feel very indignant initially and this feeling slowly translated into an enthusiasm to publicise the knowledge as well as to gain further insights into the Chinese community.

Subsequently, having had the opportunity to interact with many Chinese people from Malaysia during the course of my fieldwork, I realised their outlooks and views on some issues were very different from mine. They were already a minority in their home country and they anticipated similar experiences in the UK. In other words, they may be better prepared for migrating to the UK and this would have influenced their approaches and responses to incidences they encountered. Leveraging on this argument, it can be said that at the outset, the study can never be objective because many phenomena which at first seem natural are actually not. Ethnicity can be biologically defined but it can also be an artificially created social construct. Using ethnicity as a starting premise would thus be fraught with contentions. Participants may change their ethnicity over time depending on their social position and assessment of the more beneficial economic and / or social 'allegiance' at particular points in time. Before delving into the research design, it is worthwhile to mention the genesis of this project which will be elaborated in the ensuing section.

3.3 Ethical and Risk Considerations

This Ph.D. project may never have materialised if not for ethical and risk considerations that prevented the original research from being carried out. It is thus appropriate to briefly reflect on this experience as part of my research journey. I applied to do a research degree at the University of Liverpool in response to an advertisement by the University. This undertaking was originally a studentship research project with the initial aims of determining the patterns of migrant demand / supply in the Chinese catering industry using a predominantly ethnographic approach. Upon starting the Ph.D. programme, I found out that the project was initially going to be an Economic Social Research Council (ESRC) CASE (the United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre was the interested party) Studentship Award. However, there was an administrative oversight and the application was not submitted to the ESRC in time. As a result, the University of Liverpool took upon itself to fund this research. Fortunately or unfortunately as explained subsequently, the United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) did not back out of the funding commitment even though it failed to become an ESRC research project.

When the research was submitted to the Department's ethics committee, several concerns were raised with regard to UKHTC's vested interest in this research which was deemed highly contentious as well as the high possibility of involving 'participants who were particularly vulnerable or unable to give informed consent'. Firstly, the contract with UKHTC stipulated that research findings were to be shared with the agency. Although specifics were not detailed, I might have been bound to share the unedited interview tapes and transcripts with the government body. The confidentiality and anonymity that I wanted to

assure my research participants may thus have been compromised. To illustrate, if I became aware of an illegal migrant, I would be bound by the law to report on this knowledge even though my ethical responsibility as a researcher was otherwise. Although I had verbally told the former Head of UKHTC that I would not report on any knowledge of illegalities pertaining to my research, he responded with the statement that I was part funded by the agency, implying that I should not withhold any information. He could have said it in jest but his reply was of concern to my supervisors. In my application for approval for my project from the ethics committee, I stressed to the committee that the ongoing argument of 'legality' being a state-produced notion aside, not all irregular statuses were illegal. For example, Ruhs and Anderson (2009) argued that those who may be legally resident but violate employment restrictions attached to their legal status were semi-compliants and not illegals.

Secondly, the participant observation methodology in focusing on the catering industry would have been fraught with many risks. Using Chinese cuisine establishments as key research platforms, it was envisaged that I would work as a catering staff to carry out my study. One of the concerns was the question of ethics. Remarked by Hoinville and Jowell, (1987: 186), "survey research depends essentially on information being freely given without duress, obligation or deception". Being a community researcher, the researcher can easily infiltrate the group being studied and carry out covert investigations. This may be a strategy deployed in order to obtain findings in its most 'natural' and unaltered form. However, withholding the information that the group is under scrutiny can be seen as deception which is ethically not right (Bulmer, 2001).

Although it can be argued that covert methods of research do not cause harm to those being studied just as long as anonymity and confidentiality safeguards are in place or that greater

scientific knowledge are far more important, the consideration on ethical grounds and potential loss of goodwill with persons involved far outweighed the benefits of deception. The dilemma was in whether to make my research interest known to the participants. On one hand, if my research objective was articulated at the outset, I may have been faced with rejections and thus a stalemate with my study. On the other hand, if I withheld the research information from my participants, the latter may have felt betrayed and resentful if my identity came to light. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence suggests triads abound in the Chinese catering industry. Their suspicions of my research and of my association with the UKHTC were additional concerns threatening the viability of the original study of which my safety was a key factor. After consultations with the UKHTC, the agency evaluated that the potential risks to me were also of concern to the UKHTC and they thus expressed reservations about ethnography.

Moreover, as time unfolded, I developed suspicions of possible illegalities as well as of possible corruption in legitimate organisations which would greatly threaten the feasibility of the original research design. My moral dilemma intensified. Innovative and considered approaches to writing up aside, this discovery led me to have internal conflict as knowledge of the research findings may possibly perpetuate the power stronghold of 'legitimate' structures. A hypothetical example is that the authorities might have come up with strategies to purposely exert some control over the Chinese community. After several consultations with my supervisors and with the UKHTC, the decision to reassess the research objectives as well as the overall research design was affirmed during the process of filling out the application form to the University's Ethics Committee for fieldwork approval as well as undergoing the UKHTC's risk assessment. Thereafter, with the UK's economy in recession,

the UKHTC pulled out of funding the project altogether. As a result, a revised research question was developed.

3.4   Archival Research

To answer question (1), 'How is the development of Liverpool's Chinatown situated within the wider, Western-dominated culture of the city?', archival research was carried out. Similar to many studies on Chinatowns throughout the world, the approach that was adopted was analysing archival records. This historical analysis will contextualise the research. It is essential to grasp an awareness of the history of the Chinese community in the UK – from when the first immigrants set foot in Liverpool in the 1800s (Wong, 1989) and more specifically, the global political, economic and social situations prior to 1997 – a significant consideration as 1997 was the year that Hong Kong's sovereignty was handed over to PRC – and seek out their motivations for leaving home as well as for settling in Britain and the trades they entered.

In addition to scrutinising actors' agency, it is pertinent to appreciate the evolution of Britain's policies towards immigrants to understand Chinese immigrants' perceived racial discrimination which would also have a contributory impact on their survival strategies and acculturative behaviour (Ward, 1996). Exploring the identification of actors' motivations as well as the external controls on social action, the research hopes to paint a more holistic picture. As Latour (1993) posits, society is a network of social actors and abstractions and reality are constructed out of constructivist processes of translation. Therefore, to carry out structure-agency analyses, it is necessary to have an awareness of the Chinese value-system in terms of the Chinese traditions, customs, practices and beliefs. These historical and cultural

underpinnings provide a robust context within which the researcher will be better able to interpret and explain the findings. These undertakings are essential to understand the intricate and inter-linking mechanisms and processes which explain how the observed regularities are brought about (Bhaskar, 1998).

For the empirical research, I have scoured and analysed national and local (Liverpool) English newspapers from 1785 to 2009, Council proceedings and documents retrieved from the Liverpool Record Office and consulted internet and museum sources. Recognising the potential bias of relying solely upon English sources which are largely intended for an English audience, I have studied relevant Chinese newspapers, newsletters and magazines in Liverpool from 1947 to 2012. The year 1947 was the earliest Chinese source because that was the year the first Chinese paper – handwritten version – was launched. Seeing the experiences from a Chinese perspective ensures a more holistic analysis. Earlier local Chinese archival sources are unavailable and English print sources for this period would have to suffice as an alternative to highlight the reported Chinese passive and / or active[8] reactions to key events. These responses help to flesh out the interactionist dynamics between majority and minority groups within specific contexts of the day.

Following the Chinese conventional system, Chinese names are written by their family names followed by their forenames, except for those with English names. Most of the Chinese materials were written in traditional Chinese characters and although I am educated in simplified Chinese script, I am able to read and translate traditional Chinese characters. All translations of Chinese materials as well as Chinese translations from the Wade-Giles system[9]

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[8] Passive reaction is a response that is reactive to events while an active reaction is a response that is not inert but is pro-active to events.
[9] The Wade-Giles romanisation system for Mandarin is the product of British scholars, Sir Thomas Wade and Herbet Allen Giles. The system is now largely supplanted by Hanyu Pinyin.

into Hanyu Pinyin[10] and English are mine and are performed where applicable. However, translations in themselves are another layer of hermeneutics. Furthermore, my positionality as an ethnic Chinese researcher runs the risk of taking certain observations for granted or missing blind spots. Therefore, to avoid misrepresenting Chinese texts, I consciously bear the particular time specific and circumstantial contexts in mind when translating and analysing the materials.

I spent lengthy periods of time in the Liverpool Record Office. The archival research process being arduous aside, returning home to type out the numerous hand-written pages of notes and ensuring correct referencing were time-consuming. After all the notes and translations had been typed out, I grouped the materials chronologically – with dates of the article / material, summary of the article / material, and source of the article / material in different columns. Key observations were highlighted and synthesised. Main and sub-themes were subsequently coded accordingly to distinguish the various phases of Liverpool's Chinatown. The research questions (2), 'What are the roles of 'traditional' Chinese activities (e.g. Chinese community centres, catering industry) based in and around Liverpool's Chinatown in Liverpool's contemporary Chinese community?', and (3), 'Given Liverpool's changing relationship to the People's Republic of China, how are these patterns changing over time?', are addressed by primary qualitative research which entailed gaining entry into the community.

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[10] For example, referring to the same place in the People's Republic of China, 'Canton / Kwang-tung' is Wade-Giles while 'Guangdong' is Hanyu Pinyin.

3.5   Securing a Voice

Before one can conduct research and thus accord a voice to the researcher as well as the researched, the researcher must first be able to get a foot into the research setting (Coy, 2001). Prior to starting this research, I was completing my Masters in Research Methodology (Sociology and Social Policy) at the University of Liverpool. From February – August 2008, I also worked part-time as a clerical worker at a wholesaler of food and drink products from the Far East. It is worthwhile elaborating my experience there, as this proved a significant factor in enabling me to get a foot into one segment of the Chinese population in Liverpool – those in the catering industry. Similar to the core factor of Guevarra's (2006) ethnic status as a Filipina American easily opening doors for her to conduct a study on Filipino labour brokers, I was recruited primarily because of my language ability.

The position of an accounts assistant was advertised and, although I had no knowledge of accounting or the use of accounting software the company used, I was recruited. The successful application was due to the fact that I could speak Mandarin and Cantonese. In the beginning, I handled sales orders for clients in Merseyside. That expanded to liaising with clients in the UK as well as liaising with suppliers in the Far East. However, the difference with Guevarra's (2006) experience is that the idea of using the business as a site for recruiting my participants did not arise until much later after I had already been working part-time in the organisation. In other words, I had the added advantage of time to establish relationships and build rapport with participants even before fieldwork began – rapport being a salient factor for the success of fieldwork as many researchers have observed.

Cultivating rapport is important and sharing a similar ethnic / racial identity with the participants is insufficient to guarantee unproblematic and automatic inclusion into the community (Kusenbach, 2003). Wearing an office suit and bringing along a folder holding my resume and qualifications, I knew I had been overdressed for the interview when I found myself standing outside a neglected-looking Victorian period factory with huge metal shutters and interviewed by a finance manager dressed in jeans. Throughout the interview, the recruiter did not ask to see the documents I had brought along and the process was more an informal chat about my nationality and purpose in Liverpool. Having learnt the embarrassing lesson of my incongruous attire for the environment, I turned up for work in more casual clothes. Although dressing down was done to blend in at the workplace, the "ability to first recognise and then strategically work within the socially constructed meanings that define all her physical and social characteristics deemed relevant by her particular field setting" (Mazzei and O'Brien, 2009: 359-360) were essential to gain access and establish rapport with the research participants. As with Masselot's (2008) encounter in interviewing male scientists, dressing to 'fit in' with the crowd was crucial to connect with the participants.

Attire is only one of several variables in the field that affected rapport and relationship fostering. The multitude of situations and tasks that unfolded meant that I had to be flexible and adaptable to new encounters and experiences. The demands of fieldwork cannot be stressed enough (Sharp, 2005) and fieldwork for my research was not restricted to merely the interviewing phase. Fieldwork for me, extended much earlier to the period of forming, establishing and concretising relationships. To provide a brief example of the 'demands' of fieldwork, I had expected to be given a brief induction to the company's operations and an

overview of my duties as well as some training on how to use the accounting software. Contrarily, I was practically thrown into the deep end and informed of my duties, task by task.

In the beginning, my primary responsibility was to handle sales orders for clients in Merseyside. The task entailed calling up clients and taking down their orders. The orders were then entered into the accounting system for the goods to be despatched. Fluctuating prices and inventories for which I did not have control or knowledge of prior to carrying out my task did not make the job easy. Gradually, sales duties expanded to liaising with clients in the UK as well as liaising with suppliers in the Far East. Duties also included handling marketing, public complaints, legal affairs, health and safety issues, human resource matters etc. I was not happy with the amorphous job description but I did not voice my displeasure for fear of spoiling the relationships. After a few months, I was 'promoted' to Sales Manager without any pay rise and attended meetings with potential clients, networking sessions as well as running publicity road shows tending stalls and selling food and drink products. I was also asked to help out in the mass production of Chinese dim sum. Although I was quite averse to wearing someone else's butcher's coat and hairnet and being in a room filled with the smells of raw meat, complicity to avoid losing rapport, in this instance and in some of the other tasks, prevailed.

Since starting my research degree in February 2009, I was given an opportunity to work as a waitress when the job was offered to me by my former wholesale employer. It was deemed another good opportunity to expand my contacts in the community whom I could later approach for participating in my research. The waitressing job lasted from October – November 2009 and I encountered similar experiences of a vague job description as with the wholesaler stint. Being adaptable in handling varied duties aside, the demands were more

physically draining this time. However, the waiting job was aborted when risk concerns were significant arising from the process of ethics and risk assessment considerations that I detailed earlier in this chapter.

From August 2009, I also started volunteering with the Merseyside Chinese Community Development Association (MCCDA). However, this was not a commitment that I engaged in for the sake of penetrating the Chinese community. This endeavour was undertaken purely for altruistic reasons because I genuinely wanted to reach out to older persons, especially lone elders, given my own personal experiences and greater empathy for senior citizens. Nevertheless, seniors became a very likely potential group of research participants. Additionally, I was asked to set up a Women's Group within MCCDA. The prospect of being able to reach out to a wider group of people in the community was the impetus for me to volunteer as secretary for the committee. Attending monthly meetings and frequent social events, I bonded with the members of the Women's Group whom I was able to turn to for participating in my research.

Furthermore, since February 2009, I co-incidentally got acquainted with an asylum seeker from China. The interactions that have taken place as well as the relationship that has formed gave me much insight into her worldview and life journey. I was welcomed into her circle of friends from the same province in China and who all share similar migration journeys and experiences. Cementing the friendship was not done with the a priori aim of utilising them as research participants, although I kept personal diary notes of my interactions, especially with this 'interesting' acquaintance from the very beginning. Throughout, I was approached by them to assist with requests for interpretations, applications for state benefits, communications with job agencies, their landlords and with immigration officers. Although I

was genuine and more than happy to help in all instances, it can always be argued that underscoring the relationships is an element of selfish 'mutual help' – they utilise me for their objectives and vice versa.

Due to the fact that I am ethnically Chinese, it was often the case that work life (research in this case) and personal life are inseparable although I recognise that this is a trend that is common to many other researchers. However, because of a similar cultural background, there may be a propensity for a greater merging of work and social lives. For example, I was invited to participants' birthday parties, weddings and get-togethers and at these events, interactions that took place as well as observations made were inevitably factored into my interviews. Together with life experiences in Liverpool's Chinese community, it was only after the archival research was completed that the new research questions came to be formulated. The evolving research objectives and research design proved that data collection and analyses is an iterative process. Particularly for this relatively lesser-studied community, it was useful to begin with archival data as part of the initial exploratory and inductive research process because they helped to clarify and narrow the focus of the research. In the next section, the primary qualitative research that I conducted is outlined.

3.6   Primary Qualitative Research

To carry out the interviews, three groups of first generation Chinese migrants were identified: (a) professionals and business owners, (b) administrative and service workers, and (c) students. It is worth noting that homemakers, asylum seekers and children caregivers fall within the second category. All of them do either housework and / or take care of children. Although they are not monetarily paid for their responsibilities, the services they provide in

their everyday tasks can be argued to be economically productive because they make it possible for other family members to go out to work. The Chinese catering industry is the mainstay of Chinatowns throughout the world and Liverpool is no exception. It is thus an industry that presents employment opportunities to immigrants and possibly serves as a springboard for them to scale the social mobility ladder. This is set against a background of present day realities in which, as a result of higher aspirations, many subsequent generations of British Chinese have shied away from work in the Chinese eating establishments (Shang, 1984). Coupled with tightening migration policies, a shortage of workers, especially of chefs, has been expressed (European Union Chinese Journal, 2009a).

At the same time, the demand for foods from all over the world is expected to be sustained as people are increasingly exposed to other cultures through the media. Further contributing to the demand for Chinese goods and services is the influx of Chinese higher education students especially from PRC and Hong Kong. Students from these countries account for, respectively, the highest and third highest percentages of accepted applicants into the UK in 2008 (UCAS, 2010)[11]. Other than these profiles of Chinese migrants, there are also individuals who are represented in the professional rungs of society. Very often, this group is neglected in studies but they are also a contributing factor in impacting the evolution of Chinatowns, and perhaps more so in today's context in which we witness a rising presence of Chinese professionals.

It is thus interesting to find out if and how the new waves of first generation Chinese migrants in Liverpool will shape and be shaped by the development of Liverpool's Chinatown. The benefits of studying first generation Chinese migrants aside, the broad

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[11] Particularly in Liverpool, the academic year 2009-2010 witnessed the first wave of XJTLU students into Liverpool.

categorisations of the Chinese migrants would be very useful to tease out not only age and socio-economic differences, but also to reveal insights into variations due to nationalities. Furthermore, this mode of categorisation allows for one more advantage and that is that no age band criterion is set. Such an approach would allow me to also interview elderly people who fall within the occupational profiles and they would be a very rich resource as they will be able to bridge the present with the past. In total, 68 research participants in Liverpool (22 from the group of professionals and business owners, 25 from the service and administrative category and 21 from the group of students) were approached via my own contacts that had been formed since 2008 through my part-time working stints in Chinese businesses, volunteering commitments, as well as personal social relationships that had been formed in Liverpool. For some of the participants who were referred by gatekeepers, recruitment of these individuals was accessed via the following organisations as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Organisations approached

Organisation	Participants
Merseyside Chinese Community Development Association	Elderly, adult workers and homemakers
Liverpool Chinese Gospel Church	Adult workers and homemakers
Universities in Liverpool[12]	Students

Source: Author

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[12] Mass email through Universities' student bodies / organisations requesting interested student participants were sent out.

A snow ball technique followed from the initial recruited participants. Biographical interviews were conducted with the elderly and relevant adults; and semi-structured qualitative ones with the adults and students. In the semi-structured interviews, I prepared a list of questions which I wanted my interviewees to touch on. These included general socio-demographic questions, questions about their migration motivation, migration process, day-to-day experiences here in Liverpool and their short- and longer-term aspirations. This interviewing technique allowed greater flexibility for the emergence of other dimensions which I may have been oblivious to. Semi-structured interviews therefore allowed interviewees to talk about issues other than those that were asked of them.

For individuals who are older and are perceived to have richer life experiences, I used biographical interviews instead. I started the interviews with very general questions such as their age, where are they from, their reasons for migrating and what have been their experiences thus far. Biographical interviews also allowed for sensitivity to interviewees' circumstances to be taken into consideration. For example, I was not fully aware of the different migration process all my participants underwent. Some of them, especially asylum seekers, have gone through illegal migration journeys (sometimes repeated returns to their home countries) over a long time period. Although they may have embarked on a journey from, for example, PRC to the UK, their migration journeys could have resulted in them going to many other countries as well as repatriations back to PRC before they finally came to Liverpool. That this information was offered during the interview can be seen on the one hand as effective gaining of trust by the interviewer, but also because an open-ended method of questioning allowed the interviewee to be able to broach these topics, if they are willing to talk about it.

The average duration of each interview was approximately one hour. The shortest recorded interview was 30 minutes while the longest interview was approximately five hours. All the interviews were conducted face-to-face except for three which were carried out over Skype. As much as possible, the face-to-face interviews took place at public and neutral places such as at fast food restaurants and cafes. However, there were occasions when I was asked to conduct the interviews in respondents' homes and I would oblige when I assessed it appropriate to do so. During these instances, I would also notify my next-of-kin of the venue, as well as the timing and duration I would be at their homes. The interviews themselves also threw up surprises at times and on these occasions, I must admit that I did not anticipate these occurrences and was sometimes thrown off guard. For example, I was sometimes stood up at agreed meeting venues and not only had I wasted time standing in the open, at times outside Chinese restaurants, I had to reschedule my interviews so as to fit in revised appointments. Additionally, I would at times receive calls informing me to meet my participants in half an hour or an hour's time. Such last minute notifications would once again throw my schedule into disarray and I would have to re-organise my appointments and commitments.

Sometimes, I would be requested to do my interview participants favours in return for their participation in my research. Although my information sheet given to them at the outset of the interviews explicitly highlighted that there would be no benefits or remuneration in return for their participation, some of my respondents still went ahead to ask for favours. These requests included helping to proof-read their Ph.D. thesis, helping to tutor their children, accompanying them to immigration offices as well as helping to distribute flyers at Liverpool One for their businesses' publicity. Wherever possible, I acceded to their requests but I was firm in turning down demands that I was uncomfortable to undertake. Another type of occurrence which I was somewhat prepared for was interviewees breaking down during the

interviews. I foresaw that some migrants may have had more difficult life situations resulting in their decisions to migrate for economic reasons. In recounting their migration journeys as well as their background etc, I anticipated that some respondents might feel emotionally distressed given the topic involved. Indeed, some of them broke down but I was prepared and could say that I handled such situations well, empathising with my respondents and ensuring that the interviews did not end abruptly. I carried out the interview in a manner that did not make them feel I was only there to listen and take away useful information from them for my research without giving anything in return. I was genuine in empathising with their plight, I gave them sufficient space and time to compose themselves and I offered help in ways that I was sure my promises could be fulfilled.

In seeking all my interviewees' agreement to participate in the research, I would first briefly describe what my research project was about. If the individuals agreed to participate, I would hand out a detailed information sheet (English and Chinese versions were available) for them to read and seek further clarifications before I obtained their signed consent (consent forms were also available in English and Mandarin). Only two participants refused to provide written consent and instead, they provided verbal consent.

With regard to written consent, some participants were uncomfortable with providing their full names, as required in my consent form, and asked to sign without writing their names, or to provide only a first name. With regard to assuring participants' anonymity, I reiterated to my participants that the materials collected would be stored in my personal computer and later analysed. The data would be anonymised and only I would have access to the raw data. Furthermore, I offered to let my participants read my draft thesis before I submitted to the

examiners and offered verbal accounts of my thesis for those with a weaker grasp of the English language but no one took up my offer.

The interviews were carried out in English, Mandarin or Cantonese and were taped whenever possible. Of all the interviews, only two were not taped and one was taped half-way in accordance with the participants' wishes. These recordings were then transcribed in verbatim form and subsequently translated. With regard to coding, I went through each transcript individually and developed a matrix (one for each of the three categories of participants) in which I typed out all the main themes and sub-themes on the left-hand rows. After that, I went through all the transcripts a second time and labelled interviewees, in an adjoining column, against the themes if these themes were present in the transcripts. After this was done, all themes that had less than three interviewees marked against the observation were deleted. Themes that were deemed ethically contentious were also deleted. Subsequently, I went through all the transcripts a third time to check for inaccuracies, themes I had earlier missed out and inconsistencies. Key observations were then highlighted and synthesised, and comparisons were made between the observations arising from the three categories of research participants.

3.7   Profile of Sixty-Eight Interview Respondents

According to the UK's 2001 Census, there were about 7,978 Chinese people in Liverpool. They made up 1.71% of the total population in Liverpool. From the UK's 2011 Census, there are about 4,074 Chinese people in Liverpool. This is 0.87% of Liverpool's total population. Amongst the 4,074 Chinese people, we must bear in mind that there are further differentiations by nationalities. At this juncture, it will be helpful to provide a brief overview

of the profile of my interview respondents to set the scene for the discussions in the subsequent chapters of this thesis.

3.7.1   Differentiations between the Occupational Groups

Categorising the 68 interviewees by their occupational profiles, 22 are professionals and business owners, 25 are administrative and service workers and 21 are students. Overall, the ages of these interviewees range from 19 to 79 (see Figure 1). Comparing their age profiles, the ages of professionals and business owners range from 20 to 79 with a majority (73%) within the 20-39 age band. Administrative and service workers are also between 20 and 79 year olds although the range with greatest representation (80%) is wider, 20-49 year olds. Amongst the students, the age range is narrower, 19-39, with 76% falling within the 20-29 age group.
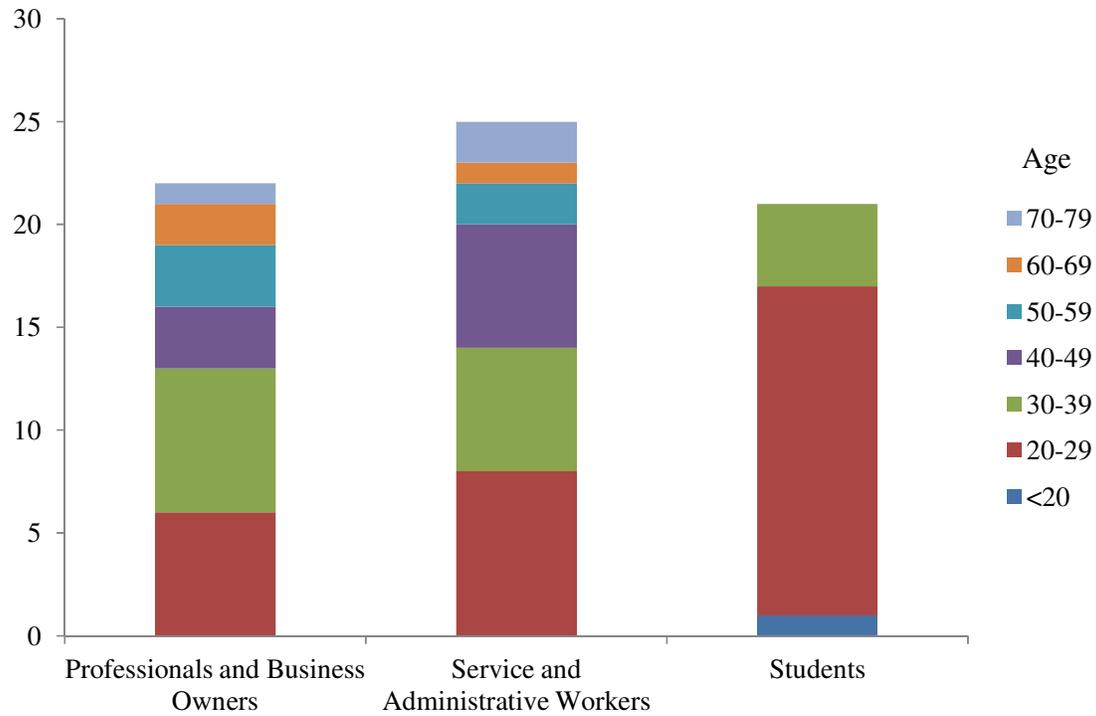
Figure 1 Age distribution of research participants

Source: Author

Generally, the gender ratio is well balanced. There are a total of 33 men and 35 women. However, with the exception of students, the gender mix is disproportionate in the two other clusters. Men dominate the professional and business owners grouping while women make up a greater number in the administrative and service workers group. To enumerate, there are 18 men and 4 women who are professionals and business owners; and there are 5 men and 20 women who are administrative and service workers. With regard to students, there are 10 men and 11 women (see Table 2).

Table 2 Gender distribution

Category	Male	Female	Total
Professionals and Business Owners	18	4	**22**
Service and Administrative Workers	5	20	**25**
Students	10	11	**21**
Total	**33**	**35**	**68**

Source: Author

Comparing the frequencies of interviewees' countries of origin, PRC ranks first, followed by Malaysia. PRC, Hong Kong and Malaysia are the countries from which most professionals and business owners originate. In contrast, the majority of service and administrative workers come from PRC. PRC and Malaysia are also the countries from which most students come to enroll in the universities in Liverpool. Other nationalities include Singaporean, Taiwanese, Burmese, Indonesian and Vietnamese.

3.7.2   Differentiations within Each Group

Apart from the differences between groups, there are also variances within each group. The professionals are engineers, doctors, dentists, lawyers, academics and white collar personnel of at least managerial positions. All business owners, except one, are in the Chinese catering industry. The other business owner runs an entity selling gift items. As highlighted earlier, the age profile of most of these individuals are relatively young and men greatly outnumber women. This phenomenon may be attributed to wider global gender inequalities pervading in our society, especially in Asian and South-East Asian societies today in which there is a tendency for women to be restricted to lower-end jobs and to being homemakers. Although the number of 68 interview participants can be considered a relatively small sample from which to draw generalisations that are representative of a population, the types of occupations women have in this research is of interest. Amongst the four women, only one is in a profession that is highly regarded in the Asian context. She is a medical doctor. Although two other women are managers, they are in the community and social services industries, industries that are deemed 'softer' from the Asian perspective. Furthermore, the last woman is an owner of a Chinese takeaway, a stereotypical industry for the ethnic group.

Administrative and service workers include employees working in the Chinese catering industry as waiting staff, cooks, busboys (general kitchen workers handling odd jobs such as cleaning, chopping, simple frying) in restaurants and takeaways. There are also those who work as cleaners, home help social workers, interpreters and clerks. Within this category are also homemakers (housewives and househusbands), asylum seekers and grandparents who are child-minders. Although they are not economically active, housework and childcare are also productive work and can be considered a type of service to the rest of the family.

Therefore, these individuals fall within the group, 'Administrative and Service Workers'. Women dominate this category of migrants, once again reflecting the non-representativeness of this research. It is nevertheless interesting to point out that all five men in this occupational group are in the Chinese catering industry. The Chinese catering industry is an industry in which many of my participants in the 'Administrative and Service Workers' category are employed. The over-representation of Chinese people in the catering industry, compared to other industries, might signal the presence of a barrier for migrants and ethnic minorities to find mainstream jobs in host societies. This is an area which will be dealt with in greater detail in *Chapter Six*.

Finally, within the students category, there are undergraduates as well as postgraduates. Some of them have completed their foundation year course or pre-Masters programmes before embarking on their respective degrees at Liverpool. One of the differences within this group is their subject specialisations. PRC nationals favour physical sciences and management courses; Malaysians, physical sciences, medicine and dentistry; and Singaporeans are attracted to physical sciences and law. Amongst the undergraduates, not all of them are registered in their respective programmes immediately after pre-university studies. Some of them are mature students who have prior working experience and who do not have a Bachelor's degree. Other than these students who skew the age group upwards, those who are older are usually those undertaking further studies at Masters or Doctoral levels.

In conducting research on the Gullah community, Beoku-Betts (1994) asserted that sharing a common racial identity and cultural history were insufficient to concretise her membership in the group. Other 'status identities' such as gender, marital status and educational level

influenced how members of the community viewed her and thus the relationships she formed with her participants. Similarly for my experiences, further delineation by nationality reinforces the idea of researcher's positionality as a multi-faceted concept. In the next section, I shall elaborate how I utilised and invoked different positionalities as and when deemed relevant.

3.8   Negotiating the Voices

Because of the diversified nature of the Chinese community, existing in an ongoing state of reflection and having to establish and re-establish one's positionality thus becomes inevitable. In Soni-Sinha's (2008) experience, her class background and education were critical in helping her gain access to the entrepreneurs and managers in India but these identities also distanced her from the workers and artisans in the beginning. During my fieldwork, the plethora of positions I occupied were evident, regardless of whether the ascriptions accorded by the field participants' were synonymous with my own perception of my identity. In one instance, my ethnicity dominated. During an incident when I professed a preference for chicken thigh meat over breast meat, one of the individuals present in a social gathering who was half-Chinese-half-White proclaimed, "you Chinese like to suck on bones". In another situation, my nationality stood out. During an interview with a Chinese woman from the PRC, she talked at length about the 'moral degradation' of her younger fellow countrymen. She said that she would only say this to me because I was not a PRC Chinese. In such instances, being of a different nationality had its advantage because participants were more willing to be open in their critical musings. In another example, a Singaporean and a Malaysian were very frank and straightforward in expressing to me, their negative impressions of PRC Chinese.

At other times, being of a different nationality had its disadvantages. For instance, when another PRC Chinese tried to explain to me how the overseas PRC Chinese were in tune with the latest trends in mainland China, she invoked many social examples from home. Even if I were to be privy to the social trends that she mentioned, without an in-depth grasp of the culture in PRC, I was not able to fully appreciate the analogies she was drawing. Such examples reinforced the fluidity of identities I possessed and highlighted the shifting insider-outsider status I had.

Labaree (2002) has provided a good review of the literature on insider-outsider position from proponents of it being two mutually distinct constructs to those arguing insiderness and outsiderness being on a continuum. Further scholarship raised the idea of multiple insiders and outsiders as well as the notion of positionality being an ongoing process of evaluation. It is necessary to be aware of the multiple attributes associated with one's positionality (Palmer, 2006) but it is insufficient and perhaps wasteful to be merely cognisant and passively negotiate around identities ascribed by the participants to the researcher. As Narayan (1993: 673) articulated, "a person may have strands of identification available, strands that may be tugged into the open or stuffed out of sight". Thus, and following the overall standpoint of the thesis, identities need to be proactively engaged with during the research process, rather than ignored or dismissed.

Gender, as one of the status identities, was 'deployed' during Mazzei's and O'Brien's (2009) research. They postulated that researchers "can read which of their attributes matter in a particular field setting (and field interaction), come to understand the scripts operating about these attributes, and then, usually strategically negotiate their gender and / or host of identities to build access and rapport" (2009: 363). Active positioning was adopted to

accentuate commonalities and mitigate differences with their participants in conducting a successful and ethical research. However, when the groups' characteristics and individual interests are diverse, such a strategy becomes more complex. Indeed, Ravitch and Wirth (2007: 77) are of the view that "these choices can be difficult, as their impact can affect not only the research process and outcomes, but professional relationships and situations both during and after the research".

Relatively speaking, I am more academically qualified than most, if not all, of my research participants. Amongst them, there are elderly men who are established within the Chinese community in Liverpool. Instead of playing up my educational achievements, I downplayed them in order to establish rapport before and during the interview. Instead of introducing myself as a Ph.D. student or a postgraduate researcher, I merely said that I was a student who was very interested to talk to them to hear their views, perspectives and opinions. Through doing so, the elderly men who were community leaders or established men in the community were more likely to be helpful. It could be a case of male chauvinism at play because more traditional Chinese men of earlier generations tended to relegate women to lesser and unimportant roles. Their male egos may feel threatened by an educated woman, and a much younger woman in this instance. However, there were other times when I needed to play up my educational qualifications in order to build rapport. Especially for Chinese people from the Fujian province as well as lesser educated women in the community, they were very 'honoured' that an educated person was willing to talk to them and to listen to their stories. In these instances, I did not downplay my qualifications but I also took care not to sound too arrogant in case it annoyed my potential participants. These encounters stressed the need for me to realign my positioning now and then depending on the situations which were often assessed at the start of interactions.

Whilst acknowledging the benefits of active positioning in the field, the strategy should not be executed to the extent of tampering with the site in the sense that the researcher becomes the initiator of an outcome. Ultimately, the researcher, being present in the field, can influence the voices of the researched. Drawing upon the example of chicken thigh meat, after I explicitly requested that I wanted chicken thigh over breast meat, fellow Chinese people made the same requests, albeit meekly. Similarly during the interviews, it was paramount that I avoided professing my agreement or disagreement with remarks made by the interviewees. There were times I strongly dissented with some of their views but I would only express them if the participants asked me. Even when I articulated my different viewpoints, I made it a point to state them objectively and with much reduced emotional fervour.

Although it is recognised that knowledge is intersubjectively negotiated by the researcher and the researched, the researcher's assertion will have ramifications on the dynamics between the participants themselves, hence fundamentally altering the nature of the field site. Unless the researcher's non-interference would bring about life and death outcomes, such as McGettigan's (2001) diving into a river to save a fellow tour member during his participant observation, a researcher must be reflexively deliberate about whether his / her actions are leading and not merely contributing to the development of field dynamics. Even though I agree with Mazzei's and O'Brien's (2009) call to read scripts and position oneself strategically, another equally pertinent consideration when actively positioning oneself is the plausibility of the researcher's role in spearheading dynamics.

The most authentic and reliable interview method would entail obliterating interviewer effects as it offers an understanding of natural settings and events as well as genuine information volunteered by participants. It can be argued that carrying out such a study is almost impossible as the physical presence of a researcher can have some bearing on how participants react. The Hawthorne effect[13] aside, the essence of research requires a researcher. Instead of trying to be invisible, the researcher should instead be mindful of his / her position and make reflexive decisions to negotiate the field. With roots in feminist research, reflexivity is defined by Mehta (2008: 240) as "the conscious attempt to identify how we as researchers influence the research process and how the whole research process is structured around issues of dominance and power, gender, class, age and race". Active positioning tempered with reflexivity to avoid creating otherwise artificial settings and events would thus be the middle ground I am arguing researchers should tread.

3.9   Validating and Justifying the Voices

Negotiating the multiple aspects affecting one's shifting positionality is thus an ongoing process of negotiation researchers have to contend with. This intricate appreciation of the subjectivities surrounding the researcher and the researched must be comprehensively grasped as these understandings undergird the interpretation of data and representation of knowledge (Conti and O'Neil, 2007). After all, the research process is an intersubjectively produced account, a representation of participants' voices alongside the researcher's (Baxter and Eyles, 1997). With regard to data interpretation and validation, I found that harnessing my inner voice arising from my various identities was especially useful. My heightened sensitivity due to socialisation in a similar cultural background was essential in teasing out,

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[13] People modifying their responses when they know that they are participating in a study.

and following up, participants' expressions. In other words, the research process is not merely an account in which researcher's and participants' voices are heard alongside one another, it is a process which entails the researcher's voice coaxing the real voice(s)[14] of the participants.

The importance of face value[15] is known to be relatively significant for most Chinese people. In some of the interviews, respondents were exuberant in detailing their achievements and statuses which were sometimes over-exaggerated. Rosy pictures of their lifestyles were also frequently painted initially. Instead of appearing doubtful towards what they said, I tried to tread such situations delicately, sometimes even appearing to believe everything that they said. However, at the back of my mind, I was consciously aware of the need to triangulate in my questioning in order to validate their accounts. By asking further probing questions in a politically correct and less direct manner, I was thus able to obtain more accurate and representative data from them. When the interviewees realised that I would not look down on them for their less glorious achievements and still accorded them respect for who they were and for what they did, they were then less likely to play up their façade and became more forthcoming with genuine details.

Not only is the researcher's voice potent during the circuitous course of fieldwork and analysis, the researcher's voice is equally, if not more, significant in representing the interpretations. The aim of my study is to cast further light on the lesser-researched Chinese in Britain in parallel to Black people, Pakistani and Bangladeshi minority groups which have generated relatively greater attention (Dale et. al. 2001; Dale, 2002; Salway, 2008). It was found that there are relatively fewer studies on the Chinese in the UK because it was generally more difficult to penetrate a community which usually kept to themselves and that

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[14] Real voices refer to genuine and unmodified responses provided by interviewees.
[15] Face value refers to the notion of one's reputation.

was perceived as "quiet, law-abiding and hardly noticed" (Au, 2004: 50). From the policy sociology angle, generating a greater amount of studies on ethnic minorities is favoured by the authorities (Burawoy et al, 2004) and academic circles so as to open the door for more dialogues and understandings of one another in an increasingly globalised world.

However, what if the Chinese community prefers to keep to themselves and they do not wish to be highlighted? How should we rationalise the desire for keeping a low profile with Becker's (1967) call to give a voice to the 'voiceless'? Especially for increasingly multi-racial Britain, developing a good grasp on the various minority groups, and how they impact the social fabric, is gaining importance. Furthermore, the knowledge is essential for Britain as she manoeuvres immigration, local planning, economic and nationalism policies. The research will also pave the way for future comparisons between different ethnic groups. However, one can argue that more expansive understandings also make it possible for the state administrators to exert control over the group(s) (Foucault, 1989). Political legitimacy and legality are after all politically derived definitions. Therefore, academic researchers must also be wary of contributing knowledge that would perpetuate the power stronghold of dominating groups. As argued by Marx (Elster, 1986), the utopian but often difficult to achieve outcome would be a type of knowledge that would raise participants' consciousness and ultimately lead to the process of social change from alienation.

On one hand, insider researchers have the privilege to access domains closed to others and can identify insights into cultural constructions. Their position, on the other hand, can present another layer of internal struggle, often on the part of the researcher, between representing the knowledge and upholding a commitment and loyalty to the community (Hörschelmann and Stenning, 2008). At the same time, insider researchers "find themselves in a position of

responsibility and strength to change the disciplines and their social worlds by speaking out in words that in the past were either unspoken or unheard" (Kobayashi, 1994: 73-74). Given the additional suspicions surrounding the objectivity of qualitative research in general, researchers have to be conscientiously reflexive throughout the entire research process – from project inception to findings dissemination – in order to achieve robust research outcomes. Indeed, as time in the field lengthened, the weight of being a responsible community researcher bore down on my shoulders. The writing-up process is similarly carried out under similar conditions of feeling the brunt. Constantly, I felt the need to be very considered and deliberate in writing up my thesis – being objective in presenting knowledge and at the same time not compromising my loyalty to my community.

3.10   Conclusion

An insider / community researcher has several advantages but it is not without its disadvantages. Although I am effectively bilingual in English and Mandarin, my Cantonese is only conversational. The process of thinking, writing and noting language nuances in the English language whilst carrying out the interviews in Mandarin and Cantonese would be extremely taxing if not for the deployment of a tape recorder to prevent anything being 'lost in translation'. However, transcribing and subsequently translating were an altogether different ordeal, although inevitably necessary. More importantly, the difficulty of being a community researcher is with reporting the findings responsibly and at the same time, being conscious of not compromising my loyalty to my community. During the course of my research, I have come across sensitive information with regard to illegitimate affairs. Whilst ethical safeguards serve to protect the interests of research participants, discussing sensitive information can present a rich source of materials. Acknowledging these in academic

discourse may not necessarily disadvantage the community, although it is recognised that there is a power imbalance between legitimate and illegitimate structures.

CHAPTER FOUR

HARNESSING THE TIDES: THE INCEPTION OF LIVERPOOL'S

CHINATOWN TO DATE

Chapter Four – Harnessing the Tides: The Inception of Liverpool's Chinatown To Date

4.1   Introduction

In studying the state of Liverpool's Chinese community and its role in the development of Liverpool's Chinatown, a holistic understanding of Liverpool's Chinatown and its history are warranted. As such, I will be addressing my first research question, 'How is the development of Liverpool's Chinatown situated within the wider, Western-dominated culture of the city?' This chapter undertakes a historical analysis of Liverpool's Chinatown from late 1700s to 2012. The analyses are largely reliant on English and Chinese archival materials and are inspired by Kay Anderson's seminal study on Vancouver's Chinatown (1995). By scrutinising the dialectical interactions of host and minority group dynamics which are embedded in structural factors, I identified four main phases in the evolution of Liverpool's Chinatown. Along this developmental pathway, there is the beginning era of Chinatown, the growing period, the maturing stage and finally, the stagnating phase in present day. Parallel to Anderson's argument that Vancouver's Chinatown is a product of White political domination, the construction and reconstructions of Liverpool's Chinatown depict a similar story. However, I diverge from Anderson's conclusion of Western *cultural* hegemony being the fundamental underlying reason. Instead, I will show that within the developmental phases, *economic* factors that are specific to the socio-political climates of the day are the primary motivators for the manifestations of White supremacy. A further point of deviation from Anderson's study pertains to the agency of Chinese actors. As I can also read Chinese text, I am able to appreciate the perspectives of the Chinese community that are not available in English sources. As a result, by according sufficient weight to Chinese agency, I further argue that there is Chinese agency and the way that Liverpool's Chinatown is being shaped

and re-shaped is not solely attributed to the actions of the White populace. Their actions are *contested*, *negotiated* and *embraced* by the Chinese community at varying points in time. Consequently, based on my interviews with 68 participants, I will give a brief account of the visual realities of Liverpool's Chinatown today as well as clarify the definitions of Liverpool's Chinatown. These will set the scene for the contemporary part of my study, the findings of which will be documented in the subsequent three chapters.

4.2   Chinese Migrants and the Seafaring Trade

Eighty-seven years before Columbus's famous voyage on the Nina, Pinta, and Santa Maria, and two hundred years before the Dutch settled on Manhattan Island, a Chinese Muslim admiral, named Zheng He, set sail from Fuzhou in 1405 with a fleet of 317 ships and 27,870 Chinese sailors on an imperial-sponsored trading mission to the south seas of Asia, the Middle East, and down the East coast of Africa (Guest, 2003). As these Chinese migrants set foot and settled down in the destination countries, they planted the seeds for the growth of 'Chinatowns' (these places may not necessarily be formally designated Chinatowns but have a significant presence of Chinese people) worldwide.

According to Raitisoja (2006), Binondo's Chinatown, located in Manila, Philippines, was established in 1594 and is the oldest Chinatown in the world. Many other Chinatowns in East and South East Asia also have early beginnings. For example, in 1600, there were Chinatowns in Nagasaki, Japan (Yosaburo, 2004) and Hoi An in Central Vietnam (Li, 2006). In 1740, there was a Chinese quarter in Jakarta, Indonesia (Abeyesekere, 1987) and in 1782, the Chinese community concentrated in Bangkok, Thailand (Yaowarat Heritage Centre, 2011). Apart from South East and East Asia, Chinatowns also developed in Australasia,

Africa, the Americas and Europe. For instance, in the late 1840s, the 'coolie' trade to the Americas was established and the gold rushes of 1849 and 1850s attracted Chinese labour into California (Cook and Cubbin, 2011).

Apart from Chinese labourers, there was also the presence of Chinese students. For example, Wong Fun from Edinburgh University received his doctoral degree for physicians and became the first Chinese student to graduate from a British university in 1855. In the late 1800s, under the advocacy of Zhang Zhidong, an eminent Chinese politician of the late Qing dynasty who strongly believed that Western learning was needed to help China catch up with the West, a steady flow of students from China arrived to study in Britain (Keith, 2009). Particularly in Liverpool, there have been students, one of whom is Mr Chen C. Z. who studied architecture at the University of Liverpool in the 1940s and who was the person who put forth a proposal for the rebuilding of Liverpool's Chinatown after the World Wars (Daily Post, 1944).

In Europe, Liverpool has the oldest Chinatown (International Institute for Transcultural and Diasporic Studies, 2007). While most sources point to the earliest account of Chinese in Britain being 1851 when there were reportedly 78 mainland Chinese living in London and 1868 being the year when large numbers of Chinese seamen arrived in Liverpool (Shang, 1984), Vision (2004) stated that the first recorded arrival of Chinese seamen aboard a Liverpool bound freighter from China was in 1834. In June that year, the Duchess of Clarence, a clipper owned by Bobby and Company, with a crew that comprised a contingent of Chinese sailors, was reportedly the first ship to sail into Liverpool (Echo, 2006a). With the termination of East India Company's (EIC) monopoly over trade between Britain and the Far East, trade with India and China was opened up in 1813 and 1833 respectively.

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, China was an autonomous state that had been under the imperial rule of the Qing Dynasty since 1644. The year, 1838, marked the beginning of foreign domination. When the smuggling of opium onboard British ships in Guangzhou was resisted, Britain retaliated militarily and defeated China. This defeat led to the signing of the 1842 and 1860 treaties of Nanjing and Beijing respectively, by which Britain obtained certain trading and territorial rights from China, including control of Hong Kong. These unequal treaties, testament to an era of British imperialism, enhanced Britain's flourishing trade at the expense of China's. Subsequently, Britain's victory was followed by many other foreign invasions, each one resulting in an unequal treaty that infringed on the territorial and economic integrity of China. Between 1838 and 1900, Britain, France, Germany, Austria, Japan, the US, Italy and Russia engaged in a series of wars in China's territories and succeeded in securing trading and other concessions from the Chinese government (Li, 1998). Poor economic conditions and subsequently, the unstable political climate (1900 Boxer Rebellion against foreign incursions into China, 1911 overthrow of the Qing Dynasty by the revolutionary alliance of Sun Yat Set, and 1937 – 1945 war with Japan) were the main reasons for many Chinese people leaving their homes in search of a livelihood overseas (Li, 1998).

Other British ports also began to partake in 'trade' upon the dissolution of the monopoly during which London was the only base from which EIC operated. In Britain, although the employment of Chinese labour began before 1842, it was from 1866 that the Holt's Blue Funnel Line traded with countries in the Far East and employed greater numbers of Chinese labour (Craggs, 1983; Benton, 2007). The next wave of Chinese seamen into Liverpool was in 1868 when Liverpool shippers, Phillip and Alfred Holt, started the first direct steamship

from Europe to China which required refuelling only once throughout the journey each way. Subsequently, Alfred Holt introduced steel girders to support the upper deck of a ship which greatly increased the carrying capacity of vessels and cut the costs of voyages considerably. By the end of the 1860s, the technological breakthroughs resulted in Liverpool's ships trading with five continents and were creating untold wealth in Liverpool docks and warehouses (Evans, 1997). As Chinese seamen left ships to find work ashore in prospering Liverpool, they sowed the seeds for the germination of Liverpool's Chinese community.

With a weakening China, the perception of a sophisticated Chinese civilisation amongst the people in eighteenth century Britain and France was "replaced by a racial or even racist perspective that saw China as a weak, effete and corrupt nation incapable of governing itself effectively" (Cook and Cubbin, 2011: 44). This negative view of Chinese people as morally corrupt and unhygienic creatures who indulged in vices prevailed and had a significant bearing on how the Chinese people and Chinatown came to be constructed as I will outline in the next section.

4.3   Phase One: Constructing a Misrepresented Chinese Community and Chinatown, Early 19th Century – Early 20th Century

Virgin encounters with the 'unknown' are almost always premised on ignorance and a certain degree of wariness. The initial empty slate of perception was quickly filled out with imaginings of an undesirable Chinese race that partly resulted from an idea of Western supremacy as well as from news around the world regarding the influx of Chinese migrants into Western societies. At a time when hostility towards the Chinese was brewing in Britain (Belchem and MacRalid, 2006) in the nineteenth century, animosity towards the Chinese in

other parts of the world had already been rife. After a campaign of hatred originating in San Francisco, the United States Chinese Expulsion Act took effect in 1882, marking the start of the exclusion era (Lee, 2003). Australia and New Zealand also implemented White only policies while South Africa joined the bandwagon with sustained and savage critique of Chinese coolie labour. In Canada, the first anti-Chinese bill was passed in 1885. The movement culminated in the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 which essentially stopped any future immigration of Chinese people and legalised the inferior status of those in Canada for nearly a quarter of a century. Between 1923 and 1947, fewer than 50 Chinese people were allowed to go to Canada (Chinese Canadian National Council). The 1900 Boxer Rebellion in which Christian missionaries were attacked in an anti-imperialism movement in China further contributed to the rising sentiment of the 'Yellow Peril'.

The sanctity of Britishness associated with the White race is an irony given Liverpool's history as an immigrant city which began with King John founding the port of Liverpool in 1207. By the early eighteenth century, the population was estimated at 5,000, followed by 20,000 in 1750 and 77,000 in 1801. Many of the inhabitants were immigrants, of which Irish people made up the majority. Their numbers in Liverpool peaked during the potato famine in Ireland in the 1840s (Lambert). Welsh presence was also strong. In 1813, one in every 10 people in Liverpool was Welsh. In the 1870s, a further 50,000 Welsh people moved to the city making it the unofficial 'capital' of North Wales (Liverpool Record Office, 2009). Furthermore, because of the slave trade, there have been people of African descent in Liverpool since the 1700s (Liverpool Black Heritage).

4.3.1   Association of Chinese and Chinatown with Vice and Moral Decadence

  Although Chinese people were in England since the 1800s, there were no negative reports

on them in that century. It was only after the worldwide hostility towards the Chinese (as

highlighted in an earlier paragraph) that Chinese people were thrust into the limelight in

England, negatively. In 1904, the hanging of Ping Lun for shooting John Go Hing in a

gambling dispute in Liverpool (English and Welsh executions, Walton Local History search),

left an indelible imprint on White people's perceptions of Chinese people's association with

vice and notoriety. Although violence was often inflicted amongst members within the

Chinese community, in-group feuding nevertheless gave Britain's Chinatowns a bad

reputation (Whittingham-Jones, 1944).

  Apart from gambling, opium was another depravity that Chinese people were commonly

associated with. Ironically, opium was introduced by the British to the Chinese in 1825 as a

recreation drug. In an article, 'The sale of opiates' in The Times (1912), it was reported that

the first case in England relating to the sale of opium was heard at the Liverpool county court.

The pharmaceutical society was seeking to enforce penalties against two Chinese people, Ah

King and Chow Mee, who had sold opium to an agent of the society at their shops in

Liverpool's Chinatown. Up to World War One, stories of opium traffic continued to plague

the community (The Times, 1917, 1923).

4.3.2   Sensationalist Journalism

  In Britain, the arrival of 32 Chinese people in Liverpool from London in 1906 without the

'guarantees of employment' that were required by the 1905 Aliens Act, caused a hysterical

public outcry. Sensationalist journalism was key in causing an amplified reaction amongst White people, suggesting that Chinese people compromised British societal fabric. In his 1906 article, 'Chinese vice in England', Sunday Chronicle's Claude Blake stoked British fears of the Yellow Peril. In his article, he made allegations of crime, underage sex, opium, gambling, squalor and of Chinese immigrants turning the city into a 'yellow town' which was 'not fitted to be a part of civilised White society'.

"Is this open sore to be allowed to fester in a White community? Remember this, the Chinese are in close touch with one another all over the world, and when they hear from their countrymen that England is a good place where they are allowed to do as they like, they will come here in droves" (cited in Clegg, 1994: 9).

This public hysteria was out of proportion, considering the small and almost insignificant number of 32 Chinese people. Blake's article was instrumental in instigating the panic. By alluding, not only to negative habits and ways of life associated with Chinese people, but also to the likelihood of an influx of Chinese migrants, he stirred up emotions and caused uneasiness amongst members of the host society who were already exposed to the existing worldwide animosity towards the Chinese.

Trepidations about non-preservation of the Anglo-Saxon race remained persistent throughout this period, nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. The recurrent themes of Chinese vice and moral decadence endangering the Western way of life continued to be invoked by the media. This expression of racial superiority was similar to the earlier mid-nineteenth century experience of African seamen who settled in Liverpool and married

mostly White English[16] and Irish women (Brown, 2004). As penned by Scheffauer (1911: 466), "Chinese is already peculiarly and perilously involved with English life through a mixture of blood". Until the early years of the twentieth century, Chinese government adopted measures to prevent the emigration of Chinese women. Coupled with British Government's 1914 Aliens Restrictive Order that disallowed foreign women under forty years of age to gain entry into Britain, some Chinese seamen in Liverpool inevitably set up families with White wives.

4.3.3   Politicking amidst Economic Uncertainties

As a result of an expanding Chinese presence, and leveraging on British fears, James Sexton, Irish labour party leader, was opportunistic in making use of the tension to further his political cause. During the thriving seafaring period, Chinese workers were a key competitor to the White population in the labour market. With surplus labour supply thus reducing the availability of jobs and depressing wages, White employees who were seeking work were concerned and increasingly unhappy with the threats to their livelihood.

Leveraging on the host society's insecurities with bread and butter issues, Sexton turned the attention to the Chinese to distract the electorate from domestic economic issues. He moved that a representative Commission be appointed to inquire into the Chinese settlement in Liverpool. It should be noted that there were dissenting voices in parliament; one of whom was Chairman of the Watch Committee, Alderman Maxwell. Maxwell argued that of all the foreigners in Liverpool, the Chinese gave police the least trouble. Furthermore, they were relatively few. Despite the facts, by an overwhelming forty votes to six (The Times, 1906),

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[16] White English refers to White people who are from England while White British refers to White people who are from Britain – England, Wales and Scotland.

the Commission was formed. The greatly unbalanced voting outcome alludes to the fact that either Sexton was very charismatic and persuasive in influencing his colleagues, or fears about the Chinese populace were already very ingrained and amplified at that time.

Unsurprisingly, the report (Council proceedings, 1907) did not discover any damning evidence about the Chinese community with regard to their morality, habits and mode of living, nor adverse economic impacts on the host community due to increased numbers of Chinese people in Liverpool. In December 1906, there were only 224 Chinese residents of whom 132 were transient in Liverpool (Council proceedings, 1907). In other words, only 92 Chinese people were permanent residents in Liverpool. The moral panic that was produced despite the negligible numbers is testament to British fears of a foreign race which were accentuated not only by sensationalist journalism, but also by politicians wanting to pursue their own agendas and to distract the populace from larger domestic economic affairs.

4.3.4   Demarcating Chinatown

In constructing a negative representation of the Chinese community, the place where there was a visible presence of a relatively 'large' number of Chinese people thus became associated with the attributes and traits ascribed to the group. The area where Chinese people resided, as well as where Chinese businesses could be found, therefore became a place associated with opium jaunts, gambling dens, prostitution houses as well as morally degraded Chinese inhabitants. A Liverpool Commission stated that Pitt Street was "long noted as a street down which a woman might walk without molestation" (cited in Clegg, 1994:9).

Chinese seamen originally settled in the Cleveland square, Frederick street and Pitt street area (see area 'A' in Figure 2). It is noteworthy that the Chinese settlement moved into an area that was already being inhabited by various non-British people such as Jewish, Russian, Scandinavian and Black people (Daily Mail, 1929; Loh, 1982; Belchem and MacRalid, 2005). In addition to the presence of other racial groups, the emergence of a half-Chinese populace (children of Chinese and White parentages) within the neighbourhood further contributed to the multi-racial nature of the place. Despite the place being multi-racial and the relatively small numbers of Chinese inhabitants then, the notion of a Chinatown was conceived. The mention of Liverpool's Chinatown was first highlighted in a 1925 news article in The Times which reported two Chinese people being accused of keeping adjoining houses in Pitt Street for the purpose of unlawful gaming and the arrest of 37 other Chinese people on the premises. My argument then is that this ascription of a geographically bounded area enabled peoples' imaginings to have some visual basis and hence, to become convenient targets of opposition and oppression in the event of host-minority group conflicts which I will expound in the subsequent sections. This is similar to Craddock's (2000) work on the interpretation of smallpox in nineteenth century San Francisco as a Chinese disease. Smallpox served a strategic role in extending the discourse from labour practices and the control of a minority group to the control of a racialised area of the city.
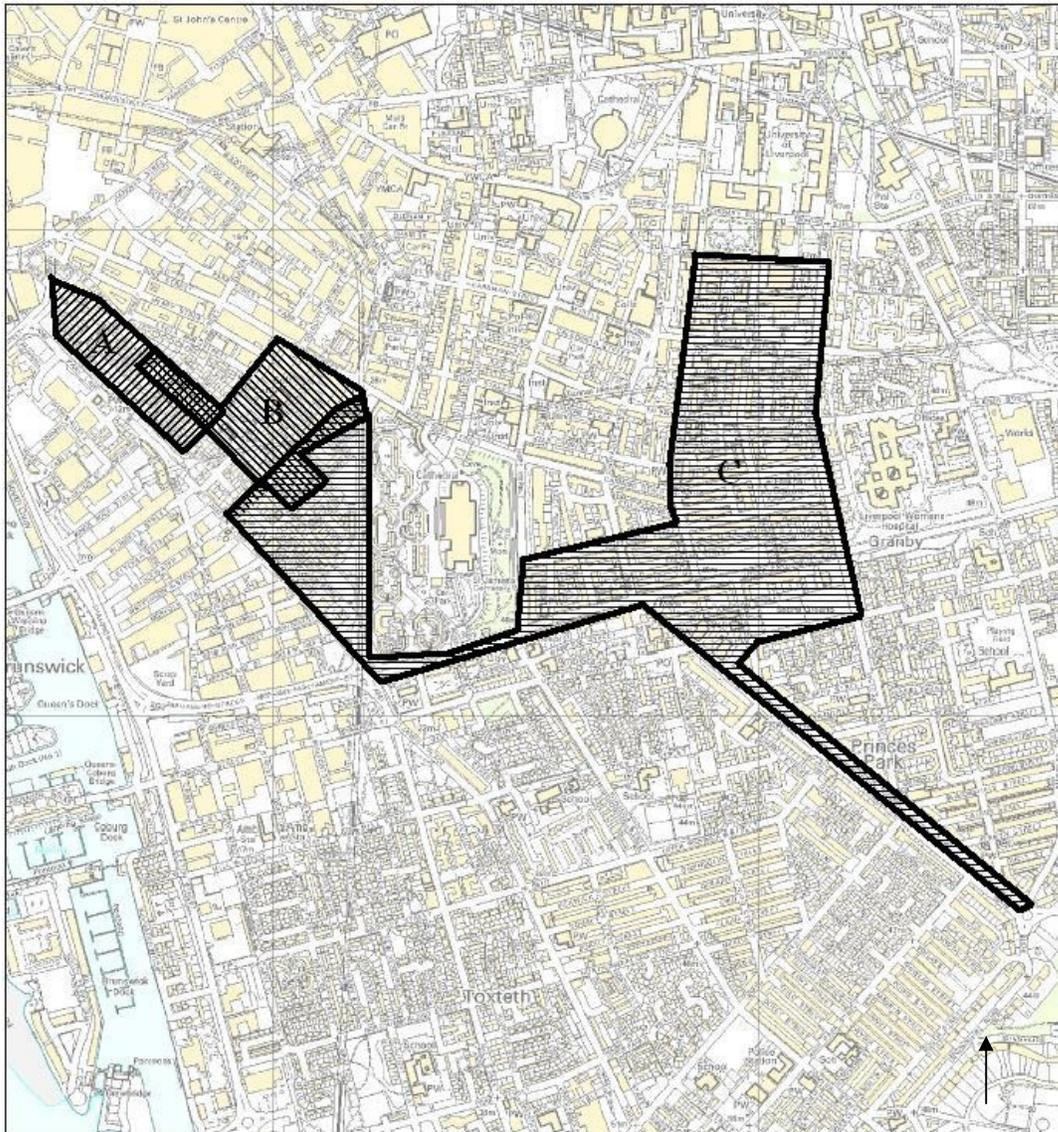
Figure 2 Changing premises of Liverpool's 'Chinatown' over the years

(A: Early Chinese settlement in the 1800s

B: Chinatown pre-World Wars

C: Chinatown post-World Wars)

Source: Ordnance Survey digital map constructed using ArcGIS

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4.4   Phase Two: Subduing a Growing Chinatown, Early 20th Century – Mid 20th

Century

The Chinese community subsequently expanded and moved. According to Evans (1997), there were more than 6,000 Chinese people in Pitt Street, Great George Square and Nelson Street after the end of World War One (see area 'B' in Figure 2). The settlement also spread inland into Cornwallis Street, Dickenson Street, Kent Street and Greetham Street (Liverpool Chinese Business Association, 2009). Different people and sources also had different impressions of the boundaries of Liverpool's Chinatown. This is the same difficulty Luk (2008) faced in trying to demarcate the geographical boundaries of Britain's Chinatowns. In addition to the vague geographical location of Chinatown, Chinatown is mutable and may change its location over the years as is the case with Liverpool's Chinatown as shown in Figure 2. Another reason for the variable location is because of White political intention to eradicate Liverpool's Chinatown and the Chinese population.

4.4.1   Demolishing Chinatown and the Economic Factor

To contain the expansion, the Liverpool City Council embarked on a series of demolition plans on 'Old 'Chinatown'' (Post and Mercury, 1934b) in 1933. In referring to Chinatown as 'old', there was the idea that there were plans for a 'new' and refurbished Chinatown. However, the City Council did not have any intention to redevelop the area. Instead, many of the former inhabitants were relocated to Warrington, Southport, Birkenhead and Wigan (Daily Post, 1970). The dwindling numbers of Chinese residents within Liverpool's Chinatown was highlighted in an article in Post and Mercury (1934a) on the growing resentment of residents against the inaptly-termed 'Chinatown'. The term 'old' thus referred

to the condition of the buildings and the general physical environment in Chinatown. While it may be true that insanitary conditions were the driving force behind the need to rehouse inhabitants of 'Chinatown' (The Times, 1937), demolition may not be necessary. My argument then is that it was only a distraction from other more pressing considerations.

This policy decision to demolish Liverpool's Chinatown was made in a period during which Britain suffered the full force of the 1929 Great Depression, with debilitating effects. As with political strategies that are common throughout the world, Liverpool's 'Chinatown' once again became a convenient scapegoat to distract voters from wider economic discontentment. Although the area of Liverpool's Chinatown is not big, the City Council's demolition plans persisted for a decade. On the one hand, it could be that the City Council was very inefficient in its policy implementation. On the other hand, it could be a deliberate move to execute the demolition slowly so that Liverpool's Chinatown continued to be around for utilisation by politicians to incite resentment amongst members of the host society against the Chinese population. Considering that the government took so long to demolish Liverpool's Chinatown, it can be assumed that government did not feel that Liverpool's Chinatown was serving as a strong rallying point for the concentration of an ethnic group becoming a strong unified voice and a challenge to the government. Otherwise, the implementation of a strategy to 'divide and rule' may have been accelerated. Nonetheless, the demolition plans were expeditiously wrapped up by the 1940s German Luftwaffe bombings.

4.4.2   Chinese Fighting Back White Dominance

The preceding paragraphs show that from an era of worldwide animosity against the Chinese, the representations of Liverpool's Chinatown and the Chinese community reflect

White political domination as similar to that presented by Anderson (1995). I further argue that this political domination is motivated by economic considerations and not because of an idea of phenotypical superiority. During periods of economic downturns, 'outsiders' sometimes become scapegoats. They are easy targets for re-channelling the electorate's foci from issues threatening overall economic well-being. For example, in 1998 during which there was the Asian financial crisis, massive violence was inflicted on the ethnic Chinese populace by Muslims in Indonesia (Refworld, n.d.). In Indonesia, the Chinese populace comprises a very small percentage of the country but the majority of Chinese people are wealthy. They thus became targets for the outburst of resentment. Similarly, in Liverpool during the Great Depression, Chinese people became the scapegoats for the country's economic woes. However, it does not mean that there were no assertions of Chinese rights.

Direct confrontation between British and Chinese people was prevalent in the seafaring industry, in which there was an influx of some 15,000 to 20,000 Chinese people into Liverpool during World War Two (Foley and Foley, n.d.). During the war, all merchant shipping came under the control of the Ministry of War Transport which set up the Chinese seamen's reserve pool in Liverpool. Every Chinese seaman serving in the British Merchant Navy was operated by the Chinese seamen's reserve pool and managed jointly by two main companies that employed Chinese seamen – Blue Funnel Line (liner section) and Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Company Limited (tanker section). According to a 2004 British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Radio Four programme, most of the Chinese seamen during the Second World War were from the rural parts of China, generally speaking either Shanghai dialect or Cantonese.

Due to the unequal treatment received in comparison with their British counterparts, and the awareness that their services were indispensable, Chinese seamen's demand for improved conditions of service aboard British ships first came under consideration in September 1940. An inquiry was carried out to examine the "payment of war risk bonus, compensation for war loss of effects and compensation for disablement and death due to war injury and detention" (Whittingham-Jones, 1944:21). Nevertheless, institutional racism continued and the inequality persisted (Foley and Foley, n.d.). Many disputes were settled by force and exacerbated a sense of grievance amongst Chinese seamen. In 1942, Chinese ambassador, Wellington Koo, in a letter to the Minister of War Transport, protested at the "growing number of unfortunate case of dispute which have happened on British ships, some resulting even in the loss of life by Chinese seamen" (Foley and Foley, n.d.).

It was not only during the wars that the two groups clashed. British-Chinese conflict began much earlier. The first culmination of resistance against the discrimination was a strike that spread from Liverpool to the docks and port of Cardiff in 1911 because of unfair treatment of Chinese seamen (Gathering the Jewels, n.d.). However, the backlash against the protest was a series of attacks on Chinese restaurants and laundries (Siyu, 1985b), especially in Cardiff, where every one of the 33 Chinese laundries was ravaged (British Museum). Subsequently in 1916, threatened by the employment of Chinese labour, the British Seafarers', National Sailors', and Firemen's Unions demanded that British government provided facilities for the Chinese workers' immediate repatriation. It is believed that the British government recognised that the Chinese populace served as a cheap and abundant pool of labour that they needed, and the demand for the Chinese's repatriation was therefore turned down (Foley and Foley, n.d.).

The argument of economic considerations driving British government's strategies is further backed up in the case of the repatriation of Chinese people. When Chinese people were no longer useful to the government, the British government immediately expelled them from the country. British authorities saw a window of opportunity to repatriate Chinese people when the war with Japan ended. The Yellow Peril at work aside, the Liverpool authorities were quoted at a Home Office meeting on 19th October 1945 (Daily Post, 2008b) as wanting to secure the use of housing accommodation which the Chinese population occupied. The compensation to former property owners or their kin was never paid out (BBC Radio Four, 2004). The first ship out of Britain was supposedly on 10th December 1945. Chinese men who married British wives were supposedly not on the first repatriation list. Most of these men already had children with their White British wives and they were to be reported and evaluated for repatriation individually. However, all of those with White British wives were repatriated. By 11th July 1946, a total of 1,362 Chinese men were repatriated. Almost overnight, these wives lost their husbands and an estimated 450 – 1,000 half-Chinese-half-White children lost their fathers (Half-and-half organisation, n.d.).

4.5   Phase Three: Controlling a Maturing Chinatown, Mid 20th Century – Late 20th Century

Although the British government tried to control Chinese population growth, the 1949 British Nationality Act allowing access to Commonwealth countries dramatically altered the member constitution of the community. Many of these first generation Chinese migrants have sunk roots and have children who were educated and socialised in Britain. Over time, these second and subsequent generations of, so called 'Chinese Liverpudlians', were well integrated in Britain (Wong, 1989). As a testament to their early presence, the recruitment of

Liverpool Chinese children as extras for a film, 'Inn of Sixth Happiness' in 1958, would prove most revealing. During the recruitment exercise, the recruited Liverpool Chinese children had their voices dubbed over by Chinese children from London because their accents sounded too Scouse (Daily Post, 2004). Another case in point was an observation by one of The Times journalists (1984) who heard the "thick scouse accents from the most oriental looking of waiters". The long history of Chinese presence in Liverpool is unquestionable.

4.5.1   Immigration Policies and the Ethnic Catering Industry

With the decline of Liverpool's port activities, Chinese people harnessed the opportunities of an emerging consumerist society hungry for new tastes and lifestyles and, during the post-war period, diversified into restaurants. The earliest known Chinese eating house was in Pitt Street, between 1910 and 1920 (Daily Post, 2008c). It is highly possible that Chinese eateries existed before that, although they were not listed in the first issue of the Trades Directories in 1907 because most Chinese eating houses catered for seamen and did not usually serve British patrons (Craggs, 1983). It was post-war that catering flourished and continued until the 1970s. The thriving Chinese food industry led to the Secretary of the Association of Chinese restaurateurs embarking on a recruiting mission to Hong Kong (The Times, 1961). With the introduction of Value-Added Tax and Selective Employment Tax, the Chinese responded with the more economical 'Chinese takeaways' drawing primarily on family resources. The catering boom lasted about two decades and Britain progressively tightened its immigration laws after 1962.

The dominance and viability of ethnic eateries serving commercial and employment functions is now in question. Tightening migration policies to end family chain migration

(Silk Road News, 2005) as well as increasingly restrictive migration policy under the Points Based System will impact one of the oldest and most dominant forms of industries for most Chinese families in Britain. Incidentally, the catering trade is a vocation an overwhelming proportion of subsequent generations of Chinese people in Liverpool wished to avoid (The Times, 1980; Steering Committee, 1987; Liverpool City Council, 1992). From the policy makers' perspective, an influx of immigrants would potentially result in a greater strain on social and healthcare resources. From the angle of economic and resource considerations, it is understandable for the authorities not to facilitate the employment of labour for the catering industry that greatly relies on ethnic and familial labour usually from overseas.

Chef shortage in restaurants was a pressing problem put in a report to the MAC in 2009. The report highlighted the unsuitability of employing Eastern Europeans who were not accustomed to the unsocial lifestyles that a job in the catering industry would entail. Working late into the night and starting work in the late mornings, the work demands mean that little time is left for social activities outside of the workplace. Moreover, Chinese cuisine is an art and not only does an appreciation of Chinese food culture have to be cultivated, it usually takes at least seven years to train up a decent chef (European Union Chinese Journal 2009a). Marring the catering labour shortage situation were tragedies of the human smuggling trade. Although they were not directly related to Liverpool (e.g. 2000 Dover lorry's fifty-eight deaths; 2004 Morecambe Bay's twenty-three deaths), they resulted in raids in Liverpool's Chinese restaurants suspected of harbouring undocumented workers (Daily Post, 2008a). As Chin (1999) pointed out, a thriving irregular migration system accompanied restrictive immigration policies. Insufficient and / or irregular workforce for the catering industry threatens the sustainability of the trade, and undermines positive career prospects for employees in the industry.

The ethnic catering industry, closely related to Chinatown, is thus inadvertently associated with illegalities and the underworld (Christiansen 2003). Crime is another problem confronting Liverpool's Chinatown. In a crime wave which hit Liverpool's Chinatown in 1985, restaurant and takeaway owners requested extra help from the police in tackling burglaries on their customers' cars. Although the police convened a meeting between senior officers and community leaders to come up with a more robust policing package in 1985 (Daily Post, 1985), the assistance did not seem to have been helpful to Chinese businesses. This can be deduced from the community's reaction to a similar crime wave that took place five years later, when eleven Chinese restaurant and local pubs took matters into their own hands and split the £380 per week security bill for engaging private security personnel to patrol the streets (Echo, 1990).

4.5.2   Preserving Chinese Culture and Government Funding

As espoused by Chen (2000), we should not merely focus on studying Chinatown from the perspective of a community being disadvantaged by the host society. By analysing also the agency of Chinese actors, we will arrive at a more holistic understanding of how relationships between host society and the minority group are being negotiated by both parties in influencing the development of Chinatowns. On top of the initiative to protect their livelihood, another example of the Chinese community's activism is their efforts to preserve their cultural assets. The fear of a gradual cultural loss was lamented in a community-funded Chinese newsletter, Siyu (1984a), in the 1980s. Although the interest in the Chinese language had risen even amongst the non-Chinese population with some schools throughout Merseyside reporting larger intakes into their classes (Echo, 2008b), Chinese language

schools throughout Britain were facing a crisis of sustainability as discussed at a Britain's Chinese language education conference held in Birmingham (European Union Chinese Journal, 2009b).

When the local authorities planned to close down a bilingual nursery within The Pagoda of a Hundred Harmony Chinese Community Centre (Echo, 2008a), the community responded with strong opposition (Silk Road News, 2008). The local authority's plans for the nursery's closure also came at the same time that the City Council terminated funding support for the local Chinese community newsletter and took decisions that threatened the survival of the Chinese Youth Orchestra. Members of the community and wider society were urged to write complaints to the City Council. Of these threats to the greater embracing and celebration of Chinese culture, only funding support for the local Chinese community newsletter was terminated. The local authorities felt that the newsletter did not carry sufficient information about British culture and society that would bring about greater integration of Chinese people into the UK.

In instances where justified funding support was sought, they were released to the community. Examples of varying scales include a £20,000 package from the Granby / Toxteth Single Regeneration budget to support a business development manager for the Liverpool Chinese Business Association (LCBA) (Echo, 2002c), the Liverpool Chinese Gospel Church obtaining a £2,000 grant to encourage physical activity amongst its members (Echo, 2006b) and members of Chinapool winning a £2,000 grant to produce a book for the organisation's Chinese memory line project (Daily Post, 2005a). To encourage the diversification of Liverpool Chinese businesses from its concentration in catering, a £700,000 programme in 1994 (Daily Post, 1994a) provided workshops exclusively for Chinese

entrepreneurs. In line with my deductions about the underlying economic considerations motivating White power, as highlighted in preceding sections, this selective funding support to the Chinese community provides further evidence of the Government's emphasis on the importance of the economy, and as a tool of governance of the Chinese population.

4.5.3   Degenerating Chinatown

Apart from curtailing funding to the community for causes that were not in line with their policy objectives, the local authorities were also inactive in regenerating Liverpool's Chinatown in a bid to control a maturing Chinatown. This inertia has been observed since the end of the Second World War. After the demise of the physical premises of 'Old 'Chinatown'', a 1943 article entitled 'New Chinatown' detailed the quarter as the area extending inland to Nelson, Upper Parliament, Huskisson, Bedford and Grove streets as well as Princes Avenue (see area 'C' in Figure 2). Although the original spatial perimeters of Liverpool's Chinatown had been eradicated, the idea of 'Chinatown' had not. Leveraging on this, an architectural studies student, Mr Chen C. Z., put forth a bold proposal for the rebuilding of Liverpool's Chinatown (Daily Post, 1944) replete with sculptures exuding visual 'Chineseness'. The proposal was turned down. The timing of the unsuccessful endeavour paralleled that of Chinese musings surrounding the negotiations of majority-minority relations in China News Weekly articles (the first UK's Chinese handwritten newspaper that started in Liverpool in 1944). News about China dominated the paper but some articles provided education on human rights in Western society (issue 189) – a concept that was then unfamiliar to the Chinese community; analysed Americans' perceptions of Chinese people (issue 191); reminded people of the importance to learn from history and not

commit the same mistakes twice (issue 218); and inculcated the need to challenge 'destiny' (issue 226) strategically.

   In terms of infrastructure, buildings and ornaments are visible and thus easily attract attention. Occupying a prominent position in Liverpool's Chinatown, the former Scandinavian Hotel was involved in a long and tumultuous legal tussle. The local authorities won a Compulsory Purchase Order for the site owned by Mr Jimmy Wong at a greatly reduced price (Daily Post, 2002a; Echo, 2002a; Echo, 2003; Echo, 2005a; Echo, 2005b; Daily Post, 2006c; Daily Post, 2008d). The key reason that the Council argued they should gain ownership of the building, was the building being in ruins and thus an eyesore in the area. Yet, despite the local Council gaining possession of the building, the building still stands undeveloped today (see Figure 3). There is an obvious lack of concerted effort to put in place visual enhancements to the structure. In a similar incident, a row between the local authorities and the community ensued over the demolition of a building off Duke street. The community had already secured European Regional Development Funding for a 20,000 square feet business centre and the building was demolished without any prior consultation with the community (Daily Post, 2002b).

Figure 3 Undeveloped former Scandinavian Hotel

Source: Author, 2009

4.5.4   Chinese Disengagement

  In 1991, a Rope Walks Partnership Meeting was convened. It was a Duke Street / Bold Street Integrated Action Plan Partnership Board to develop the Rope Walks area. That area was the recipient of a multi-million pound regeneration scheme (Daily Post, 2007). Liverpool's Chinatown lies within the zone and one of the key Terms of Reference of the Board was to discuss the building of a Chinese Arch. At the first meeting in July 1991, concern about a lack of Chinese representation was raised. It was highlighted that there was a long-established forum which could be approached to solicit Chinese inputs instead of getting a Chinese representative on board. The former arrangement was deemed to be more effective. Subsequently, a change of position with regard to Chinese representation at the Board occurred. It took the Board a year to finally approach the Chinese community for a representative for the Chinatown area (Meeting Minutes, 1997-1999). Even when the Chinese representative was invited to the meeting, the selection of the representative was inappropriate given the person's lack of knowledge in architecture, building works and commercial acumen. Another representative had to be appointed as an advisor to the Board to provide the requisite inputs.

  The rationale for the Board avoiding Chinese representation at the outset could be attributed to the fact that the Chinese community then was perceived to comprise several factions such that there was no single representative voice for the Chinese community. The fragmentation within the Chinese community is further analysed in *Chapter Five*. Due to its divided nature, the Board felt that it would be a challenge and perhaps even pointless to engage the community by relying on a representative. The person may not have the buy-in from the rest of the community leaders and this would thus create further obstacles for the Board to push

through decisions. Another aspect of this issue relates to the insularity of the Chinese community. This is discussed further in *Chapter Six*. At a Coalition for Equality Conference I attended on 24 March 2009, Chinese representation was starkly absent at the event organised by the local authorities despite the community being affected by the outcome of the gathering. The objective of the conference was for local and minority communities to network and to address challenges to their economic development interests in a time of recession. The outcome of the conference would be an action plan that would affect minority communities.

4.6   Phase Four: Reviving a Lacklustre Chinatown, Late 20th Century – Present

It is not always the case that there is a lack of positive enthusiasm on the part of the White community leaders, as well as on the part of the Chinese community leaders, with regard to the development of Liverpool's Chinatown – in terms of structural enhancements, promoting economic vibrancy and celebrating cultural differences. When there is a common interest, and this interest is almost always motivated by economic gains, there have been close collaborations between the host society and the Chinese community. Liverpool City Council's request for closer cooperation with the Liverpool Chinese community came at a time when the former wanted the latter to assist the City Council as it attempts to promote the city to potential investors from Hong Kong (Daily Post, 1994b).

4.6.1   Host Society Riding the China Wave

The impending 1997 handover of Hong Kong to China resulted in speculation about the emergence of China as a world superpower that would be hard to ignore. In 1993, the UK's

department of Trade and Industry (North-West) organised a trade seminar on "China – The Big Opportunity" to ride the China wave. Similar to the twinning of Victoria in Canada with Suzhou in 1980 (Lai and Madoff, 1997), the twinning of Liverpool and Shanghai took place in 1999. The local authorities and the Chinese community therefore worked in close collaboration. Against this backdrop, Liverpool's Chinatown became 'courted' by the council. This is similar to the former Exposition '86 site in downtown Vancouver where Hong Kong capital, from the likes of property tycoon Li Ka Shing, was wooed after 1984 by the British Columbia Provincial government in their privatisation bid amidst an economic downturn (Olds, 1998).

In Liverpool, by the early 1990s, attracting tourism into the city was high on the authorities' agenda. The City Council's strategy and action plan to promote tourism in Liverpool deemed Chinatown a potential resource, yet to be fully harnessed (City Council, 1996, 1997). On 26 July 2005, Liverpool hosted the first official Chinese delegation to the UK which was empowered to give the go-ahead for Britain to become an accredited tourist destination for the former's citizens (Daily Post, 2005b). A development project, with the first phase estimated to cost £500,000, aimed to turn Liverpool's Chinatown into a big tourist attraction (Echo, 1995). The local authorities engaged in partnerships with Chinese organisations such as with Pine Court Housing Association to revitalise housing in Liverpool's Chinatown (Merseymart, 1989). However, due to a bad decision, the labour council made a hurried sale of 390 freeholds in 1992 to a property company which collapsed into receivership (The Independent, 1995) resulting in greater decline of Liverpool's Chinatown area. Although the decay of the tenement slum was intended to be arrested with a proposed £20m redevelopment scheme (Echo, 1993) and the Kent Street development also won £50m public money to

eliminate dereliction (Daily Post, 2003), Liverpool's Chinatown area still looks as glum today as it was before.

In 2008, Liverpool won the bid for the European Capital of Culture. After winning the title with the slogan, 'The world in one city', Liverpool City Council engaged in aggressive marketing tactics to project a multicultural city and emphasised Liverpool's historical ties with China. For example, a memorial was erected to commemorate the Chinese seamen's role in Britain's victories [Lee (1996) pointed out that those who died in action in Flanders Fields had no burial place with White British soldiers'] and of those who were forcibly repatriated after World War Two (Daily Post, 2006a). The timing of construction of the memorial after more than sixty years and at a time when historical ties with China were emphasised alludes to the likelihood of strategic leveraging on the occasion to reinforce Chinese people's early presence in Britain. In the same year, China hosted the Olympics and reinforced its growing strength in the world. The multitude of business opportunities and great potential for economic gains to be reaped from a growing China were increasingly recognised. This culminated in Liverpool being the only British city other than London, to participate in the 2010 Shanghai Exposition, the first ever mega world exposition that aimed to bring together 200 nations and 70 million visitors for international cooperation and investment opportunities.

On the social and cultural fronts, efforts were poured in to Liverpool's Chinatown to create a vibrant Chinese cultural atmosphere. At a time when the full cooperation from, and partnership with, the Chinese community was warranted, Labour leader, Councillor Joe Anderson, described 'Chinatown' as "a jewel in the crown" of Merseyside and remarked that the Chinese New Year celebrations had never been properly leveraged. He went on to suggest

expanding the event to a weekend and even throughout the week (Daily Post, 2006b). In time for the 08 Capital of Culture celebrations, the Liverpool Chinese arch received a £86,000 makeover (Echo, 2007). Furthermore, in the lead-up to 2008, together with events involving various cultural segments and ethnic groups, several Chinese cultural performances and shows were staged in accordance with the theme, 'The world in one city'.

The multicultural identity is once again projected in the filming of the Shanghai World Exposition promotional films for Liverpool. The production company, River Media, had difficulty getting enough volunteers to fill the space outside the Chinese arch. As a result, a mass email was sent out to international Liverpool University students on 25 January 2010:

"Students are needed urgently to be extras (in the background) for some filming that is taking place this morning at the Chinese Arch (Duke Street) for a Shanghai World Expo film. The filming is taking place now and there is not enough people so if you are interested then please go there immediately. Any international student is welcome to take part but Chinese students in particular.

This is a scene with a Chinese dragon, dancers, smoke machines, and sparklers! They need people to populate that area, for walking shots, watching the 'show', chatting to each other and so forth. This is a huge set to fill, so they need as many people as possible!"

By mass mailing this request to international students, there is an underlying intention to depict a thriving multi-racial scene in Liverpool. Furthermore, invoking images of Chinese dragons, smoke machines and sparklers not only exoticises the idea of Chinatown but also portrays a false impression of a lively Liverpool Chinatown. The present reality is a dull and visually unappealing Chinatown which I will elaborate in section 4.6.3.

4.6.2   Chinese Community Riding the China Wave

  At a time when the Chinese community and culture were celebrated, the Chinese community was also keen to highlight the profile of the group. The Pearl Awards was instituted in 2004 to bring the acclaimed achievements of the Chinese community in Britain to the attention of a wider public (Echo, 2004). To engage more with the wider business community, an inaugural cocktail challenge coinciding with the Beijing Olympics was organised (Echo, 2008c). Recognising too the investment potential of the handover of Hong Kong in 1997, the LCBA was launched in 1994 to promote Liverpool's Chinatown as a key area in Liverpool both commercially and socially. The Chinese leaders later joined forces with their counterparts to form a North-West Chinese council to act as a voice for the 80,000 strong Chinese community and to function as a forum for Chinese people to give opinions on policies and actions which had an impact on their lives (Daily Post, 2002c). The overriding objective of such a forum was to cooperatively organise business links between Britain and China (Echo, 2002b) in order to bring in investments. As observed by Ley (1995) in the mushrooming of 'monster' houses owned by elite Hong Kongers in Shaughnessey, Vancouver, the landscape of Liverpool may change in years to come if top dollars from the Far East are successfully attracted into Liverpool. However, because of the present economic recession throughout Europe, the vision of a vibrant Chinese economy in Liverpool is highly suspect.

4.6.3 The Visual Reality of Contemporary Liverpool's Chinatown and Liverpool's Geographical Position

Earlier in this section, we saw the local authorities' intentions to revitalise Liverpool's Chinatown. In terms of the infrastructural developments, some of them were bad decisions while the positive outputs from some other projects remain to be seen in present day. For example, the Scandinavian building in Figure 3, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, still stands as it is at the time of fieldwork in June 2010. The only 'improvement' to it is covering up the derelict building. Figure 4 shows the buildings on the row opposite the former Scandinavian Hotel as mentioned by Interviewee 43 below.

Interviewee 43: Do you see the White building beside the arch? It has been like this for the past 20 years. It is so dilapidated but nobody is taking any action on it. The government doesn't care. Even the buildings on the row opposite that building? They have stayed this same way for 20 years. Dilapidated and abandoned. (*53 year old male Business Owner*)

Figure 4 Dereliction in Liverpool's Chinatown

Source: Author, 2009

Interviewee 43 is a restaurant business owner who has been in Liverpool since 1990. Apart from dereliction, Liverpool's Chinatown is also deemed very quiet and lacks vibrancy.

SC: How would you describe Chinatown here?

Interviewee 49: Ahh, very dismal…hahaha very disappointing…oh yeah actually Chinatown, so we moved here in August 2006, my sister-in-law from Edinburgh came visit us the following month. And ahem, and she also have like lived away from Singapore for many years so she came here…she like…and you know we all read from the internet that the oldest Chinatown in the world. And you know she's like, 'I just want to go to a restaurant with ducks hanging you know…by the window' and so we were like on the hunt for roast duck and I was like 'I don't know where to go but let's'…of course like, this (Chinatown) was our natural first choice. So came here and we were like so shocked…I

couldn't believe that this was Chinatown…I was like, 'Where are the people'? You know, where's the business…where's the hustle and bustle, so yeah I was really disappointed. (*43 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

A dismal Liverpool's Chinatown is also depicted by Interviewee 49, a 43 year old woman who came to Liverpool to join her husband after the latter took up an academic job in Liverpool. Another interviewee in his 60s and who has been in Liverpool for more than 40 years as well as an interviewee in his 70s who has been in Liverpool for more than 50 years all testify to the physical state of the buildings in Liverpool's Chinatown remaining the way they were for more than two decades. Despite the physical dereliction, Chinese people continue to stay on in Liverpool. As Christiansen (2003) points out, this could be a proactive strategy to keep rents down and avoid becoming a target of gang lords. If the community's profile was too visible or ostentatious, it could attract unnecessary attention and may thus subject itself to undesirable conflicts with the host society. At times, it would be better to adopt a low profile to lead a smooth-sailing life.

Interviewee 43: If you come into Liverpool, it seems you only go to Chinatown. At most, there is Liverpool One for you to go to do your shopping. Because of the 08 European Capital of Culture Award, we now at least have Liverpool One. Previously, we didn't have that. (*53 year old male Business Owner*)

The continual dereliction, I argue, is because of the low priority accorded to Liverpool Chinatown's physical revitalisation by the City Council. Even though some other regions in Liverpool are undergoing regeneration, Liverpool's Chinatown, although identified as an area for improvement, only received refurbishment to the Chinese Arch as part of the regeneration package. The arch is instrumental in projecting the image of Liverpool's Chinatown to the *rest of the world* because it is a massive and relatively impressive structure that can readily

capture people's visual attention. The physical area of Liverpool's Chinatown beyond the arch is thus not as important for a visual representation to the international audience. Whilst importance is given to the image of a vibrant Chinatown, this image is targeted at an audience outside of the UK, to the rest of the world, especially Europe (for the 08 Capital of Culture bid) and PRC (for the 2010 Shanghai World Exposition). With regard to domestic tourism within the UK, Liverpool's Chinatown is relatively low on the local authorities' agenda. One major factor is the geographical location of Liverpool.

Being a port city, Liverpool's position was extremely advantageous during the era when the sea trade was thriving. It was strategically placed to ply major sea routes and many immigrants thus entered the UK and Europe via Liverpool. Ironically, Liverpool's position is also its nemesis now that its glorious seafaring days are over and air travel is more widespread. Liverpool's primacy as an entry and exit point in international migration is now muted. According to a businessman who was interviewed, Liverpool is a 'dead end'.

Interviewee 43: There is only one way into Liverpool. But once you get in, there is nowhere else for you to go. The roads will lead you to places such as Southport, Blackpool, tourist places. But really, not other places. Personally, why I feel Manchester's Park and Shop is more prosperous is because it is well served by the transportation system. You can access Manchester from East, West, North and South. Liverpool, on the other hand, is a dead end. From Manchester, I can go to Birmingham, I can go to Sheffield. To get in and out of Liverpool, it's only one way. It's a waste of petrol and also it takes a long time. If you see around Liverpool now, many of the shops have closed down. I feel that Liverpool's geographical position is a dead end. It has very few developmental opportunities. (*53 year old male Business Owner*)

It can be seen from Interviewee 43's comment that he made the reference to internal migration and mobility. The main transportation system is the road and rail network for people moving within Britain. Due to Liverpool's geographical position, the attraction to

travel to Liverpool's Chinatown from other parts within Britain for leisure is minimised. Besides, Manchester, with the third most populous Chinese community other than London and Birmingham, is only an hour's drive from Liverpool. Boasting a Chinatown on a larger scale than Liverpool, Manchester has a greater variety of ethnic Chinese food outlets. They also have a wider range of East Asian – Thai, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese – restaurants. Most importantly, there is a physical square in Manchester's Chinatown.

There is a square in Manchester's Chinatown which is designed with Chinese pavilions for people to gather. Many interviewees opined that the square in Manchester's Chinatown is a key feature where many Chinese people congregate. In the middle of the square, there is a large car park which is a useful amenity for customers of the multitude of restaurants, bakeries and supermarkets. The greater variety and number of Chinese food outlets aside, the physical presence of Chinese people in the area makes Manchester's Chinatown seem livelier and more vibrant. This is in contrast to Liverpool's Chinatown, which is described by many, if not all interviewees, to be very quiet and only coming to life at night. Even then, it is very desolate and there is nothing visually enticing about the place.

A development worthy of note is University of Liverpool's opening of a new University in China, a first for UK Universities (University of Liverpool Press Release, 2005). This has meant that students, who were once not an important category of immigrants within the first generation Chinese migrants, are now a significant population group within the city. The opening of the University is thus critically relevant especially for looking at the role of first generation Chinese migrants in impacting the development of Liverpool's Chinatown over time. Established by the University of Liverpool and Xi' An Jiao Tong University in 2006, XJTLU has 2,500 students registered on 14 different programmes in 2010 (University of

Liverpool Press Release, 2010). These students have the option to transfer to Liverpool for two years to complete their degree after two years in XJTLU, known as the '2+2 route'; or they can continue to do further degrees in Liverpool after four years in Suzhou.

In 2010, there were around 400 XJTLU students in Liverpool. The student numbers are expected to rise to 10,000 in the next five to eight years (University of Liverpool Annual Report, 2008). In academic year 2009, the first wave of XJTLU's students came into Liverpool to complete the latter part of their studies and graduate with a full University of Liverpool degree (University of Liverpool). The subsequent waves and increasing numbers of students from XJTLU would without doubt impact the development of Liverpool's Chinatown. Already, higher education students from China and Hong Kong account for respectively the highest and third highest percentages of accepted applicants into the UK in 2008 (UCAS, 2010). There are also those who come for pre-university or pre-further education preparatory courses as well as those who come specifically for courses such as English language programmes.

Although Chinese student numbers into Liverpool will increase in years to come, they may not necessarily contribute to a surge in demand for Chinese food products and services given the financial limitations of students. However, we must not forget the factors of an economically strengthening PRC and also the rising numbers of international students from well-off family backgrounds. Nevertheless, even if they may be frequent patrons of restaurants, their expenditure may not be sufficiently large to warrant an expansion of the industry in Liverpool. Furthermore, with a weakening British economy coupled with increasingly restrictive migration policies, we will most likely not see a rise in the number of professionals who have higher earning and spending powers in contributing towards a

booming Chinese restaurant industry. Regarding takeaways, it is also predicted that there will

not be an expansion. The concentration of takeaways can be said to have reached saturation

point. This is inferred from the high rate of ownership changes amongst existing takeaway

shops. Amongst the Chinese population, there are many who are boss-aspirers. However,

there is a limit to the number of shops that can survive in a highly competitive retail sector.

Moreover, with takeaways' main clientele being the local host community and with the

present economic downturn, customers will inevitably be more prudent with their

expenditure. Persisting but not prospering is hence what Liverpool's Chinatown is envisaged

to be into the future.

4.7   Interviewees' Ascriptions of Liverpool's Chinatown

At this juncture, it is important to be clear on the ascriptions of Liverpool's Chinatown

especially for the subsequent three chapters encompassing the findings and arguments for the

contemporary portion of my research. As seen in the literature review, not only has Chen

(2000) expressed difficulty in demarcating the geographical boundaries of Chinatown, the

definition of Chinatown is nebulous with it sometimes being characterised by residential

functions (Lee, 1949; Yuan, 1963; Anderson, 1995) and at times characterised by the

commercial entities (Luk, 2008) present in Chinatown. I find that defining Chinatown is

fraught with many theoretical and technical difficulties. This thesis is thus not concerned with

defining Chinatown per se. Instead of arbitrarily ascribing a definition for Chinatown, the

approach I have taken for the contemporary part of the research is to solicit my interview

participants' definitions of Liverpool's Chinatown. Using their ascriptions of Liverpool's

Chinatown as a lens, I analysed respondents' everyday experiences and draw conclusions

about what they mean for the Chinese community and the development of Liverpool's Chinatown.

4.7.1   Connection of Chinatown with Chinese Food

Liverpool's Chinatown as a physical place is the connection all the interviewees have. To them, Liverpool's Chinatown is merely the street beyond the Chinese arch. The distance may encroach onto the street all the way up to Chung Wah, one of two Chinese supermarkets in Liverpool. For some individuals, Liverpool's Chinatown extends towards Bold Street and stops just at the start of Bold Street. To some others, it extends sideways to Berry Street, the street where a Chinese Association, Wah Sing, is located. Some participants feel that Liverpool's Chinatown is only half a street, starting from the arch to the last restaurant. It is the half on which the restaurants are located. The other side of the street, though dominated by Chinese housing associations, is not considered part of Liverpool's Chinatown. Very clearly, Chinese food – Chinese restaurants and Chinese supermarkets – dominates their impressions of what Chinatown is all about. Liverpool's Chinatown being only a street long, participants usually refer to 'Chinatown' as 唐人街 (Tang Ren Jie) trans-literally meaning 'Chinese Street' in interviews that were conducted during which the English language was not used.

Another issue about referring it as Chinese Street has to do with the varied Chinese community. Very often, they would not use 中国城 (Zhong Guo Cheng: trans-literally meaning China-town) unless they were PRC nationals. However, even amongst the PRC Chinese, they would slip into using 唐人街 (Tang Ren Jie) when speaking with me. Further probing of their inconsistency in the usage of terms to refer to the place known as Liverpool's

Chinatown further reinforces the importance of not essentialising the community. A 28 year old female postgraduate student from Wuhan, PRC, mentioned that before she left PRC, 'Chinese' to her and most of her friends only meant Chinese from PRC. However, after they left PRC, they realised that 'Chinese' encompassed even ethnic Chinese who were from other countries.

SC: For Chinatown, how would you translate it in Mandarin? Would you say 'Zhong Guo Cheng' (中国城) or would you say 'Tang Ren Jie" (唐人街)?

Interviewee 23: It depends on the person I'm having a conversation with. For you I would say, 'Tang Ren Jie' (唐人街) but amongst people from the mainland, I would use 'Zhong Guo Cheng' (中国城).

SC: Why the difference?

Interviewee 23: Because before we left the country, in the usage of English in mainland China, PRC is translated as 'Chinese'. After we arrived here, we realised that those people who are not from mainland China are also labelled as 'Chinese'. They would say, 'I'm Chinese. I am not from China.' Then I realised that this word can be translated as 'Hua Ren' (Chinese). So for course mates such as from Singapore, or from Thailand or somewhere else, we would use 'Tang Ren Jie' (唐人街), because it symbolises a mark of respect for other people. (*28 year old female Student)*

As seen from the excerpt of Interviewee 23's interview transcript, the reservations that people from PRC have about addressing Chinatown as a town belonging exclusively to PRC Chinese were heightened after being exposed to the greater composition of 'Chinese' when they were overseas. Therefore, when she was with others from PRC, she would refer to 'Chinatown' as 中国城 (Zhong Guo Cheng). Otherwise, she would refer to it as 唐人街 (Tang Ren Jie) to avoid being disrespectful to other ethnic Chinese. Such a distinction that she and many other ethnic Chinese make allude to the intrinsic distinction the Chinese community draws amongst themselves. The varied profile of a Chinese person will be discussed in greater detail in the ensuing chapter.

4.7.2   Connection of Chinatown with Chinese Associations

Apart from relating Liverpool's Chinatown to Chinese food, interviewees who are active in the Chinese associations are the only ones who went beyond linking Chinatown purely with ethnic cuisine. They opine that Chinatown is the composition of the Chinese community, associations and cultural activities in Liverpool.

SC: What does Liverpool's Chinatown mean to you?

Interviewee 59: Well, Liverpool Chinatown for me, I think it's probably, I think it's kind of like, um, it's really like my, I wouldn't call it home, because this (her house) is my home. But community for me is definitely holding a special place in my heart, because I know for sure, without a Chinatown, I'm not talking about the geographic region of Chinatown, I'm talking about the people in Chinatown, community organisation in there, and the activity that's happening in the Chinatown. That's actually really important thing to keep me, to, to keep me understanding I'm a Chinese person. I shall be proud of my Chinese culture and background. And it's just something, and, it's, it's culture link that my daughter will be a part of as well. (*34 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

Interviewee 59 is a 34 year old woman from Shanghai, PRC. She married a White British Liverpudlian and has been in Liverpool for six years. She is also actively involved in a Chinese association as a volunteer. For her, Liverpool's Chinatown has a broader meaning than just being a physical place. The people that she interacts with and the activities that she engages in contribute to a psychological dimension rooting her to her ethnic background.

SC: What meaning does Liverpool's Chinatown have for you?

Interviewee 65: The associations. I go to See Yap. When they have activities, I would participate.

SC: What kind of activities does the association organise?

Interviewee 65: Sometimes they would rent a coach to have a one-day trip around the UK.

SC: How did you get to know of See Yap?

Interviewee 65: They are all from See Yap. I knew the chairman and many of the people are from my village and they told me about it. When the association organises activities, the chairman would call me. However, he has since passed away. There is now a new chairman. In the association, there are many members, just as long as you are from See Yap. We don't have to register to be members. Just as long as you are from See Yap, you are most welcome to join. (*75 year old male Service and Administrative Worker*)

Interviewee 65 came to Liverpool in 1999 and, being able to speak only Cantonese, his association, See Yap, is a key feature of his social life in the UK and is what defines Chinatown for him.

SC: And what do you think of Chinatown over the years….

Interviewee 67: Well, we use Chinatown as a collective term of the organisations and the activists among them. Um, but Chinatown organisations they are not all the same…See Yap have their own way of doing things. Chee Kung Tung, they used to be called Chinese Freemasons. They have a very different structure. Wah Sing, um, very proud (of) and very passionate about you know China and the China policies. And then the Pagoda, it's funded by the Liverpool City Council… My initial sense about the community was quite I would say it's nothing I came across in Hong Kong. As if we've gone back in time where um, we live in a village, where everyone seem to know one another. And, um, I also get the sense that this is quite a closely-knit community. Lots of people speaking in Hakka. Obviously Cantonese but there were lots of Hakka people. I got the sense that there is a large number of See Yap as well so I never before came to the UK think about my origin in China will play a big part in this community. The first thing they ask you, let me give you an example, first thing they're going to ask you is, 'so, where are you from?'. I say, 'Hong Kong'. Well, er, 'but where is your hometown?'. And initially that doesn't didn't really make much of a sense to me because what do you mean? I'm from Hong Kong. I knew my father was from China but what is the problem. And then later on I found out that that seems to determine whether you belong to one of us or other groups so when I said I was actually, my father came from the See Yap province, they said, 'oh right, then you are See Yap people'. Then I found out there's another group who speak Hakka. So that's how they kind of, I wouldn't say they categorise you, but they kind of set their mindset on what you're going to be like. (*43 year old male Professional*)

Interviewee 67 is a community leader from Hong Kong and has been in Liverpool since 1987. For him, Chinese associations are a key feature in his definition of Chinatown and as outlined by Christiansen (2003), division by lineage is a critical feature of the Chinese community. Similarly, volunteers, ordinary members, community leaders and committee members of Chinese associations in Liverpool who I interviewed tend to adopt a broader definition of Chinatown. Chinese culture and the associations they are involved in are facets making up their definitions of Liverpool's Chinatown. This wider view, upheld by individuals active in Chinese associations, relating Chinatown beyond Chinese food parallels the extended geographical boundary of Liverpool's Chinatown as shown earlier in this chapter. The boundaries of Chinatown in Figure 2 show the spanning distances community leaders postulate the premises of Liverpool's Chinatown to be. In contrast, the physical premises of Liverpool's Chinatown is only a street, and sometimes half a street as perceived by many ordinary Chinese people today who are unaware of or are passive in participating in Chinese associations.

4.8   Conclusion

During the inception of Liverpool's Chinatown, there was already a growing worldwide acrimony towards the Chinese community. This hostility did not germinate from Europe but was instead seeded elsewhere and shifted to the UK. As the Liverpool Chinese community expanded in the once flourishing port city, the community continually came under attack. Subsequently, after the wars, Liverpool's Chinatown went into a state of decline. At a time when the British economy was undergoing severe strain and public funds had to be managed more carefully, restrictive measures were thus imposed upon the Chinese population. In contrast to Anderson (1995), the development of Liverpool's Chinatown is not purely a

product of White supremacy but closely related to economic factors. More recently, with a mutually-shared objective to sow and reap economic gains from a rising China, the host society and minority group are coming together to collaborate. We thus witness strategic essentialism not only by Chinese people of their 'Chineseness' but also by Britain of her links and historical associations with China. Both Liverpool City Council's bid for the European Capital of Culture 08 and Liverpool's presence as the only city outside London to represent the UK in the 2010 Shanghai World Exposition, show that the local authority has vested interest in proclaiming that they have one of the oldest Chinatowns in Europe. Chan's (2004) analysis of the regeneration efforts in Birmingham's Chinese quarter showed that the commitment to multiculturalism was suspect as the main emphases were on attracting financial investment and business tourism. Similarly, for Liverpool's Chinatown, there is a playing up of the historical importance of Liverpool's Chinatown and the city's link with PRC are strategies to enhance Liverpool's cultural diversity in projecting Liverpool's image to the rest of the world. If we are not careful, the Chinese community will always be framed as an 'exotic' minority that is to be utilised, positioned on the fringe of society and not fully embraced as a constituent member of a multicultural society that genuinely appreciates and respects diversity. Historical analysis has brought us to the present state of a visually non-vibrant and stagnant Liverpool Chinatown. Digging deeper into this present state is what will occupy the next three chapters. With regard to the more recent stages of development as outlined in this chapter, the analysis has tended to focus more on the leaders / persons in positions of power from both the host and Chinese communities. The perspectives of *ordinary* Chinese people will greatly supplement the findings thus far for a more realistic portrayal of Liverpool contemporary Chinatown. First generation ordinary Chinese migrants and their relationships with the host society, with ethnic Chinese in Liverpool, and with family and friends back in their home countries, will thus be the focus in the subsequent three

chapters. Using the ascriptions of Liverpool's Chinatown given by my research participants, their characterisations of Chinese cuisine and Chinese associations will be the lenses through which interviewees' everyday experiences are analysed and conclusions drawn with regard to what these mean for the future of Liverpool's Chinatown and the Chinese community, a non-homogenous and increasingly fragmented group.

CHAPTER FIVE

ALL WITHIN THE FOUR SEAS ARE BRETHREN?: THE DECLINING

CHINATOWN AND A FRAGMENTED CHINESE COMMUNITY

Chapter Five – All Within The Four Seas Are Brethren?: The Declining Chinatown and a Fragmented Chinese Community

5.1   Introduction

In this chapter, I will use Chinese Associations as a lens to analyse the implications of migrants' migration motivations as well as the social dynamics within the Chinese community in Liverpool and draw conclusions about what these mean for the Chinese community and Chinese associations in Liverpool. Specifically, this chapter will address my second research question, 'What are the roles of 'traditional' Chinese activities (e.g. Chinese community centres, catering industry) based in and around Liverpool's Chinatown in Liverpool's contemporary Chinese community?' This chapter will begin by analysing the present day realities of Chinese associations in Liverpool. First generation Chinese migrants will have an impact on the evolution of Chinatown – specifically, for this chapter, in terms of the utilisation of services rendered by, membership of, and leadership in Chinese associations. Guiding the development of this chapter then, a key principle is that of not essentialising a community. Many studies on race perceive each group as a homogenous entity devoid of complex differentiations by age, gender, socio-economic background, amongst many other variables. Furthermore, compared to studies that look at one particular group in each study, my approach is one of examining the different occupational profiles of Chinese people, at a particular point in time. Different categories of people bring with them different migration objectives and they also possess different longer term goals and aspirations.

5.2 The Chinese Associations in Liverpool

In my interviews with my participants, all of them have a geographical frame of reference when they talk about Liverpool's Chinatown.

Interviewee 46: I think, remember the last time we ate at Top Chef (Berry Street)? At the door, there is a pair of stone lions. On it is inscribed some Chinese stuff. You can go and take a look. If you think Chinatown starts from there, I would use that more often because it is nearer to city centre, to Bold Street. But if you regard Chinatown as the street beyond the arch, then I would use that less often. (*48 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

As shown in the interview excerpt above with Interviewee 46 who is from Hong Kong, it is not possible to definitively demarcate a geographical boundary for Chinatown. This is similar to the experiences of Chen (2000) and Luk (2008) in physically defining San Francisco's and Britain's Chinatowns respectively. Although some of my interviewees feel that Liverpool's Chinatown is only the street beyond the Chinese arch, Nelson Street, some others may adopt a wider physical boundary that includes the nearby street, Berry Street. Even with an enlarged geographical area, the sites of some Chinese associations do not lie within interviewees' perception of Chinatown's location. For example, The Pagoda of a Hundred Harmony Community Centre, Wah Sing, LCBA and MCCDA, associations that were also highlighted by my interviewees as defining Liverpool's Chinatown, reside in Henry Street, Duke Street, Seel Street and Hanover Street respectively. Whilst these streets are still in relatively close proximity to Nelson Street, an association in a nearby area, Wirral, is also listed as a community organisation on Liverpool Chinatown's website (Liverpool Chinatown). It is evident that interviewees' physical frame of reference for Liverpool's Chinatown and their ascription of Chinese associations for Liverpool's Chinatown is an incongruity. Given the

imprecise nature of the physical boundaries of Chinatown, instead of correlating those Chinese associations with the exact location of Chinatown, this thesis will adopt the view that Chinese associations, one of interviewees' ascriptions for Chinatown, are generally those Chinese organisations[17] situated within the city of Liverpool.

5.2.1   Chinese Associations' Outreach

It is crucial to note that there are differentiations amongst these organisations. Although different associations have different aims, there are duplications of functions to a certain extent. The main disparity is associations' length of existence and, generally, we can categorise the associations in Liverpool into two groups. Of the long established associations such as Chee Kung Tong, See Yap, Wah Sing and Hoi Yan that were set up in the early 1900s, they share a similar trait of restricting membership via word of mouth, personal referrals, as well as one's birth place. They were set up to address the needs of migrants who came from different provinces in China. Presently, these associations serve slightly different functions. For instance, Wah Sing specialises in Cantonese education and Chinese culture and Chee Kung Tong serves the needs of elderly Chinese people. Given the changing profiles of Chinese migrants coming to the UK which I will elaborate in a later section in this chapter, the long-term viability of these associations is uncertain. The observation of a lack of individuals renewing membership of the associations catering for older Chinese people may have led Laguerre (2000) to postulate that these organisations will fade away with the demise of present leaders and members.

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[17] University-based associations such as the Chinese cultural societies are not considered to be one of the Chinese associations defining Liverpool's Chinatown.

The next generation of associations that were set up in the 1980s and 1990s are The Pagoda of a Hundred Harmony Community Centre, MCCDA and LCBA. These associations are different from the earlier associations in terms of their outreach. They do not restrict membership by lineage and they render their services to the general Chinese community and sometimes, even to non-Chinese members and members of the public. Functionally, they are also slightly different. For example, MCCDA is part of The Pagoda of a Hundred Harmony Community Centre and was established to address the social care needs of the community that were not dealt with. LCBA has a commercial focus. This dual classification between the older and newer associations is further supported from my own experience. During my fieldwork, I went to an association established in the early 1900s on one occasion to make enquiries in English. There was a language barrier between the individual at the association and I and I was referred to another association set up in the 1980s / 1990s instead. Not only is the first wave of associations inaccessible to outsiders, these associations can also be inaccessible for its members, i.e. its insiders, as highlighted below.

Interviewee 43: There are organisations that help fellow Chinese, such as Wah Sing. I was a member since I came here. They provide English classes but the help they render to businessmen is very limited. They have quotas for their courses. For instance, if they only have ten places for a business related course, the priority goes to businesses within Chinatown. For businesses outside of Chinatown, we receive the news later and we often can't get places in those courses. When we went to register, the class is already full. (*53 year old male Business Owner*)

The restaurant owner said he was a member of a Chinese association and every time the organisation coordinated a talk or was providing some form of assistance for catering businesses, he would never be able to attend because he was not one of the short-listed invited attendees; the reason being that his restaurant was not within Liverpool's Chinatown area and that the quota for attendees were often very small. This highlights the fact that

146

Chinese associations may have a system of hierarchy in extending their services and resources to their members. Granted that resource constraints will always be a factor, it is understandable that not all members can have access to the services but the mode of allocation should be open to all members on a first come first served basis. Instead, Chinese commercial entities within the physical premises of Liverpool's Chinatown are accorded higher priority as compared to those that are located outside Liverpool's Chinatown. Therefore, two members of the same association may be given differential privileges when resources are available to them. The disadvantage of not being located within the physical confines of Liverpool's Chinatown may thus reduce the attraction of membership into these organisations.

This also brings us to another issue about the definition of Chinatown. In my earlier discussions about the definitions of Chinatown, they are determined either by its functions and / or by the inhabitants of the area. Another factor determining the definition of Chinatown is the limited funding / training schemes for businesses as highlighted by interviewee 43. The availability of funding / training schemes determines the geographical boundaries of Chinatown.

5.2.2   British-Born Chinese's Apathy towards Chinese Associations

Going back to the discussion of the associations that were set up in the 1980s / 1990s, there is little evidence to suggest the proactive involvement of British-born Chinese at the committee and leadership levels of the associations to sustain these organisations. A community leader who was interviewed said that his passion to run his organisation well was neither for recognition nor egoistical rewards. Although he has been in Liverpool for many

decades, he still regards himself as an 'outsider' in the UK and feels strongly that British-born Chinese should take on greater ownership of their community because he says that at the end of the day, their lives would be most affected by how Liverpool's Chinatown and associations evolve.

There are three issues that stand out from two points that were made in this interview with the community leader. Firstly, with regard to the point of an 'insider-outsider' dichotomy, his narrative suggests a distinction between the overseas Chinese and the British-born Chinese. This distinction will not be pursued in this thesis because my focus here is on the first generation Chinese migrants. It will be shown in the final section in this chapter that there are differentiations *within* the overseas Chinese population. Secondly, by regarding himself as an 'outsider' in the UK, he is insinuating a perceived dichotomy between the Chinese community and the host society, a strand of inquiry that will be pursued in the ensuing chapter. Thirdly, with regard to his second point about his hope of seeing more British-born Chinese coming forth to take greater ownership of their community, he highlighted the fact that first generation Chinese migrants continued to be the main stakeholders making up the committees in, and sustaining, these associations. These associations are founded by first generation Chinese migrants and many, if not all of them continue to be helmed by first generation migrants.

> Interviewee 46: They must have their own value and have been of help. But it depends on the scale and the angle from which you are assessing these organisations. Their 20 over years of existence must have its own value. Whether there is any improvements, room for improvement, area for widening the scale are separate questions. Who are the willing ones? Are they the passionate ones? Would they groom the right people with the right vision? (*48 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

Similarly, Interviewee 46, who works in one of the Chinese associations set up in the 1980s / 1990s, also laments the lack of suitable candidates to ensure a smooth succession planning process for the long-term sustainability and viability of some of these associations. The lack of second and subsequent generations of Chinese people coming forth to steer these associations is in line with Lee's (1949) argument that with the gradual integration of subsequent generations of Chinese people, and increasingly restrictive immigration policies, Chinatown would eventually die out. However, Lee's (1949) pessimistic hypothesis may be unfounded for Liverpool because there are plans for leadership renewal in some of Liverpool's Chinese organisations. For instance, Wah Sing has spearheaded the institution of a young professionals' network with the aim to rally new blood.

5.3   First Generation Chinese Migrants and their Involvement in Chinese Associations

Even if some associations were to die out, the formation of new entities can mitigate the decline of the Chinese associations as a whole. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the Chinese associations defining Chinatown are not merely those that are located within the physical premises of Liverpool's Chinatown. If new Chinese associations within the city of Liverpool are formed, these new entities can retard or even reverse the declining fate of the Chinese associations in general. For example, Liverpool Mandarin Chinese School was set up in 2004 to meet the increasing demand for Mandarin classes. It is noteworthy that this demand does not originate only from the Chinese population. The rising popularity of Mandarin could, in part, be due to the prominence of a growing PRC. With the world's most populous country gaining a stronghold in the global power balance, her existence is hard to ignore. The desire to learn Mandarin may thus be due to people's interest to learn more about

that country's culture. On the other hand, with a greater influx of PRC nationals into the UK, the likelihood of a greater proportion of enthusiastic individuals who have greater resources and who want to profile and share their nation's culture is important. For instance, Liverpool Mandarin Chinese School is run by like-minded volunteers and qualified Mandarin teachers.

Organisations may also remake themselves to stay relevant to the changing times. One such entity is the LCBA. Instead of focusing on extending assistance to Chinese catering businesses, LCBA provides funds and grants for innovative business ideas beyond the ethnic food industry within the Chinese community. Partnering with Liverpool City Council, LCBA represented the Chinese community at the Shanghai Exposition 2010 with the aim of linking Chinese and non-Chinese businesses in Liverpool to China's opportunities. Nevertheless, the successes of rebranding and revitalisation measures remain to be seen. Where new organisations have been instituted, or existing ones revamped, the survival and / or creation of Chinese associations is largely due to initiative on the part of first generation Chinese migrants. Whether there will be a continual inflow of migrants who are enthusiastic about, who have a stake in, and ownership of, these organisations will thus be critical to the fate of Chinese associations. Central to migrants' passion and interest in Chinese associations is hence the migration motivations and aspirations of these inflows. It is to this topic that we now turn.

5.3.1   International Students' and Professionals' Sojourning Mindset

Amongst the number of Chinese migrants, those who feel that they have a stake in, and who have ownership of, the Chinese associations are disproportionately small. A large part of their disengagement and apathy is due to their sojourning mindset. Liverpool is a transitory place

for them to accumulate social and cultural capital before they go off to different places, back home or not, in the longer term. International students come to Liverpool with a primary objective: to obtain an overseas qualification. Most interviewees suggested that doing an undergraduate or postgraduate degree overseas is regarded and experienced to be less stressful and demanding than similar educational endeavours back home. For those who have had prior working experience, pursuing overseas higher and / or further education is also an opportunity to take a break from previous hectic work schedules. Although the desire to experience a different culture and the excitement of independent living surfaced in many cases, very often, the overriding reason for embarking on an overseas education was because they did not have better alternatives back home. Usually, self-funded students are unable to gain admission into their local universities. In order to enhance their future employability, they look abroad to fulfill their short-term goal, a pre-requisite for them to attain their longer term aim.

Interviewee 64: One secretary of the school, he just ask me, why children in your country like to erm, how to say, send their son and daughter abroad and then leave their parents at home. They will ask such question. And then I didn't say much and I say, maybe the English education system is better than their country. (Laughs). I can only say that. So I don't know. But it's like erm, how to say, those middle class, I can say those middle class to high class they would like to send their children abroad, um, one reason is the education may be better but because you know how to say everything has pros and cons. If you send your children abroad, they may be very isolated, lonely and their education may not be as good as you expected. The other reason you know is in Hong Kong, they have um, if you go to the Hong Kong U (University), those famous universities. Just like you go to some very popular subject, like medicine, accounting, you need to have a very high grade. 'A' level subject and then it's just only a small people can have the ability so if you choose to have this career then maybe England have more opportunities because they have more universities. You know what I mean? Yah, the, the chance is higher. So this is maybe, the second reason. You know, yah? (*45 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

Interviewee 64 accompanied her three children to Liverpool so that they can get accustomed to the educational system in the UK before they sat for their 'A' Levels, the results of which

will decide their eligibility for university education. The competition for enrollment into home universities is very stiff because smaller countries such as Hong Kong and Singapore have fewer universities. Take for instance Singapore. Only 23% of each year's cohort is able to secure places in local universities (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2011). Malaysian Chinese face the problem of racial quotas for admission into universities in their home country as native Malays are positively discriminated for entry into higher education institutions. In Asian cultures, where academic achievements are highly prized, parents are an additional source of pressure for students, voluntarily or reluctantly, to commit to the paper chase which is to accumulate academic qualifications.

The desire to continually upgrade their knowledge and skills set does not stop after obtaining a first degree. For mature students either pursuing their first or second degrees, they do so to upgrade their educational qualifications and hence their marketability. Citing stagnation in their previous jobs, they return to education with the hope that they can enhance their Curriculum Vitae (CV). A more polished CV is expected to earn them better career prospects. When undertaking their education in Liverpool, they also strategically partake in activities that are perceived to contribute towards making the CV stand out when compared to their counterparts.

Interviewee 32: But because from Singapore lah you know, everything you do must look good in your CV. If you are working in Marriott and a place in Chinatown, actually it's different lah. I mean I'm not trying to be preju-mentic (prejudiced) but you know Singapore is like that. You know so I was telling them they were laughing at me because everything I do right actually mostly is because of my CV. I, I, I made it, I mean like my cousin ask me, 'do you join mooting or not', 'do you join debating or not'? Really important for your CV. I said, 'ok, ok'. Because I told you my cousin is reading Law in Birmingham. So I said, 'ok, ok'. And he was urging me to apply for internship when I was back for summer holidays. Yah, actually I never apply and you know he will be telling me you really have to believe me, it's really stressed. He's not working in a legal firm that I, I, I always talk to him because he is always doing OT (overtime), he never sleeps, it's a very stressed thing lah so that's why it's like he keep encouraging me to join everything. Even

volunteering I never thought of it, but happen my friend happen to ask me lah. I was thinking it's kind of helpful to my CV so ok. (*21 year old female Student)*

In polishing their CVs, all the international students do so with their home countries' labour markets in mind, therefore suggesting a sojourning mentality in the UK. They strategically seek out educational and curricular activities in Liverpool that would contribute to a CV that is tailored to meet the expectations and demands of what they perceive the job market back in their home countries to be. For instance in Singapore, as Interviewee 32 mentions, an all-rounded CV is sought after. The stint of working in the Marriott Hotel, as opposed to working in Liverpool's Chinatown, gives the candidate the multicultural experience required. Furthermore, possessing debating skills adds value to her law degree and engaging in volunteer work would let her be able to boast of her social responsibility in addition to her academic credentials. Like many international students working to accumulate social and cultural capital in Liverpool, she does so with a long term view of going back eventually. After obtaining a higher / further education, many international students, such as Interviewee 32, mention the desire to return home to work. Many prefer Asian / Chinese lifestyles and they therefore want to go back eventually. Furthermore, amongst those who express a desire to work for a short stint in the UK after graduation, the motivation is to gain experience working in a multicultural context, an attribute that is once again perceived to be prized by employers back in their home countries.

Professionals are similar in a sense that they do not have the mindset of settling down in Liverpool permanently. The difference between this group and the students is that the professionals have a more *global* outlook. Their next destination after Liverpool may not necessarily be their home countries. A cosmopolitan lifestyle is therefore their choice. As

Hedetoft (2004) pointed out, they belong to the group of 'movers' who are engaged in a process of infinitely accumulating homes, networks and possessions. Some of them secure professional jobs upon graduation from universities here. Although they mentioned the attraction of a better quality of life in the UK – better work-life balance, less hectic lifestyle, amongst others, the overriding reason for those in medicine and engineering is the commercial value of overseas work experience. For professionals in the medical and engineering industries, their working hours are not necessarily short and the pace of work in the multi-national companies are not necessarily slow. These individuals prize working in an overseas outfit, especially if it is multi-cultural, viewing it as being of high worth.

> Interviewee 01: Working in Liverpool has been a good experience because I have exposure to a range of duties and training. My relationship with my colleagues is considered neutral and I do not perceive any colour barrier issues. All my colleagues are White British except for three individuals, myself included. The only difficulty is with the local 'lingo' as I am not familiar with that. It was more difficult at the beginning when you cannot catch some of their jokes and conversation styles but it became better with time. Given a choice to live my life all over again, I would still come here as my life experience has been good generally. I learnt things I otherwise wouldn't have and most experiences were good. I picked up good life skills such as cross-cultural communication, and I think my career prospects are much better from what I learnt here. *(30 year old male professional)*

As highlighted by Interviewee 01 who is a professional from Singapore, the overseas working experience is believed to set them apart from their competitors in an increasingly globalised world in which cultural sensitivity and proficiency are highly regarded. Their motivation for being in Liverpool is career prospects and their next destination, ideally a place nearer their home countries, is dependent on the existence of more lucrative career opportunities.

Most of the migrants who expressed intentions to settle down in Liverpool are those who dominate the service and administrative workers category. Very often, these are the individuals who work in the ethnic catering industry. As highlighted by Shang (1984), most migrants are economic migrants. They leave their shores to seek out greener pastures where they can eke out a better living. Administrative and service workers are similar. They are in search of a better life because economic conditions back in their home countries are relatively dismal. Some interviewees mentioned that in PRC, without the requisite 'Guan Xi'关系 (connections) and money, it was impossible to survive in an increasingly competitive and highly pressurised Chinese economy.

Interviewee 54: …I didn't have any connections so it was extremely difficult to find a job. Furthermore, the Chinese government, they seldom help the weaker group in society. We belong to that group and because we have no money and no connections, it becomes difficult to survive with dignity in such a society. (*30 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

Although they may dominate lower-end jobs in Liverpool, relatively speaking, the pay from these jobs are still better than what they would be earning back at home. Even if monetary remuneration may be similar, other aspects such as the presence of a welfare system makes migrating to and settling in the UK attractive to this group of individuals. Some of the migrants led hard, farming or factory working, lives back home. Their work conditions were difficult and, very often, their remuneration package did not include health or welfare benefits. Coming to work in Liverpool as kitchen workers or cleaners is an elevation in comparison to their economic situations back at home. The exchange rate also enables money earned here in Great British Pounds to yield more when converted back to their home

currencies. With earning money and amassing savings as their main motivations, coming to Liverpool makes sound economic sense to these migrants. This is partly the reason why many individuals in this category do not work in mainstream jobs in which they will be liable to pay high taxes, although they expressed the desire for an opportunity to do so and to experience local culture. Language barriers aside, the high tax rate and the prohibitively strict immigration rules and visa conditions, put these economic migrants off trying for such jobs.

Staying on permanently in the UK has another benefit – free education for their children if they are able to obtain residency status. Financial constraints in their home countries are an impetus for them to look towards the UK for their children to receive a good and free education. Many of those interviewed place their children's education as their top priorities. For instance, a participant gave up her businesses in PRC to come to Liverpool so that her only child could receive a British education from his early formative years. Her husband also owned a business back home but because he has extended family here who have been in Liverpool for a very long time, the young family decided to come to Liverpool and work in the Chinese catering industry.

Accumulating savings and waiting for their children to complete formal education requires a long time horizon and the longer they stay away from their home countries, the greater the likelihood of them staying on in the host society.

SC: I mean would you go back to Hong Kong?

Interviewee 43: Yes I would. Not to go and stay long-term but for holidays. Because my family has sunk our roots here so if we go back to Hong Kong, it's for holidays. As my brothers, sisters and mother are still in Hong Kong, we would go and visit. But when my mother is no longer around, we might not go back as frequently. After all, I grew up in Hong Kong. There is no place there that I have not been. Maybe we would still go to China. If you ask me to go back for good, I wouldn't. My kids wouldn't either because they do not

know Chinese. They know how to speak and listen but they do not know how to write and read. My daughter is a little bit better because she learns it from watching TV and reading Chinese books. She knows sign language, Japanese, French. She wants to learn more because she wants to do some volunteer medical work in future so she thought she would learn them. I feel very happy here and I feel I did not make a wrong choice to come. (*53 year old male Business Owner*)

The longer Interviewee 43 stays in Liverpool, the greater the disconnect he feels with his home country, Hong Kong. Interviewee 43 above spoke of having sunk roots in Liverpool after having been in the UK for 20 years. Many examples throughout the interview process reinforce the observation that the longer one stays in the host society, the higher the likelihood of the individual staying on more permanently. The lifestyle in the UK becomes increasingly more appealing.

Interviewee 52: When I was studying in Taiwan, I really like the more free lifestyle (as compared to Malaysia). So I applied for the working holiday to come here. I holidayed and worked at the same time here up till now…the money is quite decent. You will have sufficient to live as well as play. There is no pressure financially at all….. The longer I stay overseas, the more I do not wish to go back. Because of the comparisons that you make between the places you have been to and Malaysia, I increasingly find that Malaysia is no longer suitable for me. (*29 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

Similar to Interviewee 52, a waitress in a Chinese restaurant, there are a handful of professionals and business owners who are not driven by future career advancements and therefore choose to work in Liverpool because of a more relaxed environment. Furthermore, being far away from home, they do not have to engage in their families' social affairs. Preferring a simpler and quieter lifestyle with minimal distractions, they favour their lifestyles here as compared to the ones they were leading back home. The quality of life in the UK is also deemed to be better. It is said that the air quality here is better than some places, such as in Hong Kong, and the living conditions are also more favourable.

Interviewee 22: You can see that, and er, for example, next time, you know, if you're still here, you know, you can visit my house next time, you know. What happens is that in summertime, I have a barbeque for my member (of the association), you know, so that you can come along to see that how my garden…my garden is like this one…(gesticulates).

SC: Wow, so big.

Interviewee 22: So that you have, something like that, you see. So that you can have a good time and things like that, you see.

SC: Must be a really big house…

Interviewee 22: Not like Buckingham Palace.

SC: (Laughs).

Interviewee 22: No…no chance for that. Just, just a reasonable house, reasonable house, you know, reasonable house.

SC: Do you think you will go back to Hong Kong eventually?

Interviewee 22: No chance. No chance. Because the life in Hong Kong, I've been here for so many years, when I go back to Hong Kong, I find it difficult to cope. First of all, the weather, too hot. I cannot tolerate that, you see. And, and also the space. The food is, the food is wonderful, fantastic food. But this weather, space to live, that's two major problems. Can't. (*Male Professional in his 60s*)

Interviewees 22 and 52, similar to many others who relish a better quality of life, choose to settle in Liverpool. The enhanced quality of life in the UK becomes increasingly attractive over time. As a result, many view their hometown as their second home. It is a place with which they will constantly maintain links, but it will only be a place where they visit occasionally. Their hometown, therefore, becomes their vacation home and Liverpool has now become their choice settlement destination.

However, even though they may choose to settle in Liverpool, it does not necessarily mean that they will thus have a heightened interest in participating in or taking ownership of the

Chinese associations. Apart from some associations being inaccessible as well as the primary motivation of migrants to earn money and accumulate savings resulting in work occupying a major part of their lives, a critical factor for service and administrative workers disengaging from Chinese associations is the element of *chain migration*. As Crissman (1967) observed of emigrants moving to localities where fellow villagers moved to, many individuals come to Liverpool either because they already have family or friends here who are able to help them ease the transition process. Very often, family or friends who are already in Liverpool help to arrange for the initial accommodation and jobs. Subsequently, the network evolves into one that provides other forms of mutual support after they are well settled in. Many of these individuals then become relatively comfortable here because they have a large circle of family and friends enabling them to feel 'at home' and they therefore do not feel a need to look for alternative sources, such as Chinese associations, for assistance.

SC: What do you think of the Chinese community here?

Interviewee 46: Extremely complicated. Actually, most of the Chinese….Our generation predominantly comes from Hong Kong, Taishan, Haiyan, southern part of Guangdong. They would bring their relatives over. Many people are in some way related to one another. For example, my uncle's wife. She is my sister's husband's sister. There are a lot of complicated relationships when you hear them talk. There is also a lot of gossips. And what else? Complicated. (*48 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

Similar to the above interviewee, another participant mentioned that more than a hundred members of her husband's side of the family are living in Liverpool alone. Many others are spread throughout the UK. Another similar example of such a tight-knit network, albeit not defined by familial relationships, will be the Fujian support system in Liverpool growing outside the physical confines of Liverpool's Chinatown. In parallel to the factor of chain migration, the reason for the emergence of exclusive non-formalised sub-groups within the

community, and therefore the decline of Chinese associations, is also related to the increasingly fragmented nature of the Chinese community.

5.4   Chinese Associations in meeting the needs of a Fragmented Chinese Community

Throughout my interviews, many of the participants who are young and / or non-Cantonese speaking often exhibit a lack of knowledge in the existence of, as well as of the different functions of, the various associations. This is the case for most students, professionals, and non-Cantonese speaking service and administrative workers. This lack of awareness is exemplified in the following interview excerpt with Interviewee 03, a final year XJTLU student.

SC: Besides the support network in school, are you aware of Chinese social and community organisations in Liverpool?

Interviewee 03: Are there? I do not know of any. The XJTLU support is actually very strong and we have not met with many problems thus far. Most problems were encountered by us first batch and we have resolved them since and we become seniors for subsequent batches and take care of them. Because of this support, they do not have any problems so far and if problems occur, they are easily resolved. (*23 year old male Student*)

The support network that has been built up by the first batch of students is strong enough such that there is no impetus for him to look for alternatives. In other words, his needs are adequately met by this exclusive support system for the XJTLU students. Chinese associations therefore do not feature in his everyday life. Similar to the Fujian group of migrants in Liverpool, they have an exclusive support system within Liverpool, albeit outside the physical premises of Liverpool's Chinatown. This emerging and growing group will be discussed in a subsequent section in this chapter.

For the professionals, although a structured system is not in place for them, they generally have greater resources and therefore do not need to tap the ethnic support network. This is similar to Ackers and Gill's (2008) observation of the highly-mobile scientists with enhanced financial and social statuses. Similarly, the professionals in my study have their own social circles which function as informal mutual support networks. From the interviews conducted, a lot of Chinese migrants engage in recreational activities within their respective neighbourhoods. They also access mainstream societies and communities instead of exclusively Chinese ones. As their English language abilities are competent, they find it easy to tap mainstream service providers should the need arise. There are various other organisations and societies outside the physical confines of Liverpool's Chinatown that meet their needs. They therefore do not have a need for support or assistance rendered by the Chinese associations. Furthermore, in this digital age, the world is increasingly interconnected and the internet has made communications across distances readily available. This issue of ICT contributing to their independence in host societies and binding migrants to their home countries will be further discussed in *Chapter Seven*.

5.4.1   Increasing Fragmentation over time

The fragmented nature of the Chinese community does not characterise the group only in the present day. During the sea-faring days when Liverpool was a thriving port, many of the Chinese seamen were from Shanghai and the coastal areas of Guangdong (BBC Radio 4). The latter spoke mainly the Chinese dialect, Cantonese; although there were also many who spoke the Hakka dialect. It is noteworthy that not all Chinese seafarers were 'Chinese' as Bunnell (2007) has shown in his research on Malay sailors from Malaysia and Singapore.

Due to their smaller numbers and perhaps also host society's lack of awareness of other races, Malay seamen were categorised as 'Chinese'. Subsequently, Chinese migrants from South-East Asia also started trickling in to the UK. Most of these Chinese migrants who left PRC for South-East Asia, especially during the World Wars, were from Guangdong. Apart from Cantonese and Hakka, the other major dialect groups are the Hokkien and Teochew speakers. Subsequently, with the handing over of Hong Kong to PRC, the number of Cantonese speaking Chinese coming into the UK and into Liverpool rose.

Although fragmentation has existed since the 1800s, this fragmentation in recent times has intensified. When the Chinese first came to Liverpool in the 1800s, these men originated from various provinces in China as well as from other parts of the world. The fragmentation within the Chinese community already exists in the past. However, although the Chinese community was fragmented by their places of origins, the majority, if not all of the Chinese, came as seamen. Although some may later branch out into business, they started out with an identical occupational profile. This is unlike the present day in which Chinese migrants who come into Liverpool originate from very diverse occupations. Apart from nationality and language differences, the additional layer of fragmentation in today's Chinese community is the occupational profile – from professionals to blue collar workers, as well as the incorporation of an expanding student populace, a group of individuals that is very small in the early Chinese community who settled in Liverpool. Parallel to the differentiation in occupational backgrounds is the variance in socio-economic status and this will be expounded in greater detail in a later section in this chapter.

On top of being fragmented, Ma (1961), at the opening of the Chinese seamen's centre in 1961, spoke of feudal bodies amongst the Chinese community: The Four Cities Businessmen

Association, Hakka Speaking Chinese Association, Masonic Hall, United New Territory Villagers Association and Overseas Chinese Welfare Association. The divided factions were clearly brought out in the construction of a new centre: The Pagoda of a Hundred Harmony Community Centre. Championed by a young Taiwan-born Mr Brian Wong, The Pagoda of a Hundred Harmony Community Centre's £250,000 grant from the Liverpool inner city partnership, deprived the already existing Wah Sing Chinese Community Centre, which had raised £28,000 on its own, and which had also applied for funding, of money to refurbish its facilities. Maoist-inspired Wah Sing and other organisations felt the architecturally elaborate The Pagoda of a Hundred Harmony Community Centre to be an extravagance. Operated on the principle of a centre that catered for the needs of the Chinese community, Wah Sing stood in opposition to The Pagoda of a Hundred Harmony Community Centre with the philosophy to be an all-inclusive centre (Daily Post, 1983). Since, both community centres have attracted different groups of people to their premises.

5.4.2   Language Differentiations within the Chinese Community

Today, although hostility between the various sub-groups within the community may not be present, the fragmentation persists and has become even greater. More recently, the migrants from PRC extend beyond Shanghai and Guangdong. From the interviews conducted, there are individuals who come from the North-Eastern parts of PRC, Beijing and other parts of PRC such as Fujian province. Originating from different parts of PRC, we can thus expect a greater variety of languages – Mandarin and Chinese dialects – being spoken by the Chinese here.

Interviewee 57: And for people from mainland China, as compared to people from Guangdong, from Hong Kong, we are like from two countries. There are language barriers between the two of us. How can we possibly integrate with them? (*Female Service and Administrative Worker in her 40s*)

Especially with a growing PRC and the establishment of the XJTLU tie-up, many Mandarin-speaking Chinese nationals are coming into Liverpool. The Mandarin-Cantonese divide is deepening as mentioned by Interviewee 57. Furthermore, not all Chinese people may necessarily be most comfortable in Mandarin and / or Chinese dialects. Take, for instance, Singaporean Chinese people. All Singaporean Chinese interviewees spoke English in the interviews because they are more comfortable in that, English being their first language in schools back home. As I am also Singaporean, all of them ended up speaking in Singlish (Singlish is a variant of English with elements of Malay, Mandarin and some Chinese dialects) with me. Some of the Malaysians who know Singlish also used that in their interviews.

The congregations at Liverpool Chinese Gospel Church represent a classic case of language differentiations within the community. According to an interviewee, the number of people who are Christians in China is about 5% - 6%. In North America, it is 30%. In England, the percentage for the Chinese population is far lower, hovering around 1.5%. Therefore, comparatively, England is deemed to be in need of a more proactive Christian mission, targeted at the Chinese population and a more concerted outreach to diverse groups within the community. The Chinese church has three congregations – English, Mandarin and Cantonese speaking. They cater to different profiles of Chinese people in Liverpool. The English congregation draws in Chinese people who are mostly from professional backgrounds and British-born Chinese. The Mandarin congregation attracts mostly asylum seekers and refugees from PRC, and the Cantonese speaking congregation appeals to people who

understand that language. They are mostly older Chinese from Guangdong province and Hong Kong. Many younger Christians amongst the interviewees do not attend mass at the Chinese church, preferring to go to Churches near their accommodation and residences. However, older Chinese Christians attend the Chinese church, the main reason being the language factor. Most of the older Chinese only understand Cantonese and have very limited grasp of the English language. Ironically, in the common rallying facility of a Church, we witness the fragmentation within the community due to language differences.

5.4.3   Socio-Economic Differentiations within the Chinese Community

  Countries, provinces and language differences aside, there are also socio-economic status differences. These have become *starker* in recent years. Although money making motivations remain a priority for economically active migrants today, their starting positions differ greatly. In the past, almost all Chinese migrants were in the seafaring trade. In Liverpool today, we have professionals who are doctors and engineers at one end of the spectrum and busboys in restaurants at the other end. Now, there is also an expanding presence of students. Amongst the students, there are also differences in their economic situations. Having to finance international school fees and living expenses, the general assumption is that these self-funded international students would be from relatively well-off families. However, I have found out this is not necessarily the case. No doubt there are those from well-off families who own businesses or whose parents are in professional careers, there are equally many students who are from humble backgrounds. Some of their parents are from working class backgrounds and have taken on loans or have sold off their houses to finance their children's education here. The other situation is that the students accumulate savings from a few years' of work prior to

coming to Liverpool to finance their education themselves. To further supplement their living expenses, they take on part-time work in the Chinese catering industry in Liverpool.

A further dimension contributing to the socio-economic variations is the group of immigrants predominantly from the poorer and more rural parts of PRC, such as Fujian province. Most of them come to the UK seeking asylum status. As shown in Figure 5, although there is a downward trend in principal asylum applications (in 2009, there were 24,485 principal asylum applications as compared to 41,700 in 1999), the number is an underestimation because dependents are not included in the dataset. If we considered the number of dependents together with the principal asylum applicants, the number is significant in impacting the development of Liverpool's Chinatown.
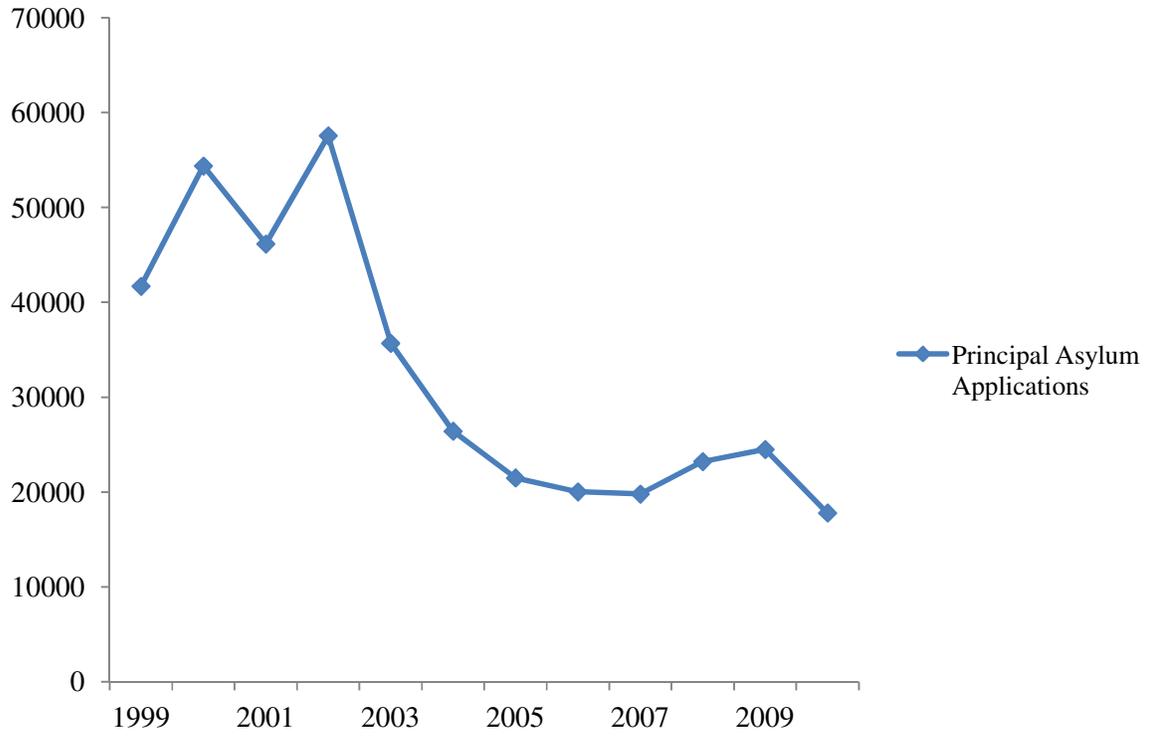
Figure 5 Principal Asylum Applications, 1999 – 2010

Source: UK Home Office, 2011

Within PRC nationals, there are distinctions between those of higher and those of lower socio-economic standings as well as in their political orientations. For instance, a relatively well-to-do PRC interviewee rebutted my labeling of the undocumented workers as refugees. She was adamant that their label is 'illegal immigrants' because she strongly believed that the latter were not facing any form of persecution at home at all. Her insistent response was tinged with scorn for people whom she believed were finding an easy way out in life by coming to the UK. In reality, the asylum seekers in Liverpool, mostly from Fujian Province, are *twice-removed* from the Chinese community. Firstly, the language barrier prevents their active participation in the associations that are still dominated by the Cantonese speaking Chinese population. Secondly, their lower socio-economic (and sometimes, illegal) status adds a further obstacle to alienate them from the Chinese community.

> Interviewee 57: …I'm not saying that my intellectual level or social standing is high but at least I'm from a big city. Compared to people from smaller places, there are inevitable differences. Culturally, there may not be much difference between two people of equivalent educational backgrounds, say people who graduated from High School or who graduated from Universities. But she is from a smaller city and I am from a bigger city. Our thinking on many things, our opinions and our vision of the world are different. It's very difficult, it's very difficult, it's very difficult for people like me to have any friends…It's difficult to find friends here, let alone talk about working for them and being of the same heartbeat. The competition is more complex here than in China. Really. (*Female Service and Administrative Worker in her 40s*)

Interviewee 57 is from PRC, married to a White British man. She spoke of socio-economic differences with her fellow PRC migrants in inhibiting any form of meaningful interaction and engagement. Although Interviewee 57 is not very highly-educated, she comes from a relatively well-to-do family background. After suffering a marital breakdown in China, she came over to the UK. She expressed that many of the Chinese people she has encountered

here were from poorer or disadvantaged backgrounds and she found it impossible to engage many of them well enough to be of the 'same heartbeat' with the Chinese community here.

5.4.4   Emerging Exclusive Support System outside of Liverpool's Chinatown

Many of the newly-arrived immigrants are from the poorer regions of PRC, especially from the Fujian province (Pieke, 2002). This group of individuals has developed their own support network in Liverpool. However, because of generational, language and status differences, their support does not revolve around Liverpool's Chinatown. It has been observed even by Chinese community workers that their social services are not presently being utilised by this new emerging and growing group of Chinese migrants even though the services are open to them to use.

> Interviewee 46: Our generation predominantly comes from Hong Kong, Taishan, Haiyan, southern part of Guangdong. But now maybe there are a lot of newly arrived immigrants. Not from Guangdong but from China mainland like Fujian. There are a lot of them here. They have their own circles but their circles are not in Chinatown. Fujian people do not hang around Chinatown. I attended a Chinese Business Association event but I have never heard or met a Fujian person. The organisations do not become representative of the Chinese community anymore. What these existing organisations represent really are those from Guangdong, from Hong Kong. (*49 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

Interviewee 46 is a 49 year old female social worker. She is keenly aware of the happenings within the community and acknowledges that the Fujian community's needs are not addressed adequately by existing Chinese associations in Liverpool. One area is in confinement services and childcare. For Chinese people, the month after a woman has delivered her baby is considered very important for the mother to fully recuperate after a physically straining delivery. This period is termed confinement and during this month, the

169

mother's diet would be centered around food and tonics that help her regain her strength and pre-delivery health. Chinese traditions of not exposing the mother to too much draught and water during her confinement are further factors that result in families soliciting the help of confinement nannies. Sometimes, this help is provided by the mother's own family members such as their own mothers or sisters and at other times, professional confinement nannies are engaged. Within the Fujianese community, the female friends from the same village are approached to help with confinement. In addition to confinement, another area is in childcare. For families in which both parents want to go out to work and who do not have family support here in the UK, they will consider engaging their friends to help with childcare. These childminders are not accredited childcare providers but are merely individuals who have children of their own. With a rise in the number (based on figures immigration from the Office for National Statistics, there were 491,000 new immigrants in June 2002 and 593,000 new immigrants in June 2011) of newly-arrived immigrants, we can anticipate a burgeoning of this informal sector within the UK.

An emerging informal economy aside, there are other aspects of the support system that is evolving outside of Liverpool's Chinatown. Fujian Chinese mothers have formed a social support group amongst themselves. In their gathering, often with their young children in tow, they would share anecdotes of their lives in helping one another cope better in the UK. For example, many of them receive government benefit in the form of vouchers for their children. They would talk about their experience of being treated shabbily when using these vouchers at certain supermarkets.

SC: What is your social circle like?

Interviewee 54: I have Fujian friends. Our group…...sometimes I would accompany them to the GP (General Practitioner) and do simple translation. We would share our life

experiences here for example, which supermarket has staff whose attitude is bad to people like us. We would grouse about this.

SC: Uh huh…

Interviewee 54: And also, now I am on benefits, I have this card. You use it to buy groceries at Asda, supermarkets. However, some British would treat you as someone who is on benefits. I feel embarrassed and I don't wish to be on benefits. When I shop, I feel miserable because people would look at you with tinted glasses. That is how I feel. Therefore, many people are applying for work permits. Hopefully the government can…so that people like us, people on the fringe can also pay our taxes and hold our heads high in society. The card is like your marker, it's as if it marks you as a beggar. (*30 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

Interviewee 54 is a 30 year old asylum seeker from Fujian and a mother of two. They would share these stories amongst themselves so that they can warn others against going to certain outlets to avoid receiving bad service. Information about the UK's welfare system is also disseminated this way. Within the circle, they find out the benefits they are entitled to and how to go about applying for them. Even for phone rates, word regarding the lowest cost overseas phone operator / calling card gets around in a similar fashion. Locations of wholesale outlets where they can get groceries as well as cheaper retail shops are another type of information being shared. On top of information that helps one to adjust to life in a foreign land, the members of the circle provide socio-emotional support to one another. Friendships are forged within the circle and further socialising takes place in the private realms of their lives. Visiting one another in their homes, having potluck[18] gatherings at home as well as going to the supermarkets together are some of the social activities that they undertake with their friends. Within their exclusive support network, not only is this group distanced from Liverpool's Chinese associations and the Chinese community in general, they are also further divorced from mainstream society.

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[18] Potluck gatherings refer to events in which participants bring a food / drink item each to the event.

5.5   Conclusion

With reference to Chinese associations, the findings in this chapter concur with Lee's (1949) hypothesis that Chinatowns would decline with time. As Lee (1949) noted, second and subsequent generations of Chinese migrants will disengage from Chinatown, and restrictive immigration policies will result in the decline of Chinatowns. While I share Lee's (1949) fatalistic outlook with regard to the eventuality of Chinese associations, I differ from Lee (1949) on two fronts. Firstly, although there may be an absolute decrease in the number of regular migrants, selective immigration policies will mean that a greater proportion of enthusiastic and able individuals who have a greater capacity to contribute to host society and / or take on leadership in Chinese associations will enter the UK. However, even though first generation Chinese migrants have a contributory role to the development of Chinese associations, the plausibility of some of the community leaders' vision for Liverpool's Chinese associations to prosper and flourish is suspect considering the majority of migrants' migration motivations. Many of the better-equipped migrants have a sojourning mindset and have neither stake in, nor ownership of, Chinese associations. Secondly, accompanying a tightening of regular migration is a rise in irregular migration. With a key focus on earning as much money as they can, the less well-off migrants have neither interest nor a stake in participating or serving in Chinese associations. Furthermore, as their needs are presently not being met by existing associations, they have developed support systems outside the geographical confines of Liverpool's Chinatown. This is similar to the case of those who may stay on more permanently – individuals who dominate the service and administrative workers category. Due to the element of chain migration, they turn to familial networks in Liverpool instead of Chinese associations to address their needs. Given the diverse profiles of the Chinese migrants, many differences have surfaced – socio-economic backgrounds, language

and cultural nuances. These differences highlight the non-homogeneity of the community which is highly relevant for the long-term sustainability of the existing Chinese associations in terms of the services rendered by, membership of and leadership in these associations. In the next chapter, I will now turn to the other characterisation ascribed to Liverpool's Chinatown – Chinese cuisine, and analyse migrants' everyday experiences in relation to the Chinese community and the development of Liverpool's Chinatown.

CHAPTER SIX

BIRDS OF A FEATHER FLOCK TOGETHER: THE PERSISTING CHINATOWN

AND A SEGREGATED CHINESE COMMUNITY

Chapter Six – Birds of a Feather Flock Together: The Persisting Chinatown and a Segregated Chinese Community

6.1   Introduction

In this chapter, I will also be addressing my second research question, 'What are the roles of 'traditional' Chinese activities (e.g. Chinese community centres, catering industry) based in and around Liverpool's Chinatown in Liverpool's contemporary Chinese community?' The other association that interviewees have of Liverpool's Chinatown, Chinese food, will be the lens with which I analyse migrants' everyday experiences in relation to what these mean for the Chinese community and the developmental prospects of Liverpool's Chinatown. Chinatowns have been claimed to be ethnic enclaves offering employment opportunities and protection for the minority group against the inhospitable host society (Chan, 2005). Yet the protective nature of Chinatowns is often questioned and even debunked as a myth (Gomez and Hsiao, 2004). It is sometimes postulated that Chinatowns are in fact exploitative and regressive sites (Barrett and McEvoy, 2005). Instead of mutual help undergirding the operation of the community, there is self-exploitation in ethnic enterprises. This claim is backed by evidence of harsh working conditions and incommensurable compensation that abound in the catering industry (Li, 1999). Without suitable structures in place for progress and career professionalisation, the Chinese food industry is thus said to be relegated to subsist at the fringe of society (Li, 1999). There are two aspects of the Chinese catering industry that will be studied – firstly, the Chinese catering industry as providing employment opportunities and secondly, as providing consumer goods and services.

6.2   The Persisting Chinese Catering Industry

Baker (1981) said most Chinese want, eventually, to be their own bosses and the ethnic catering business is a common entrepreneurial endeavour for overseas Chinese migrants. However, from my interviews, none of the workers express this desire, because of the enormous stress that comes with being responsible for the viability of the business, as well as the financial costs that have to be incurred in the first instance. Compared to the past, when there was a smaller Chinese population in Liverpool, the takeaway business, for instance, has indeed become more competitive nowadays. The retail competitiveness has resulted in a plateauing of this sector. According to one of my interviewees who is an owner of a Chinese takeaway business, he said that takeaways' main clientele is the local host community and without a drastic expansion of the host population, the sector will not continue to expand. We therefore see existing takeaways being taken over by new owners on a frequent basis instead of an expansion of the takeaway sector.

In addition to the saturation of similar businesses causing a competitive Chinese food industry, other non-Chinese players have entered the market. Supermarkets such as Tesco and Asda have expanded their range of Chinese products – from ready takeaway meals to more authentic ingredients. Even some stalls in St John's Market in Liverpool's city centre are selling a wider range of Chinese vegetables, as well as brands of Chinese soy sauce that Chinese people are more familiar with. It can be said that there is a rise in competition in the retail market of Chinese food products. Furthermore, most of the interviewees would choose to shop at British supermarkets more frequently instead of Chinese supermarkets. Chinese supermarkets are frequented once in a while or when their bulk purchases have been depleted. However, this does not mean that the Chinese catering industry is expected to die

out. Firstly, Chinese supermarkets carry a very wide range of ethnic products. Secondly, the experience of eating at a Chinese restaurant – with Chinese waiting staff etc – cannot be easily replicated at home. Thirdly, with more and more Chinese students in Liverpool, there is a constant, if not increasing, demand for Chinese foods – in restaurants, takeaways as well as supermarkets.

6.2.1 The 'Unchanging' Industry

The Chinese catering industry has dominated Chinatowns throughout the world. In the UK, Chinese catering is an integral part of the British catering and tourist industry. Constituting one-fifth of the UK's restaurant sector, the Chinese catering sector generates approximately GBP4.9 billion each year to the British economy (CICC, 2008; CICC, 2009). Especially after the end of the World Wars, the industry flourished. Today, it remains the dominant industry in Liverpool's Chinatown. Particularly for Liverpool, the respondents who were above 50 years of age and who have been in Liverpool for at least 20 years, all testify to the unchanging line-up of restaurants along the street deemed as Chinatown. Not only is the majority of restaurants the same as yester-years', even the frontage of the business entities have been largely unchanged. Comparing the experiences of interview respondents who worked in takeaways and restaurants decades ago with interviewees who are presently working in these catering establishments, the work conditions are very similar. Long hours, high physical demands and low pay are associated with work in the Chinese food industry.

> Interviewee 62: The Chinese restaurants here have not changed much at all. Most of them are run by early immigrants who were from Hong Kong and they are nearly retired already and they have children who were either born here or who grew up here. They do not want to continue their parents' business because working in the Chinese catering industry is very hard work. There are some second generation Chinese who take over their parents' business but they spend more money than invest the money back into the business to take

the business to greater heights. I want to introduce a new style of leadership, a new style of management. Most service staff are mainly Hong Kongers and Malaysians. For my workers, I do not tell them that they have to keep doing work all the time. We are one big family. When there is work to do, of course you do them. When there are no customers, you can relax and take it easy a bit. *(37 year old male Business Owner)*

As highlighted by Interviewee 62, most restaurants are owned by Cantonese-speaking Hong Kong bosses and the front-line full-time staff are usually Hong Kongers and Malaysians. These waiting staff know Cantonese and linguistically, Malaysians have an added advantage in that they can also converse in Mandarin. This advantage is increasingly being acclaimed given PRC Chinese's widening presence in Liverpool, many of whom are from relatively well-to-do family backgrounds. The Malaysian Chinese people's language abilities gain them a competitive edge and make them favourable with the bosses. Even Thai restaurants prefer to employ Malaysians as waiting staff because they can also interface with the local host community reasonably well as their English skills are generally better than the Hong Kongers and the PRC Chinese.

On the façade with regard to the visible frontage of the commercial entities as well as the waiting staff, it may seem that the catering industry has remained unchanged. However, changes are taking place with respect to the workers being employed in these eating establishments. A developing trend is that there are now more PRC students working part-time in restaurants. Service work in this line in PRC is considered a low status job. However in Liverpool, the disdain for the work is not as compelling because family and close friends are not here to witness them working in an eatery. Furthermore, the work helps to finance some of their lifestyle choices such as buying branded fashion wear which gives them the ultimate tools with which to project their identities in social gatherings and functions. As their numbers in Liverpool have increased over the years, it is inevitable that labour supply

will necessarily follow. Being abundant, their wages are naturally depressed in line with the economic laws of demand and supply. They thus form a source of ready low-cost labour for the industry. A further developing trend as evident from interviews with restaurant workers and owners is that the profile of kitchen staff is also changing.

SC: I heard that in restaurants, like for you as waiting staff, there are differences between Hong Kongers, Malaysians and other nationalities in the sense that Hong Kongers highly regard than Malaysians…

Interviewee 51: Why Hong Kongers may seem to have a higher status is because most of the bosses are Hong Kongers. We are actually all the same. The perception is because the bosses are Hong Kongers, it may be easier for a Hong Konger to communicate with the boss. But it's not the case there are differences at all. Like at my restaurant, there are a lot of part-time PRC students. Hong Kongers only know English and Cantonese but if a PRC works here, they know Mandarin and English. Sometimes, they also know Hakka, Fujian.

SC: I also hear that there are differences between waiting and kitchen staff?

Interviewee 51: In the kitchen, the demarcation is clearer. Waiting staff is more or less homogenous. But I heard in London, they have things like 'da gong' (similar to head chefs), 'xiao gong' (similar to helper cooks and busboys). The former gives the orders and the latter helps the former. For my restaurant, we don't have this difference. You do it just as long as you know how to do it.

SC: Do you interact with your colleagues working in the kitchen?

Interviewee 51: You have to communicate with them because you come into contact with them very frequently. If you don't, it would be troublesome. A lot of them now are from China and I can't speak Mandarin very well but they are also very easy-going people so it is quite alright. *(25 year old female Service and Administrative Worker)*

Compared to mostly Hong Konger and Malaysian chefs and cooks in Chinese restaurants, there is a tendency for more and more non-Cantonese speaking PRC Chinese migrants (from places such as Taishan and Fujian) working in the kitchen as cooks, assistant cooks and busboys as indicated in the excerpt provided by Interviewee 51. Some of these kitchen workers from PRC know very little English, and sometimes, cannot speak Mandarin either.

6.2.2   Perpetuating a Tight-Knit and Non-Progressive Industry – Manpower Practices

As mentioned in *Chapter Five*, the older Chinese associations established in the early 1900s are exclusive in their membership practices. This insularity is not only peculiar to the Chinese associations. Studies (Broady, 1952; O'Neil, 1972; Wong, 1989; Au, 2004) that look at specific areas such as health and social care arenas have alluded to the community being one that is closed, tightly-knit and premised upon the principle of self-help. The tight-knit element of the Chinese catering industry is similar in the sense that one would usually get employed through introductions. Those who are working full-time or part-time in the industry all highlight the fact that knowing someone who is already working in a restaurant or take-away is key to their gaining employment in the sector. It is only if your social circle comprises people working in the industry would you be able to gain entry. Although cold calls seeking employment are possible, referrals are usually preferred. However, it does not mean that one will definitely get employed if an 'insider' has made the introduction. It also depends whether there is a vacancy and whether the business is employing at the outset. Therefore, the notion of whether self-help or mutual help exists is debatable as employers' interests are still the overriding deciding factor.

SC: How did you find your job?

Interviewee 51: It is more convenient if you know people. They won't ask too much. They would just go, 'oh, ok, ok'. They would give face to the person making the introduction. It was easier. But actually, it also depends very much on whether they need the manpower or not. If they really need, they would definitely employ you. If they didn't need extra hands, they would also ask you to wait a while. (*26 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

The above excerpt is an example of the importance of 'connections' in gaining employment in the catering industry as highlighted by Krug (2004) and Chung (2005). I have had a similar experience when I was 'offered' a job in a Chinese restaurant in Liverpool. A former colleague at the Wholesaler where I worked told me of a waitressing opportunity in the owner of the wholesaler's new restaurant. She called the co-owner of the restaurant who was in charge of workforce to inform him that I would like to work there. However, as he had already employed someone else, he turned her down. Nevertheless, my former colleague approached the owner of the wholesaler and told him of my interest in waitressing. As a result, the originally hired worker was dropped off and I replaced him / her. Whilst 'connections' are critical for employment in the catering industry as emphasised by Krug (2004) and Chung (2005), my argument then is that the *nature* of the 'connections' is even more important. There is a hierarchical structure in the types of 'connections'. The status of the owner of the wholesaler is elevated in respect to my ex-colleague's who is the former's worker. Furthermore, because the owner of the wholesaler is also one of the co-owners of the new restaurant, his words and recommendations inevitably carried 'more weight'.

A further employment practice that perpetuates a tight-knit community is drawing employees from the extended family. From my interviews, chain migration of family members continues to be paramount in supplying labour to the ethnic food industry. Indeed, migration increases in places where others from the migrants' own villages and families are settled (Crissman, 1967). Takeaways started with being a one-man or one-family show. Now, for takeaways that are run by more educated Chinese migrants, there is a tendency for a greater division of work and for staff empowerment. Instead of taking on all the jobs themselves, a young couple who I interviewed employed workers in their takeaway and restricted themselves to overseeing the overall logistical functioning of the business.

SC: How did you get started on your business? What are your experiences like?

Interviewee 38: Where I was working, I was working in the kitchen, and the boss had some urgent personal matters and had to stop running his takeaway shop so he gave me a call at night. At that time, I didn't consider too much either and viewed this as an opportunity. I took it on without much consideration. There were several difficulties along the way such as finding employees. I employed kitchen staff so I did not get involved in matters of the kitchen and I also do not know what is happening there. I also employed a full-time driver and a full-time counter staff. Basically in Chinese meals, you need to make sure you have these three areas settled and these three staff are all very experienced so I had nothing to worry about. The only thing I had to worry about is how to raise the sales for the shop or say, which sector requires more help. For instance, if the counter staff needs help, I will help out of if the kitchen requires more help, I will have to cook. Relatively speaking, is it not tough for me. Many other people who open takeaways, they do everything themselves. For those people, it is extremely tough. It is tough indeed. (*37 year old male Business Owner*)

In spite of information offered by the takeaway owner as shown in the interview extract above, it does not mean that the majority of takeaways are not increasingly relying on family resources. In fact, the opposite is true. Most new takeaways today that are opened by Chinese migrants, generally from lower socio-economic backgrounds, continue to draw upon labour from immediate and extended family members for the various roles. They continue to arrange for their kith and kin from their home countries to come to the UK on working visas to be employed in their takeaways.

SC: How did you find out about going to the UK when you were only 18 years old?

Interviewee 67: Um, it was quite a shock because I wasn't quite prepared to come until one night my auntie asked if I would be interested to come over because and during that time I was in the graduation evening. And halfway through the evening, I was asked to meet my uncle and almost like on the spot make a decision. So it was quite rushed and and, but at that point in time, my primary objective was to try and help the family but no one ever forced me to come and even now, I still look back and feel that was my own decision and and, honestly, my mum did feel bad when she knew how I got through life in the UK, um, well, I said to her you know no one should you know, feel guilty of anything because I made my own decision.

SC: When you were staying with your auntie, how was your life like?

Interviewee 67: They running a uh, uh, chippy. They have to do everything themselves. And once I stay with them, I have to take a more active role to help with the business and the type of work was completely alien to me. For example, looking at the big deep fryer pan for the fish and chips and it's just a shock the amount of heat, the amount of grease that is going to get onto your hands then you have to also have to cope with the language, how to serve people at the counter.

SC: How then did you juggle this with your studies?

Interviewee 67: Very difficult. Um, because they don't necessarily want me to go to college. They wanted me to work for them full-time. (*41 year old male Professional*)

These findings support Howard et al (1985), Waldinger et al (1990), Chan (2005) and Pai's (2008) observation that ethnic resources, family labour being one of them, are greatly leveraged in Chinese businesses. Two critical considerations are however missing in their studies of ethnic businesses. Firstly, the childcare aspect. Although it may seem that childcare is irrelevant to the catering business, childcare is in fact an important *subsidiary* component of the business. Ethnic resources are very often mobilised for child-minding so that the rest of the family can concentrate on the Chinese businesses. Apart from applying for working age family and relatives to come over and help out in the businesses, there are a number of migrants who have applied, are applying, or have the intention of applying, for their ageing parents to come over, either to retire or to help out with child-minding while the adult children preoccupy themselves with the catering businesses.

SC: Did your husband employ workers in the shop or did you do everything yourselves?

Interviewee 44: We employed three. It's through our shop that we managed to apply for my brother to come over. There is also my sister-in-law and we employed someone for the kitchen. We all work together. And my mother-in-law too.

SC: And you mentioned earlier you applied for your mother to come over?

Interviewee 44: I applied for her to come on a travel visa. A month after I had my child, my mother came over. She stayed for five months in all. She helped me take care of my child while I worked. She stayed for five months up till the Chinese New Year period when we all went back together. Initially we didn't want to bring the child back but then the nanny which I employed (after my mother left) to look after my daughter, foresaw that she would be very busy with her own children and might not be able to manage. We tried to find another nanny but really couldn't find any suitable ones so my mother suggested that she would bring the child up in China and we could apply for her to come over again with the child. (*31 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

Sometimes, the extended familial support is leveraged for childcare too. It is not uncommon for migrants who are already here to be looking after their nephews and nieces who are subsequently sent here to study in primary / secondary schools whilst the latter's parents continue working in their home countries as shown in the excerpt provided by Interviewee 67 above.

Marriage is also important in the expansion of familial labour:

SC: Why did you leave Taishan?

Interviewee 44: I was of marriageable age then and my cousin said there's a guy who's not too bad and wants to introduce him to me. I saw the guy's photo. It was because the guy, my husband now, saw my photo when he was at my cousin's house and asked whether I was married. He then asked her to play matchmaker. We talked over the phone for three months and from the conversations, his character seemed ok. We met and then he came to get married after a few months. Another few months later, I came over here.

SC: Why did you decide to get married to someone who was overseas instead of finding a partner, say in Taishan, nearer your parents?

Interviewee 44: It's because, and it's not just me. The people in Taishan all think that it'll be better to go overseas. It'll be better for the future. There'll be more security for one's future. A lot of my cousins here, they are from Hong Kong, and they got married to people over here. Every time they go back to visit, they would say that the life here is quite good, the air is good. My mother has this desire for her daughter to get married to someone overseas. But more importantly, it's whether the partner is suitable for you or not. I find my husband quite suitable for me so that's how it happened.

SC: You mentioned that your cousins are Hong Kongers?

Interviewee 44: Yes, they are Hong Kongers. They got introduced to their husbands here so they came over.

SC: What does your husband do?

Interviewee 44: He's in the catering industry, takeaway shop.

SC: Do you help out in the shop?

Interviewee 44: I work seven days a week! It's especially hard at night.

SC: Do you intend to stay on here permanently?

Interviewee 44: I've gotten my citizenship status here already. I could apply for long-term residency after two years. And then one year later, I can become the citizen here. Initially, I didn't want to become their citizen. My husband said we would be living here in future so I might as well get citizenship as that would be better.

SC: Your husband is a citizen already?

Interviewee 44: He came over here with his parents when he was very young. He was a Hong Konger and came over here at the age of seven. He received the education here. Initially I was quite apprehensive (of marrying) because he grew up here. I was concerned whether his thinking would be too Westernised. I still prefer more traditional Chinese men. Luckily, he is still quite a traditional Chinese man so that's good. I guess he has two ways of thinking – one Western and one Eastern. Previously he was always with his Western friends but now after being with me, he has changed a lot. He changed a lot after he got to know me. (*31 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

From my empirical findings, a number of women within the service and administrative workers group have similar experiences of being match-made transnationally. Their partners are either British-born Chinese or Chinese men who have been in the UK since a young age. These husbands are either running their own Chinese takeaways or are working in Chinese restaurants as cooks. The match-making takes place with a relative making the introductions and, after a few telephone conversations, the marriage occurs and the woman moves to the UK. The wives come over to help out with their husbands' catering businesses, if they are running one, or stay at home to look after children after they have had them. Sometimes,

these are not the men's first marriages and they may also find older women to be remarried too.

Interviewee 50: China's tradition is that family comes first, even for singles. As I was single, I was staying with my parents all along. We don't move out. I'm not sure about Singapore. There isn't the feeling of loneliness even though I wasn't married but people around me would ask how come I wasn't married. My father works in the environment agency. My mother is a doctor. Many people were commenting about my single status then.

SC: What were your parents' reaction when you said you wanted to come over?

Interviewee 50: My parents were ok with it because I was so old already. My dad often asked me if I considered my future as I was getting older by the day. I told him it wasn't a problem because many people are single too and they do get on with their lives. Some people choose marriage, some people choose not to. However, not getting married was my parents' bugbear and even though I was going to get married and move to the UK, they were alright with it.

SC: How was married life initially?

Interviewee 50: Er, I guess I am more easy-going. Adaptable I think. I wouldn't feel down because I'm cooped up at home. But I would quarrel with my husband. When I first got married, when I first arrived, he bought a place. We had no furniture at all. He bought a huge fridge and the box was used as a coffee table. We would then eat around that. There was also no TV, no tables, no stools. There was only a bed and gradually, we slowly bought the other pieces of furniture and the TV, sofa etc. a step at a time. We stayed there for four years, five years before we moved to this new home. It is completely different from my life in my hometown. Life back there can be said to be more 'luxurious'.

SC: Are you thinking of looking for a job now?

Interviewee 50: No, I'm looking after my child. My daughter is my top priority really. I want my daughter to learn Mandarin. Her sister and brother can speak to her (in English). My husband can speak English too but he can't really read. He was here since he was 15 years old. He just couldn't learn it well. My husband asked why I'm not teaching Cantonese but I said there's no need to teach her specifically because we converse in Cantonese so her environment would result in her picking it up anyway. It's easier if you learnt Mandarin first and then it'll be easier to pick up Cantonese. Like his two sons (from first marriage), their Mandarin is atrocious. (Laughs)…..When my child gets older, I want to research the psychology of elderly and contribute to the Chinese community here. (*51 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

In terms of occupational backgrounds, women such as Interviewee 50 (who was previously in the medical profession in PRC but became a housewife to a kitchen worker in Liverpool) may seem to have 'married down'. Back in their home countries, women, such as Interviewee 50 from Guangzhou, PRC, work in jobs that are considered of relatively higher social standing, for example, administrators, laboratory assistants etc. Some of them have university degrees and hold decent job positions in their home countries. Along the way, if the opportunity arises, they might also seek out part-time work arrangements in the destination country. Very often, it is the case that the part-time jobs that they find are incommensurate with their educational qualifications. Put simply, they are over-qualified for the jobs.

Very often, their children's education takes precedence over their other priorities. After they come here to be married to their husbands, often at older ages, their husbands are usually working in the catering industry as kitchen staff or are running their own takeaway businesses. Social stigma of remaining single in their home country drives women to choose marrying down overseas, rather than staying a spinster or a widower all their lives. When they arrive in the UK, they then become labourers in the catering industry or stay at home to look after the rest of the family members.

SC: How did you find giving up you career?

Interviewee 49: It was a struggle. It was a struggle initially. Ahem, ah, it was a struggle initially and you know, my boss was quite supportive and was even thinking of letting me work remotely from the US and all that. But I think in the end, you know like the 1990s financial crisis that hit Singapore, yeah it was quite timely because the company went bust and I was expecting Elina, so I didn't have a job and I was having a baby, so I thought ok you know it's time to join my husband in the US. (Laughs)

SC: That's very brave…

Interviewee 49: Oh, I have absolutely no regrets. Ahem, not not very much, although I have to say that now my daughter is ten years old. And I'm thinking now more about ahem, going into the next phase. Then I do…I don't feel regret, I do feel a bit nervous.

About re-entering the workforce. Yeah, because you know obviously yeah, I've lost…I don't feel as confident as I did you know like before. Or I've felt like I need, I feel like I need to justify why I'm good despite my very spotty employment history. Hmmm.. so it's something I have to get over for sure, yeah. *(43 year old female Service and Administrative Worker)*

Interviewee 49 was in a professional job before she came to Liverpool. Her internal struggle when deciding on relocating highlights that in spite of her aspirations, she still choose to lead a lifestyle that is not in line with their longer term career and professional development goals. In other words, her family is deemed of higher priority in her decision-making process. Issues of over-qualification aside, similar to Interviewee 49, many of them have concerns over their longer term employability and marketability.

Interviewee 64: If you ask me, I tell you, if you ask me if there's anything I miss…. I miss money! Money is the thing I miss! (Laughs) You know, so I ask my husband to earn more to compensate me. (Laughs) But right now, of course, my first, my goal is I hope my children can go to a better university, find a good job. I'm like a traditional woman to support them at the back. But of course, I know sometimes, in the future, sometime, I have to think about myself, to be…how to say, to be more driven (professionally) again, to let myself be able to work again in a meaningful job so that I won't miss, so that I won't fall behind like how I am right now. *(45 year old female Service and Administrative Worker)*

They hold aspirations of wanting to rejoin the workforce at positions similar to those they were working in before they left their home countries. This is especially the case when their children have grown older and do not demand so much of their time and energies. Although they want to join the corporate climb once again, many of them have insecurities about their skills being current in the employment market and whether their knowledge would have become obsolete by then.

In addition to being tight-knit, the catering industry is also non-progressive in terms of its labour practices as highlighted by the Malaysian business owner in the interview excerpt below.

Interviewee 62: At first, I worked as a waiter and then slowly I became a manager. What it means to be a manager is that you invest in the restaurant. For example, you invest in new furniture or employ new chefs or introduce new dishes to the menu. And then you become a shareholders. You get a portion of the profits that the restaurants make. I have worked in several restaurants in Liverpool. For example, Taipan, New Capital, Shangri-la. So through this way, I slowly accumulate my savings. But because I didn't have permanent residency status here then, I can't set up my own business then although I very much wanted to. So the best I could do then was to be a manager and invest in the restaurant. If you are a manager, you go in to try and improve the restaurant and after the work is done, you leave and move on to another restaurant to work as a manager and invest. A lot has to do with mutual trust. Because there is no paperwork, you have to trust the owners that they will not default your money. So it is very important that there is a good relationship in the first place. But in my years so far, I have no such problem with any of the restaurant owners at all. *(37 year old male Business Owner)*

Career progression in the industry is such that one usually starts out by being a worker in a restaurant, for example, a waiter. After having accumulated sufficient years of experience as well as personal savings, the employee will be 'promoted' to become a manager. Being a manager entails having to monetarily invest in a restaurant. Apart from managerial duties such as the employment of waiting staff, chefs, introduction of new dishes to the menu, managers in a Chinese restaurant also have to purchase new furniture to refurbish the place. After improvements to a particular eatery have been carried out, the 'manager' will move on to other Chinese restaurants to carry out similar investments. These financial investments are made on the basis of mutual trust. The manager has to have faith in the restaurant owners that the latter will not default the former's money. Similarly for shareholders of a restaurant, becoming a shareholder is a natural progression from managerial positions. After they have accumulated sufficient savings, greater financial investment is made on a trust basis and no

official or formal paper work is involved. Because of the need for trust, the managers and shareholders are all familiar to one another. It would be almost impossible for a complete stranger without any connections to penetrate the tight-knit industry.

Similarly, the ethnicity of the staff is critical for an ethnic food business as mentioned by Shelly (2000). Employing only people from a similar ethnic group and relying on a basis of 'trust', it is thus very difficult for the catering business to be more inclusive in its employment patterns. Without greater transparency and adoption of members from the host society, the industry will always be seen as subsisting at the fringe of society. However, being an ethnic business that banks on exoticising itself, having a non-Chinese person working in a Chinese restaurant may not be in favour with customers who patronise Chinese eateries not only for the food but also for the entire Chinese dining experience. It is also difficult to employ non-Chinese working in the background, i.e. in the kitchens. It has been surveyed that the skills most valued by employers are knowledge of Chinese cooking techniques and Chinese cooking ingredients, practical experience in preparing, cooking and presenting food from raw ingredients as well as experience of working in a Chinese kitchen (CICC, 2008). Ultimately, good cooks and chefs, well-versed in Chinese cuisine, are needed to sustain the business. When I was working as a clerk in the Wholesaler of Chinese food and drink products, the company employed non-Chinese people as drivers. However, a lot of miscommunication always arose due to their inability to understand Chinese scripts often used on the boxes containing the goods. In the end, the purchaser always had to call the office to speak with a Chinese member of staff to clarify the delivery.

6.2.3   Segregation of the Service and Administrative Workers

   With regard to some of the Chinese workers in these eating establishments who were interviewed for my research, some of them expressed the desire to get acquainted with British society but the language barrier posed a huge problem, resulting in their segregation from mainstream society. At the same time, working hours in the catering trade is not only long, it is often very unsocial. The nature of their work leaves the workers very little time to do anything else that is not related to their jobs. Even if they want to learn English, the hours are often unsuitable for them to do so. As a result of the unsocial hours, many of these workers, usually kitchen staff, would spend their leisure time at casinos as these were the only venues open when they finished work.

   SC: Do you find life here boring?

   Interviewee 51: Boring, really. In a day, after work, in Hong Kong, you can go karaoke, go shopping, go eating, go someplace to play, no place is closed. However, over here, after work, everywhere is closed. The only place you can go to is the pub. There aren't many choices, many people after go to casinos or go to pubs or watch TV at home. Especially for the kitchen staff from China, they would go to casinos because there is nothing else for them to do. *(26 year old female Service and Administrative Worker)*

   Although it is recognised that gambling is a vice and that there is a likelihood that their hard-earned money will be squandered away, many of them do so because they have no other entertainment options. The gambling jaunts serve as a place where they can relieve stress but they are also places where the patrons can interact with many other fellow Chinese people. To them, casinos frequented mostly by Chinese patrons are both entertainment outlets as well socialising platforms.

Another platform that provides a dual function is the Chinese supermarkets. Most service and administrative workers prefer to shop more regularly at Chinese supermarkets. Citing factors of distance and convenience, there is only a small proportion of these individuals who shop at local supermarkets more regularly. Most individuals within this category have minimal or no English language proficiency. Therefore, frequenting local supermarkets is usually a leisurely window-shopping activity because they do not understand the products being sold there.

Interviewee 02: I go to Hondo once a week to buy sauces, noodles and rice. I also meet my friends from China there. They are mostly like me, others and we meet to talk about children, visit one another's homes and go widow shopping. I go to the wholesale fruit, vegetable and meat markets too. I go to Asda occasionally but I do not buy many things there because I do not understand the groceries and the packaging. I go there more for leisure, to browse. My daughter likes it when I bring her there too. *(28 year old female Service and Administrative Worker)*

Chinese supermarkets thus become their choice grocery shop. Moreover, it is a place where they can meet and interact with other Chinese people. Finally, Chinese supermarkets supply free Chinese newspapers and that is a major drawing point for most Chinese people who shop at Chinese supermarkets. These newspapers cover world news and are one of the important conduits via which they keep themselves abreast of global affairs.

SC: What do you do on your rest days?

Interviewee 06: On my off days, I want to go out of the house. I do not like to stay at home. I don't like to 'waste' my non-working days by staying at home. I usually go to the city centre. I will always go to the 99p shop at St John's, may have MacDonald's if I'm hungry. The 99p shop is very good. They have everything. Then I will go down this street with the health supplements. Sometimes when they have discounts, they are very value for money and I will buy some there. There used to be a fresh fruit and vegetables shop along that street but it has been demolished since. I like to go to that shop because you can find value for money bargains there but it's not possible now. Then I will walk to Hondo's supermarket to buy Chinese grocery. Actually the main reason why I like going there is

because I will get to meet some of my friends by chance but most importantly, I go there to get the free Chinese newspapers. I love reading the newspapers and I can get different newspapers at the supermarket for news of China, around the world too.

SC: Isn't it quite far to be walking there from where you live?

Interviewee 06: In fact, I do all my travelling on my off-days by foot. Some days, I can walk up to four hours. The distance is very great sometimes but I take it as exercise. Buses are expensive and the language barrier makes it difficult to buy tickets. I do not know English and this is one great obstacle preventing me from fully understanding and participating in the English way of life. Sometimes, there are very rowdy children and they like to sit at the back of buses. If you are unlucky, you will get targeted. Racial discrimination is always present. There were a few occasions when some White teenage boys threw stones at me. They know what time I will cycle by because it is the only route to the restaurant. One of my colleagues even encountered a group of boys who attacked him with a metal pipe. That was most unfortunate and he sustained severe injuries from that incident. *(29 year old male Service and Administrative Worker)*

The non-visibility of Chinese people in public places frequented more regularly by members of the host society projects an impression of a Chinese community that is closed up and unwilling to integrate. However, the reason for the insularity of the Chinese community may not be due to reluctance to interact with members of the host society. One interviewee gave a compelling explanation that the weather was an important factor (the extracts for this particular interview transcript were unavailable as this particular interviewee had requested for the verbal recording of the interview to be terminated mid-way into the interview. He was however, agreeable to letting me record notes from the remaining of the interview for use in the thesis). This information is backed up with interviews with elderly Chinese people. Although Liverpool has one of the largest Chinese populations in the UK (Census, 2011), it appears that their numbers are small. The underlying reason is because many Chinese people, especially the elderly, are uncomfortable with the colder weather here and thus prefer to be indoors. Furthermore, during summertime, many Chinese people prefer to stay out of the sun due to their preference for fairer skin. We therefore seldom see many Chinese people involved in al fresco dining or sitting around out in the open parks or streets. As a

consequence of this visual blind spot, the impression of a Chinese community being very insular and unwilling to integrate into society could have resulted.

The reasons for service and administrative workers' segregation from mainstream society could also be related to their aversion to interact with members of the host society arising from past experiences. The everyday experiences of ordinary younger Chinese people in their interactions with the host society play a part in shaping their attitudes and actions. For example, many interviewees, especially the kitchen staff, would walk the distances to their destinations, however long, or cycle instead of taking public transport.

On the façade, it seems to be the case that participants such as Interviewee 06 want to save and scrimp on the unnecessary. However, upon further probing, it is often the case that they want to minimise being seen in enclosed public places where they have to interact with the locals, such as on buses, because they are apprehensive of the bus drivers' reactions to and ability to understand their limited English language skills. Moreover, rowdy behavior by some youths and drunkards in buses put them off public transport because they fear they will become a target of racial discrimination.

6.3   Institutional Discrimination and Internal 'Exploitation'

Discrimination, at the institutional level, would entail restricted economic participation in the mainstream society in terms of absolute numbers of employees as well as the types and levels of employment, amongst many other types of participation. There are many permanent full time waiters and waitresses in Liverpool's Chinese restaurants possessing at least a degree and some even having a Masters degree. This mirrors the national trend of the Chinese

population being increasingly educated. From Figure 6 below, using the position of Whites as a baseline (Modood et. al., 1997), it is shown that in both 1997 and 2007, the Chinese is the ethnic group with the highest percentage of persons who have 'Degrees or Equivalent Qualifications'. Furthermore, the percentage of Chinese who has 'Degrees or Equivalent Qualifications' has leapt from 26.4% to 50.7% over the decade.
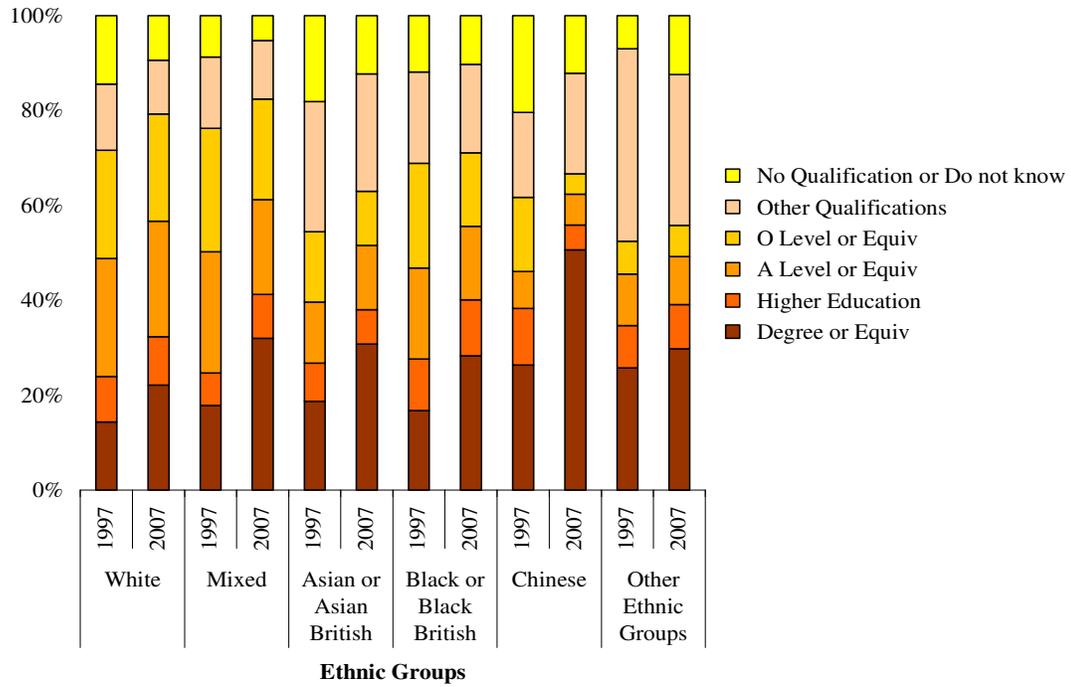
Figure 6 Ethnicity and educational qualifications over time

Source: Soon, S-C. (2008) Unpublished Masters Dissertation. Author's calculations based upon analysis of the 1997 and 2007 Oct – Dec Labour Force Surveys

Additionally, from Tables 3 and 4 below, there are two interesting trends. For every Chinese man with 'Degree or Equivalent' working in 'Hotels and Restaurants', 100 are in other industries in both years. This non-change between the years may suggest a 'saturation point' for men who have a degree in the industry 'Hotels and Restaurants'. However, for every Chinese man with 'Higher Education' working in 'Hotels and Restaurants', 20 are in other industries in 1997. In 2007, the actual odds of Chinese men with 'Higher Education' working in other industries has increased more than two-fold to 50. The trend of more educated people increasingly being engaged in industries other than 'Hotels and Restaurants' seemed to be reversed for Chinese women. In 1997, for every Chinese woman graduate working in 'Hotels and Restaurants', 20 were in other industries. In 2007, for every Chinese woman graduate working in 'Hotels and Restaurants', only 11 were to be found in other industries. This data suggests that whilst Chinese men are experiencing sideways social mobility away from catering and food industry, more Chinese women on the other hand are entering that industry.

Table 3 Odds in 1997

Variable	B	Standard Error	Significance	Odds relative to ref. category	Actual odds
Industry					
Services & IT	-2.92	0.26	0.00	0.05	0.00
Wholesale, Retail & Motor trade	-2.63	0.27	0.00	0.07	0.01
Public, Social Work and Education	-2.59	0.22	0.00	0.07	0.01
Primary Industries & Construction	-3.98	0.35	0.00	0.02	0.00
Others	-2.48	0.36	0.00	0.08	0.01
Qualification			0.00		
Higher Education	-0.40	0.27	0.14	0.67	0.05
A Level or Equivalent	-1.99	0.33	0.00	0.14	0.01
O Level or Equivalent	-1.37	0.26	0.00	0.25	0.02
Other Qualifications	-0.78	0.25	0.00	0.46	0.04
No Qualifications or Do not know	-0.60	0.25	0.02	0.55	0.04
Sex					
Female	-0.42	0.16	0.01	0.66	0.05
Chinese Male with Degree or Equivalent in H&R [ref. category]	-2.54	0.22	0.00	0.08	0.01

Table 4 Odds in 2007

Variable	B	Standard Error	Significance	Odds relative to ref. category	Actual odds
Industry					
Services & IT	-2.05	0.20	0.00	0.13	0.01
Wholesale, Retail & Motor trade	-2.06	0.24	0.00	0.13	0.01
Public, Social Work and Education	-2.51	0.20	0.00	0.08	0.01
Primary Industries & Construction	-2.59	0.24	0.00	0.07	0.01
Others	-2.65	0.38	0.00	0.07	0.01
Qualification					
Higher Education	-1.55	0.31	0.00	0.21	0.02
A Level or Equivalent	-2.31	0.28	0.00	0.10	0.01
O Level or Equivalent	-2.75	0.33	0.00	0.06	0.00
Other Qualifications	-0.63	0.18	0.00	0.53	0.04
No Qualifications or Do not know	-0.92	0.22	0.00	0.40	0.03
Sex					
Female	0.18	0.14	0.20	1.20	0.09
Chinese Male with Degree or Equivalent in H&R [ref. category]	-2.55	0.19	0.00	0.08	0.01

Source: Soon, S-C. (2008) Unpublished Masters Dissertation. Author's calculations based upon analysis of the 2007 Oct – Dec Labour Force Survey

6.3.1   The Catering Industry as a Choice Employment Industry

Amongst the workers in the catering industry who were interviewed, some of the participants working as waiting staff possess Bachelor's degrees in disciplines such as Aerospace Engineering and Journalism. From the interviews I conducted, the oft-cited reason why many respondents work in the Chinese catering industry was because they could not find suitable jobs elsewhere. For them, they choose to work in this industry because it is the easiest job to get. There is no need for complicated visa applications by the company. This phenomenon of over-qualification in the catering industry seems to hint at structural prohibitive factors as articulated by Li (1998).

Interviewee 37: There's no choice. But what other jobs can I do? I had thought about breaking out of the catering industry…some of my local friends, the BBCs (Britain-Born Chinese people), asked why don't I try? It's not that I don't want to try. There is the work permit application issue. I could apply for it on my own and save my employer the trouble but then again, there would be the issue of pay. If they want to employ a foreigner, they have to pay the person a higher wage as compared to a local. There is a standard from what I understand. I know that in restaurants, when they applied for me, they had to pay me £14K. Now, it's £18K and some even £25K. It becomes more and more difficult to come here. It's as if our route in has just been severed. It is very troublesome. It's not that I don't want to switch lines, it's just that I can't. And if the employer is a local, surely, he will employ a local over a foreigner. I am sure they have policies to protect their own citizens first. The remaining places would then be pursued by so many applicants. The competition is so great.

SC: It may not seem worthwhile then to be so qualified academically and then work in restaurants?

Interviewee 37: It's a way to earn quick money and go back after that. On the one hand, you can earn back your school fees, on the other, by the time you go back, you are only 26. It's not too old yet. Or 27. Even if you studied Masters in Malaysia or Singapore, you'll be 28 too so it was ok for them. When you return, you can still be considered comparable to them. For me, I may not have a lot of money but at least I have experience. Many of them have gone through this route and their career development is not too bad. Some of them are now working in large enterprises, MNCs (Multi-National Corporations) and some of them have become supervisors.

SC: Do you like it here?

Interviewee 37: Maybe I like it a little but not all of it. There are aspects I like and aspects I don't like. There is more freedom in life here. More relaxed here. As compared to Singapore, life there is more fast paced. Taking the MRT (Mass Rapid Transit trains), taking the bus, competition. At work, all the university graduates would continue to further upgrade themselves. If your English is not as good, you would continually upgrade. And many people there continually accumulate more and more certificates. If you do not upgrade yourself, you will be easily replaced. Over here, I may also not get much remaining time but because there are fewer leisure activities, it's ok. I slowly got used to the more peaceful life here.

SC: What would you do in your personal free time?

Interviewee 37: Watch movie, shopping. There difference between here and back home is the rest time. I finish work at 6pm and at night, there are many recreational things I could still do such as watch a movie, have a meal. Working in restaurants here I have to work till 10, 11pm. But all my meals are provided for in the restaurants and they are good meals. After working hours, your recreational choices become limited and I can only do shopping on my rest day. Or maybe I could still catch a movie. But then again, you see, the shops here close by 8pm. Almost everything is closed when I finish work. Restaurants might still be open…and casinos but I don't go to casinos. So there is nothing much to do. But I guess it's still ok. We have two-three weeks of vacation leave each year and I would then go travelling to European countries. Easy Jet, Ryanair. We will plan our own travel itinerary and backpack but because of the stronger Euro in recent years, we have not made as many travels. These two years, we have been touring most around the UK but previously because it was relatively cheaper, so we went around Europe then.

SC: Have you ever thought of returning to Malaysia?

Interviewee 37: I did think about it before but if there are good developmental opportunities here, why not stay on? People after all aspire for a better life. If there is a good lifestyle here, good options, why do I want to force myself to go back? *(28 year old female Service and Administrative Worker)*

As articulated by Interviewee 37, the catering industry is an industry that meets their needs in lifestyle choices and my argument then is that it is therefore their *choice* employment industry. For most of the better-educated waiting staff, a job in the catering industry gives them the possibility to finance their lifestyle choice – often to work and play at the same time. Most of them are young individuals who want to maximise their youth to explore the UK and Europe through travelling. With meals provided by the restaurant owners during their working hours, workers in Chinese restaurants can thus save more money on food items. Life

in the UK is also generally more peaceful because there are fewer distractions in the UK than back in their home countries. In their countries of origin, not only are there the extended family commitments, there is also a greater option of leisure and entertainment opportunities. Although they want to break out of this employment circle eventually, they indicate a disclaimer that they do not rule out the possibility of staying on in the catering industry either because it is aligned with their present lifestyle choices.

Within a Chinese restaurant, not only is the place of origin and language spoken among fellow colleagues very different, their educational backgrounds differ too. Some of them have relatively low academic achievements and, coupled with their inability to speak, write and read English, it is predictable that they are confined to an industry in which their inadequacies are inconsequential. Liverpool Chinatown's catering industry is important to these people, particularly so for irregular migrants, who are most likely to only find employment opportunities within the sector. Before the 2008 Employers' Sanction Act that penalises employers for using undocumented workers was in place, they provided a cheap source for labour. However, after the Act was in place, it became no longer attractive and worthwhile for employers to utilise undocumented labour. The only place where they can possibly find work has been terminated. However, it is suggested that irregular workers still abound. In a raid in one of Liverpool's Chinatown's restaurants during my fieldwork (Echo, 2010), a number of undocumented workers were caught and repatriated. Many of those who were repatriated were Malaysians, while the PRC Chinese were detained and had to follow up with reporting at the Border agency on a weekly basis. They either could not be repatriated because they had disposed of their passports before they reached the shores of the UK, or they had flouted employment regulations while waiting for the Home Office's decision on their asylum status. With stricter law enforcement measures in place, Chinese restaurants that

were once considered relative safe havens for irregular migrants to eke a living is no longer as feasible.

6.3.2   Justifying the 'Exploitation'

  Despite the physical strain and possibly incommensurable pay, working in the ethnic catering industry is aligned with their livelihood and lifestyle choices. It is relatively easy to find work in Liverpool's Chinatown just as long as someone has the connections and can make the introduction and referral. A job in the catering industry is nevertheless not easy and as Gomez and Hsiao (2004), Barrett and McEvoy (2005) and Chan (2005) pointed out, migrants allow themselves to be subjected to internal self and group exploitation. Whereas exploitation may exist, these scholars overlook the possibility that migrants working in the catering industry may find the 'exploitation' justifiable. Although their working hours are long and sometimes flexible to the employers' advantage, many of them are accepting of the demands at work. For instance, when their working hours are stipulated to end at 10pm, they have to stay on if customers stream in and if there is a lot of cleaning up to do after the restaurant closes. They are willing to tolerate the ambiguous working hours often because they are not able to find better employment alternatives that are also aligned with their lifestyle choices (as mentioned in the preceding section). Apart from the physical strain, newcomers to an outfit have mentioned some sort of 'bullying' or 'discrimination' by their seniors. For instance, seniors are sometimes impatient with newcomers and often pass harsh or snide remarks at their work performances.

  SC: Can you tell me your working experiences?

  Interviewee 17: When I first started, I felt discriminated against. It's as if everything wrong was done by me. Because I am new, so there are many things I do not yet know. And most

of the staff in the restaurant come from either Malaysia or Hong Kong. They know Cantonese, English and Mandarin. They know many different languages and it's very convenient when dealing with customers. But for me, I do not know Cantonese and my English isn't that very good either. And I cannot communicate with customers who use those languages. I feel as if they are wearing tinted glasses in judging me, they look down upon me because I do not speak Cantonese. … Physically, the strain is great because you are constantly on the move. In Chinese restaurants, the plates are porcelain. … So initially, it was very heavy for me but slowly, you get used to it. Basically, I can clear a table's plates by myself now. … Now, the biggest problem I face working there is my Cantonese competency. I do not know Cantonese but other than that, I could overcome the other obstacles.

SC: How did you manage the discrimination from your fellow colleagues?

Interviewee 17: The reason for their discrimination or for their looking down on you is because you give them an opportunity to mock you. If you do not give them such a chance, they will not laugh at you. How not to give them an opportunity to mock you? Give yourself two days to master your job duties and once you are very familiar with your duties and can execute them well, they will not discriminate against you. And I also feel that their discriminating against you is not ill intentioned. They want to spur you to help you integrate into the big family as soon as possible. … Initially they didn't like speaking with me because they have to use Mandarin and their Mandarin isn't that good. Their Cantonese is very good so they find it difficult to communicate with me. I did not think it a big deal if they did not interact with me but over time, they would make the effort to use broken Mandarin to interact with me, to ask about my family, my boyfriend, my relationship, what I do in my free time. From this, you will slowly realise that you have already established a place amongst them in that environment. How do you establish a place? It's from your own hard work. (*27 year old female Student*)

However, these unpleasant encounters are not discontentment that the new employees harbor. Instead, they feel that it could be the seniors' way of motivating them to learn the ropes of the trade quickly and to integrate into the organisation more expeditiously. The determining factor causing the harsh treatment from fellow colleagues is one's unfamiliarity with work duties rather than the language differences. Once the interviewee from Shandong, PRC, was able to prove herself on the job, her fellow colleagues became more embracing of her. Although Hsiao (2004), Barrett and McEvoy (2005) and Chan (2005) highlight the existence of internal self and group exploitation, they do not point out that the 'victims' may justify their negative experiences as my empirical findings have shown.

6.4   Segregation of the Professionals and Students

With a reduced dependence on the employment opportunities in the ethnic catering industry as compared to the service and administrative workers, does it mean that professionals and students have a greater likelihood of integrating into mainstream society? At first glance, this seems to be the case because professionals are after all in occupations with a higher proportion of colleagues of other races. Furthermore, universities with their multitude of cultural clubs and societies are ideal places for Chinese students to explore and interact with university friends from all over the world. However, in line with Zwingmann's (1973) notion of 'nostalgia pull', the Chinese professionals and students interviewed, discussed a desire for cultural familiarity. Chinese food is one of the tools they harness to alleviate homesickness.

6.4.1   Demand for Chinese Food – the Epitome of Cultural Familiarity

Chinese dining places as well as restaurants offering karaoke functions were consistently being mentioned by interviewees, when asked what their usual leisure activities were. Professionals, with higher earning power, are able to afford the more frequent experience of eating out at a Chinese restaurant. Dining at these places are costly as after all, restaurants serve more authentic dishes and provide a service component as part of the experience. Apart from fulfilling their desire for a resemblance of their familiar cultural roots, it is a good platform for socialising and catching up with friends after a week's work. The function of socialising over food is prized by students too. Having just arrived in Liverpool, Chinatown's iconic arch is a visible and convenient meeting point for these students.

SC: In your personal free time, recreation, what are some of the things that you do, on your own as well as with your friends?

Interviewee 53: Um, usually um, cooking, yah. Initially when we first came, we would always meet at the arch in Chinatown and we would go out and explore the Chinese restaurants. But you can't always eat out as it is expensive. Um, like when I first came, actually I didn't know how to cook. I didn't even know how to cook rice. Yah. Then my mum will, she will Fedex recipe over you know. (Laughs) Yah right yah, so because like my dad, when payment of the school fees, he will Fedex the bank draft over. Yah and the bank draft, my mum will put all the recipes inside then she will ask my aunties, some of them, the recipes then she would write down for me. Eating familiar things from home makes me feel better, especially when I eat with my friends. *(23 year old female Student)*

The familiar eating experience also helps to alleviate one's homesickness. However, as the cost of eating at these establishments is steep, it is not an indulgence that most students can keep up with over time. Therefore, after their social circles have been established, the relevance of Liverpool's Chinatown as a meeting point fades away. Nevertheless, the focus on Chinese food in their socialising events persists. Many participants such as Interviewee 53 would indulge in cooking food dishes from home when possible. Students often hold potluck or steamboat[19] gatherings during which Chinese food would be a dominant feature.

Another important aspect of Liverpool's Chinatown to the interview respondents is the Chinese supermarkets. Professionals and students patronise Chinese supermarkets once in a while. They do their grocery shopping there when their bulk purchases (for example, rice, noodles, sauces and condiments) have run out and local supermarkets are the ones they shop at more often. Day-to-day necessities such as vegetables, fish, meat, bread etc are usually bought at local supermarkets.

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[19] Steamboat refers to a dining experience in which participants sit around a table and cook the dishes of meat and vegetables in a big boiling pot of broth.

SC: And for your grocery shopping, where do you go for your grocery shopping?

Interviewee 09: Shopping….

SC: Like meat and fish, things for your cooking.

Interviewee 09: Erm, probably because where I'm living is a little bit next to Asda. So I probably… it's very hard to say. Before I, when I had my car, I went to the biggest, the 24 hour Tesco, still next to my home as well. And now, because I have the 699 bus pass, the bus will stop in Asda so I go to Asda quite often as well. But sometimes working, when I'm working here, I still take the bus go down to city centre and buy the food, fresh food from the Tesco in city centre as well. And of course, for some traditional Chinese food, I still need to buy in Chinatown, like in Hondo. That is most convenient one. I don't go to Chung Hua Hang very often because it's still a little bit far. And when I used to have a car, I know there is a, at Kensington, there is an open market, like the fish open market and the meat open market. So I used to drive that way and buy the some some fresh vegetables and the fish is from here.

SC: How often do you go to Hondo?

Interviewee 09: Once every month because erm, you know, erm, everytime I went down there, I just bought loads of things especially when I used to have a car. But now, I go there probably a bit more often. Probably once every two week. (*28 year old female Student*)

The lower frequency of visits in comparison to visits to non-Chinese supermarkets, does not mean that Chinese supermarkets are not important to them. The main reason for frequenting Chinese supermarkets less regularly is inconvenience. Local supermarkets are greater in number and hence, customers do not have to make a detour or travel longer distances to get basic necessities. Due to distance and parking constraints, Chinese supermarkets are thus frequented once in a while but when they do go to Chinese supermarkets, they would buy a lot more for stocking up. Liverpool's Chinatown, especially for students and professionals, is significant as a place for dining, entertainment and socialising. From the angle of consumer demand from professionals and students for Chinese food, Liverpool's Chinatown will thus persist.

Despite a longing for familiar cultural tangibles and intangibles when they are overseas, many of these interviewees expressed that their main purpose for going to the UK was to learn about another culture and to experience a Western lifestyle unlike their own.

SC: Ok, when you first came to Liverpool, can you tell me about your living experiences here, coping in terms of your study life, socialising, making friends, your life in general?

Interviewee 07: Ok, when I first came to the UK, it was like maybe five years ago. Uh, I have to say, we are quite shy. Most of the time, we would stick together with the same, same background of friends. But at that time, I found out this was not a good way. I believe if you take the initiative to explore a little bit more… so for example, I joined some society in Liverpool Guild. So, St John's Ambulance was one of my choices. I would have the opportunity to meet up with the local people here. They are the locally local; they speak Scousers and I don't really understand what they are talking about, but it is not too bad. There are quite a lot of students, so meeting the students is a really good, a really good opportunity to know them. At least it's like a, it's a good way to see how they organise stuff. Back home, I'm a, I was a chair of St. John's Ambulance. I organise activities, I organise events and I teach first aid. But if you come here (and join a local outfit), you see they do it differently. They do it in a very social and very um, casual way. Apart from that, I was also given the opportunity to join the local Chinese community. Um, at that time, there is another division, called the Liverpool Central Division which basically, is a whole, um…Chinese that runs the St. John's Ambulance's activities. Um, the person who takes charge right, the superintendant, he's from Hong Kong originally but he's migrated here for a long long time. So he is the one that asked me to join them. He said that we come from the same background, if we can stay together then it'll be good from the divisional point of view. Plus, no doubt from the Chinese point of view, it'll be a very good asset (for the organisation) to have a medical student join the division because first aid is a medical, it's a health orientated society so if you have doctors and nurses right, you'll definitely boost up the society's reputation. So that's why I was given a lot of offers to join them. But in fact, I refused lah. Even until right now, I've never become a member of them.

SC: Why is that?

Interviewee 07: First, I don't see the need to join them lah. So I think joining the local people will give me more exposure lah. Because this is the purpose I come here what. There's no point for me to come here, join the Chinese society and I'll learn the same way as I learnt before, what I was used to do before. So I see no point to join them, so I tell now, also never join. But I do go as a visiting member. So I just go there for a while, teach them a little bit. That's what I did. But at that, for that particular way, I also know quite a few local Chinese people around here, those BBC. So there are quite a plenty of time. So that make me know more people, get more friends. *(27 year old male Professional)*

As mentioned by Interviewee 07, he consciously makes an effort to break out of circles comprising individuals from his same racial group. The reason is because he wants exposure to a different culture since he is already in Liverpool. It would defeat the purpose of his being in Liverpool if he did not involve himself in multicultural experiences that would enrich him. Whilst these are expressed intentions, the subsequent paragraphs will explore if integration has indeed taken place for these migrants. It may seem that as they have the mindset of returning home eventually or to move on to another country after a while, they may possess a more receptive attitude towards embracing different experiences. This hypothesis however, does not hold true. From the various interviews, in-group tendencies and non-integration with mainstream society is still the picture being painted of these two groups of research participants.

6.4.2   Racial Discrimination Triggering Segregation

One overriding reason for the tendency to keep to themselves is because they suffer from discrimination. Interviewees recounted experiences of stones being thrown at them from people in moving vehicles, being called unpleasant names in public, being stereotyped as working in a takeaway, receiving bad service by shop assistants. These acts of discrimination put them off wanting to profile themselves too much in public. As a minority group, many individuals reported having experienced racial discrimination. Some of the more severe ones include physical attacks. One person recounted that youths would always throw stones at him as he cycled to work every day, using the only route he was familiar with. Some of them even had their homes burgled. Most of them do not report these incidences to the authorities because they feel that the process of official reporting is fraught with bureaucracy.

Interviewee 44: Three years ago, our house was robbed. We called the police, they came for a few hours but nothing happened. They did call us to say they caught a few people and asked us to go and see if those were our things. But they were not. Nothing happened after that. Rather ineffective. They seemed to brush things aside. We didn't pursue the matter. Sometimes, we Chinese people feel very helpless here. When we make a police report, the help is ineffective. Like our incident, we haven't heard from them since if they have retrieved the things we were robbed of. Like two days before Christmas, our shop was robbed. We made a police report. They came but also nothing happened. They said they would increase patrol there but they seemed to brush things aside. The help isn't great at all. You know, we Chinese people here, sometimes, our mentality would then be forget it then, they can't be of great help either. *(31 year old female Service and Administrative Worker)*

For those who had interfaced with the police before, they felt that the services they received were tokenistic. The police were said to respond slowly to their calls for help and even when they undertook investigations, these investigations often yielded futile results. An account of perceived discrimination by a university lecturer showing blatant favouritism for British students over Chinese students was given by one of the interviewees.

SC: Oh alright. So did you experience any racist……

Interviewee 33: Not, not really. The friend I hang out with, they are quite friendly. Scouse, they are quite friendly, and, yah.

SC: So no problems you think……

Interviewee 33: Maybe sometimes, um, um, like in maybe the restaurant or some even for some university department, there may be some that are not quite nice to you. Yah.

SC: In restaurants, in university department?

Interviewee 33: Yah. What I remember, is in the counter desk, but most of them, they are really really nice. But maybe one or two that I know of, really.

SC: In counter, what, which restaurant, is it a restaurant you're saying?

Interviewee 33: Er, I mean, in, in uni-, university.

SC: Oh?

Interviewee 33: Yah.

SC: Okay. Like what was the incident like?

Interviewee 33: Er, like they are not really very patient to you. Like, er, how to say, er, like I, er, got some problem for my scholarship those thing, and he, er, is not really patient to answer my question. Yah, so, er, in for a teacher, there's one teacher that is not really good. I can tell that because there's one time we, er, we have an intense course, we sitting in the computer room learning a software. And then we got some question to ask teacher, and then, I, I mean he just tell, tell us that er, that's the only, your, your problem you have to solve it yourself. And then, and, and I tried, and I look at him solving, like some, some other British students that have gotten questions also, and then he kind of like explaining very detail, trying to help them. But there's only only one teacher, you know, like that, but most of the teacher they're quite nice. (*19 year old male Student*)

Many respondents such as Interviewee 33 from Hong Kong, when recounting their unpleasant experiences would always qualify the treatment they received as being bearable as compared to their experiences back in their home countries. For instance, Malaysian Chinese feel that back home in Malaysia, they are already second class citizens. Because of the Bumiputera policy in Malaysia which favours Malays over other races, Malays often have priorities such as in education. For university admission, it was said that certain more prestigious disciplines such as medicine have higher quotas for Malays and the remaining places for other races thus become more competitive and difficult to secure. Since they feel they are receiving second rate treatment back home, their negative experiences in the UK are thus bearable. For Chinese of other nationalities, they recognise the fact that they are after all minorities in a host society so they are mentally prepared for certain unhappiness in the UK. These incidents are not major enough to distract them from their primary goals of being overseas. Some of them feel that to a certain extent, discrimination abounds everywhere and even the Chinese themselves may be guilty of being racist towards other racial groups too.

SC: What about incidents of racial discrimination?

Interviewee 43: Personally, I feel that racial discrimination is a matter of one's feelings. Just like in Hong Kong, when we see those people from PRC in our country, we call them 'Chua Ah Char' (derogatory term for PRC Chinese). This is racial discrimination. Right. So like last time, people here would call the Chinese 'Ah Ching', as in 'Ching Qiu' in 'Ching Qiu Fu Bai'. It symbolises a weaker and inferior race. This is labeled racial discrimination, isn't it?......Before you think an act is racial discrimination, first ask if you have discriminated against others first. For instance, you would label Africans 'Hak Gwei'. That's discrimination, isn't it?......Most importantly is your way of thinking, your perspective. Although we are second class citizens here…...isn't that right? Just as long as you are in someone else's land, you will forever be second class. Isn't that right? (*53 year old male Business Owner*)

Similar to Interviewee 33, Interviewee 43, a 53 year old male business owner from Hong Kong, also has a more 'balanced' view towards the topic of racial discrimination. Despite being in receipt of hostile treatments, they tend to temper their reactions. Such an attitude derives from their mental preparedness in the first place. They know that they are a minority in the host society so they already anticipate some degree of discrimination when they come to the UK. Being mentally prepared, they are more likely to take mild racism in their stride. Some of them are even accepting of such behavior and say that these are perfectly normal and rational behavior since they are minorities here. Another factor of their greater acceptance of hostile treatment is the fact that their encounters are not as devastating. Mental preparedness and less severe discriminatory experiences aside, feeling like an outsider in the host society is another key reason why migrants tend to be more accepting of acts of discrimination. Although Interviewee 43 has been in Liverpool since 1990 and has obtained UK citizenship status for himself and his family, he still regards himself as an outsider. By saying that he is in someone else's land, it projects strongly that he does not feel integrated in the UK. Without a more permanent stake and ownership of society in the country, they may tend to be less concerned with wanting to 'right the wrongs'.

<u>6.4.3   Cultural Differences Causing In-Grouping</u>

Apart from racial discrimination, another factor that contributes to the tendency of the research participants preferring to stay together amongst fellow Chinese is cultural differences. One such difference is the British drinking culture.

SC: Do you find that because you are able to drink so you can click with them?

Interviewee 31: Um, yah. I think that's one of the reasons because if I don't drink, uh, maybe I won't spend so much time with them. I think the major part of their life here is drinking. I think everything is associated with drinking. If you go to a pub, you drink. If you have a meal with them, you drink. If you play pool, you drink. Everything is drinking, yah. (*27 year old male Student)*

However, for most of the Chinese interviewees, such as Interviewee 31 who is a 27 year old male undergraduate from Singapore, although they may drink a little occasionally, they are not comfortable with going to pubs and drinking many pints of alcohol at one go. In some of the interviewees' home countries' contexts, going to pubs is associated with indecency. There are variations in pubs and clubs in their home countries and sometimes, these places are associated with sleaze. Some of them are evidently unfamiliar with the pubs and clubs in the British context.

Interviewee 17: I'm interested to understand the local culture, the local party scene, such as going to a bar. Because of a lack of understanding, Chinese people usually think that people who frequent bars are bad so when I ask them to go, they wouldn't want to. Actually, it's not like what they think. One of my former friends has been to bars here and I feel that there is no need to especially dress in a particular way when you go to bars here. Nobody bothers about you. It's not like back in China where you have to dress sexily but over here, you can dress simply. (*27 year old female Student)*

In certain bars / pubs in PRC, Taiwan and Hong Kong, the image of these entertainment outlets are usually associated with sleaze as articulated by Interviewee 17, a 27 year old female pre-Masters programme student from Shandong, China. To avoid any potential problems of harassment or getting themselves into a quandary, they would rather not frequent these places to drink. On the other hand, it is not the case that Chinese people abstain from alcohol. In fact, there are many who drink a lot. An example that was highlighted was a group of PRC students celebrating with many cartons of Tsingtao beer after finishing their exams. Moreover, at a Chinese wedding dinner held in Liverpool which I was invited to, bottles of Tsingtao beer were opened continuously. It is evident that not all Chinese people are averse to drinking. The more likely reason for their expressed disconnect with the British drinking culture is the *company*, preferring to hang out with peers they are more comfortable with.

It is not surprising that people are usually more comfortable with people who share similar experiences and cultures to themselves. Although they have a desire to learn about and experience a different culture, they may not necessarily need to do so in the company of those they want to learn about. Some of the Chinese people I interviewed celebrate events such as St. Patrick's Day but they may be completely ignorant of the full rationale for the celebration. With a limited knowledge of what they are participating in, the 'integration' is only superficial and will not yield any significant change in the long-term. One of the causes for preferring to stay within their own ethnic circle is the style of communication. Accent issues pose a barrier but that is not deemed a problem because the accent is not discernible after a while. The more difficult issue to overcome is the way conversations are carried out – styles and topics.

Interviewee 07: English is not my first language. So, I'm alright with professional communication like presenting a patient to the boss, telling nurses what to do, what not to do. This is alright. This is absolutely more than enough, more than I'm capable. But then because it is not my first language, that doesn't allow me to inter-, involve so much of gossip with others. When gossip, you use loads of funky, language stuff so I rarely tend to be involved in that. I tend to be quiet in terms of such. Because I don't…first thing it is not my first language. Second thing, I don't see the point of involving in gossiping. So, because of that, so nobody will talk about you. Then, you are polite, you are nice. And therefore, you will not be a, the, the, the centre of attract-, attack lah. (*27 year old male Professional*)

Interviewee 07 is a doctor from Malaysia and although he uses the term 'gossip', he is actually referring to casual conversation among fellow British colleagues. Due to his inability to engage in such bonding activities, he is not able to enter the social circle comprising British colleagues. The following excerpt from an interview with an Indonesian Chinese highlights not only the variation in conversation topics, but also the cultural difference in socialising.

Interviewee 24: I think it's the topic as well. The kinds of topics we talk about is very different. Actually before (unnamed) came right, I had a week here with the people here. So I tried to mix around but I don't feel easy. Here, it's the…you don't need to be invited, you just join in, ok like a table is discussing they want to go out tonight and then you say I want to join. But then for me it's like I need to be invited otherwise like very thick-skinned. (Laughs). Yah, so not used to the culture. (*23 year old male Student)*

From the many examples that have been narrated which are similar to those expressed by the above interviewee from Indonesia, conversational styles and topics between Chinese and Westerners are a recurring theme. The interviewee above felt he had to be invited before he would join an event but gatherings amongst his British friends were organised on a self-invite / sign-up basis. The discomfort with how gatherings were organised discouraged him from participating. However, although there is an articulated aversion to socialising with their

British counterparts, it does not mean that they socialise only with other ethnic Chinese people. Apart from hanging out with fellow Chinese people, many interviewees mention the inclusion of individuals from other nationalities in their get-togethers. These individuals come from countries as diverse as Nigeria, India, Pakistan to name a few. They can get on well together and are able to interact more easily with one another. The key reason is because they share a *common experience* – studying and / or working overseas. Therefore, it is not always the case that people of the same ethnicity want to stay together purely because of cultural similarity and / or familiarity such as in the case of South Asians in Britain (Peach, 1998). Often, a key factor for a group to congregate is common experiences that are being shared by the group.

6.4.4   Structural Factors Inhibiting Integration with Host Society

  This phenomenon of segregation from the host society brings to light another issue causing the segregation, albeit for a particular group of respondents in my research – the avenues for these overseas students to converge. Before proceeding, it is important to clarify that although this section does not explore students' opinions of, or engagements with, Chinatown, they are nevertheless crucial. In analysing the development of Chinatown, apart from appreciating the direct engagements the students have with Chinatown, it is equally pertinent to understand why they may not do so (i.e., disengagement from Chinatown) as the latter have implications on the study.

  Some students enroll in foundation year programmes because they do not qualify for direct entry into university and some students register for pre-Masters programmes to better prepare themselves for postgraduate studies. The students who are in these programmes are usually

overseas students whose prior qualifications may not be recognised here or who need to brush up their English skills to better benefit from their tertiary education. Therefore, these courses serve as a rallying point for the individuals. When they enter the courses in university, they would already be established in their own circle of friends and may thus find it difficult to mingle with other course mates if there are no compelling reasons to do so.

Interviewee 32: ……you don't really make friends unless you have group work and I only have one so it's like those Ang Mohs (Westerners) right, I only know about, I mean I will talk and have something to discuss, only three to four. (*21 year old female Student)*

Although Interviewee 32 has been in Liverpool for more than a year, she only knows three to four White British people. Her social circle comprises mainly Chinese people, not necessarily from Singapore, but also India and Africa. A further structural reason for the reduced opportunity to interact and mingle with British people is the type of courses overseas students generally enroll on. Management and engineering courses are popular choices amongst international students. Having invested a relatively large sum of money for their overseas education, ease of employability and rates of return on their education will be key concerns. Management and engineering courses are deemed to be more marketable and to be able to yield higher returns hence international students from Asia, South-East Asia and the Far East tend to subscribe to these programmes of study.

Another avenue which has made it possible for overseas students to converge is accommodation. A parallel with the Kru community can be drawn here. Since the nineteenth century, West African seamen were confined to the south end of Liverpool. Frost (1996) argued that although work determined their settlement patterns in the first instance, institutionalised racism has contributed towards the social and spatial segregation of this

217

group from the wider community. One's place of residence can be considered an avenue for social interactions to be established and for friendships to be forged. Although each has his / her own room, the close proximity allows for a greater probability of exchanges between individuals. When the first batch of XJTLU students arrived in Liverpool, they were housed in the same building.

SC: In terms of your social networks here, are most of your friends from XJTLU or do you have many friends who are also local British or students of various nationalities?

Interviewee 03: Erm, mostly, they are from XJTLU because when we first came, there were many of us. There were more than 90 of us. And there are more this batch, more than 300. So to say.

SC: So you are the pioneer batch?

Interviewee 03: Yes, I was the first batch. And then, the 90 of us. The first batch, the first batch, actually there are about 150 students and more than 90 chose to come to Liverpool. In reality, our relationships with one another are quite good and we are rather familiar with one another too. So in actual fact, outsiders find it harder to integrate into our community and similarly, we tend to congregate within our own group. Furthermore, when we first came, the University arranged for all of us to stay together. So it became even harder to have others join our groups! *(23 year old male Student)*

As highlighted by the interviewee above, the arrangement of housing all the XJTLU students together reinforces their tendency to group together and inhibits future interactions with others. Unless they intentionally try to break out of their own circle, Chinese students seem to simulate their social networks at home, here in Liverpool. Nevertheless, this does not mean that they are averse to appreciating Western culture and experiences, one of their motivations for coming to Liverpool. For professionals, they live in places where their neighbours may not necessarily be Chinese. However, their interactions with their neighbours are not frequent either. This could be due to the declining neighbourliness in British society generally. According to YouGov research, Britons are now half as 'neighbourly' than they

were three decades ago (The Independent, 2010). Therefore, the lack of interactions between Chinese and their non-Chinese neighbours may not be solely due to a factor of ethnicity. Although the workplace can be argued as a potential platform for social interactions to take place, the workplace is a contentious site. It is a location fraught with power imbalances, competition and tension and would not be ideal as a benchmark to gauge if genuine social relationships can be formed at the workplace.

6.5   Conclusion

In the preceding chapter, I outlined a pessimistic vision of Liverpool's Chinatown with regard to the Chinese associations. This is in line with Lee's (1949) hypothesis of the eventual demise of Chinatowns. However, by shifting our focus to Chinese cuisine in this chapter, the outlook for Liverpool's Chinatown is not as pessimistic because the Chinese catering industry continues to provide economic opportunities as well as meet consumers' demand for Chinese food. In other words, Liverpool's Chinatown will persist. Furthermore, in opposition to the idea of themeparkisation put forth by Laguerre (2000) and Lai (2009), Chinatown is not necessarily an artificial construct. The workplace for business owners and individuals within the administrative and service category is usually Chinese restaurants and takeaways. The ethnic catering industry serves as a very important employment opportunity for those persons who are often restricted by stringent visa requirements. For the professionals and students who do not rely on Chinatown for employment opportunities, many of them articulate a level of comfort and a feeling of familiarity they have when they are amongst their Chinese friends. Many of them frequent the premises for Chinese food. At the same time, with supermarkets carrying a wide range of Chinese food products and ingredients, Chinese eating is easily replicated in the comforts of their own homes. Apart

from being with people of the same kind, being able to indulge in activities that are similar to those carried out in their home countries would ease some degree of homesickness. Eating Chinese is one such activity. Therefore, to the Chinese community who continues to rely on Chinatown for goods and services, and employment opportunities, Chinatown is not an artificial construct. A parallel analysis of the ethnic industry in defining Chinatown is that the Chinese community is segregated from mainstream society. Due predominantly to structural factors and an inclination to be more comfortable in the company of one's kind, the community is segregated from society. With the realities of our increasingly inter-connected world today, migrants' segregation from host society is further exacerbated and this will be elaborated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FEELNG AT HOME AWAY FROM HOME: THE NON-FLOURSHING

CHINATOWN AND AN INCREASINGLY FRAGMENTED AND SEGREGATED

CHINESE COMMUNITY

Chapter Seven – Feeling At Home Away From Home: The Non-Flourishing Chinatown and an Increasingly Fragmented and Segregated Chinese Community

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will be addressing my third research question, 'Given Liverpool's changing relationship to the People's Republic of China, how are these patterns changing over time?' Against a backdrop of Liverpool's changing relationship to the PRC, such as the more recent collaborations between them as well as an influx of Chinese students into Liverpool, this chapter will begin by outlining the shifting relevance of Liverpool's Chinatown over the years from the perspectives of my research participants. By examining migrants' coping strategies which are heavily impacted by advancements in ICT and air travel, my argument is that their reduced reliance on Liverpool's Chinatown for familiar cultural tangibles and intangibles is another contributory factor for Liverpool's Chinatown persisting but not flourishing.

7.2 Shifting Relevance of Chinatown

In the past, Liverpool's Chinatown was important as a focal point, a place where Chinese people resided and sought leisure. Especially in a time when racial discrimination was rife and more severe due to a combination of xenophobia, sensationalist journalism and racial politics, the ethnic enclave was tightened. Chinese people congregated to seek strength in numbers and to build a barrier to protect itself from the onslaught of a hostile environment. Today, the environment is very different. Chinatown as a safe haven for the ethnic Chinese

people is not as significant. The significance of Liverpool's Chinatown as a common rallying place has diminished.

Interviewee 03: Psychologically, Chinatown gives me a sense of belonging. If this city does not have a so-called 'Chinatown', something seems amiss. Regardless of whether you go to Chinatown or not, psychologically, Chinatown is the focal point. So if there are more displays of Chinese culture in Chinatown, the feeling of cohesiveness amongst Chinese will certainly be stronger. In Liverpool, besides Chinatown there are no other places that can serve as a focal point for Chinese to congregate. Chinatown thus serves as a reference point where people can perhaps go for help, meet fellow Chinese. Whilst it is true that there are so many Chinese in Liverpool now and it may not be significant to have a central point to meet fellow Chinese, 5-10 years ago when there are fewer Chinese, Chinatown will be an important place for you to meet fellow Chinese and PRC Chinese or where you can go to get information. So to me, Chinatown is like a national anthem, to gel people together. (*23 year old male Student)*

As pointed out by Interviewee 03 from Jiangsu, PRC, the meaning of Chinatown has shifted over the decades. Liverpool's Chinatown plays an important role in the past because it was a place where one could find many Chinese. Because it is so easy to talk to and see a familiar face from home nowadays, the need to congregate in places (physical) where one can find people and organisations from similar ethnic and cultural backgrounds has become less urgent. In the present day context, Chinatown is likened to a 'national anthem'. Interviewee 03 uses this analogy to highlight the symbolic nature of Liverpool's Chinatown today as well as the unifying potential of Chinatown, 'to gel people together'; although he does qualify that this can be achieved only if 'there are more displays of Chinese culture'.

Although the importance of Chinatown as a focal point has diminished over the years, it does not mean that it has become totally obsolete. Chinatown is still a place that provides a resemblance of some aspects of the Chinese migrants' culture back home and that is food. Restaurants and Chinese supermarkets still retain their magnetic power for Chinese migrants,

223

regardless of profiles or generations. Due to the non-progressive nature of the catering industry as discussed in *Chapter Six* and the sustained demand for Chinese cuisine that is tempered by alternative coping strategies to alleviate homesickness which I will subsequently outline, my argument then is that Liverpool's Chinatown will persist, but it will *not flourish*.

7.2.1 Reduced Reliance on Chinatown for Homesickness Relief

  Chinese food and / or Chinese eating takes centre stage in many social activities that respondents partake whether it is in-house dining in one of the restaurants in Liverpool's Chinatown or in the comforts of their own homes. Another leisure activity that many interviewees highlight is computer-based activities. Across the categories of interviewees, the computer and the internet are core essentials and they are greatly relied upon by the respondents. Either it is for gaming, internet surfing or watching web-based Chinese movies and dramas, the computer or laptop is deemed indispensable in today's context. The computer is especially important for the computer literate younger migrants.

  SC: What do you in your recreation time?

  Interviewee 55: I would go on the internet. That's the only recreation. When I get home every day, I would go on the internet to catch up on my drama serials. If there is no internet, life would be so lonely. *(34 year old female Service and Administrative Worker)*

  As they greatly utilise the computer as a source of entertainment, it further reduces the necessity to look elsewhere, such as Liverpool's Chinatown, for leisure. For Interviewee 55 who works in the Chinese catering industry as a waitress, her only recreation is web-based activities. She relies on it so much that she would feel 'lonely' if she did not have access to internet. To a certain extent, computer-based leisure is considered anti-social because there is

no personal touch or face-to-face interaction with other individuals. Primarily based within the confines of one's room, the computer can be said to reduce the need to venture outdoors and engage in activities that may also potentially involve experiencing the Western culture or interfacing with the locals from the host society.

However, it must be qualified that this is not the case for those migrants from lower educational and / or socio-economic backgrounds who were interviewed for this research. For example, many of those working as cooks, assistant cooks or busboys in the kitchen do not have access to a computer. This is either due to cost constraints or that they are technologically not adept at IT. Furthermore, as highlighted in *Chapter Five*, Chinese associations are not places they would go to because of membership exclusivity as well as language differences. Even though they may not utilise the computer for entertainment, it does not mean they have a greater reliance on Liverpool's Chinatown either. Instead, they turn to casinos for leisure. This leads to a tendency for this group of people to withdraw further into their own circle of the Chinese community as they frequent casinos that are also patronised by many other Chinese people.

The advancement in ICT – particularly the internet and the telephone network – as well as air travel have made Chinese migrants less dependent on Liverpool's Chinatown as a place where they can find familiar faces and a place where they can seek solace from homesickness. In the past, being thousands of miles away from home, putting up with the miseries of separation from loved ones, the familiarity of one's ethnic group is of some comfort. Although food and sundries may not have been as readily available in the past as they are now, the physical presence of fellow Chinese people, may provide some form of relief from being nostalgic. This is even more important because of the state of technology at

that point in time. Even after steam ships made a major breakthrough in transnational travel, it took months for a letter from the Far East to reach the UK. However, in our present day context, it is not unusual to see a real-time moving image of a family member from home on one's computer, android or mobile phone. The use of web cameras and third generation mobile phones is increasingly widespread because the cost of doing so has nosedived drastically. Instantaneous contact with other individuals living thousands of miles away is made accessible even to those in the lower income strata.

SC: Whilst living in Liverpool, do you stay in touch with your friends and family back in China?

Interviewee 04 : Yah, absolutely, yah.

SC: How often do you keep in touch with them and through what means? Is it through the phone or MSN or?

Interviewee 04: Um, sometimes I er, you know there's a distance in hours, yah right?

SC: Is it eight hours?

Interviewee 04: Yah, eight hours. So when I was in the night, and they just wake up yah. So maybe we can have a talk on MSN and some video like that. Or um, I don't often make a phone call to my friends or family or just by MSN, QQ, something like that. Um, (smiles), my parents always tell me do not use the telephone it's expensive, just MSN it's ok. But um, maybe I think sometimes they are not convenient. When you use the MSN, you must use the laptop, or the computer right, the software. But when I use the telephone to call, it's very convenient. Sometimes I am on the streets and I miss my mum, I can give her a call. So, um, I choose the Liberal card. It's cheap. Just um, 4p per minute. So I will call my friends or family on some special festivals. I think they will be very happy to listen to my voice right, yah?

SC: Um, do they, do they send things to you?

Interviewee 04: (Laughs). Yah! They send me a lot of things!

SC: Can you tell me when do they send and what do they send?

Interviewee 04: Um, they send me, um, what kinds of things…some books, some food. You know like dry Chinese foodstuff, it's not very common in the UK. It's from hometown. And um, (pause), some things I think most of them are food. Yah, food. Maybe some times books. Um, they have send me things three times since I been, since I have

been here (laughs). Three times! And and, um, two boxes per time. The boxes are like this (gesticulates).

SC: Wow, that is big.

Interviewee 04: Yah, really. Some things like books and three times, boxes per time and by TNT express. TNT express. From China and maybe some company to go to post office to get it. But usually, um, one or two weeks when they send the package, when they send me things and um, leave a message on MSN. Say, 'ah we send you some things and you need to, you remember to take them like that'. It always feels warm because I can feel the love from my parents. *(20 year old female Student)*

As mentioned by Interviewee 04, she maintains close contact with her family from home not only via virtual means but also the physical transfer of goods. These items serve to reinforce her connectedness with ties she has with her kin. This is explored in greater detail in section 7.4..

7.3   Fragmentation of the Chinese Community within Liverpool Accentuated by Information Technology

ICT has also led to further in-grouping and hence intensification of the fragmentation of the Chinese community in particular between PRC and non-PRC people. For instance, many PRC migrants often maintain dual instant messaging accounts. A common one often cited is MSN. This tool is used for keeping in touch with non-PRC friends while Tencent QQ (QQ), a similar instant messaging tool, is the one they would use to keep in contact with their PRC counterparts. QQ is a software that was developed by a PRC national and many PRC respondents expressed the fact that it was greatly supported because it originated from one of their fellow nationals.

Interviewee 03: I seldom use Facebook. Perhaps visit it a couple of times per month. There is a Chinese version of Facebook and with school friends, that's the one I use more frequently. With Westerner friends, the main channels are MSN and the telephone. (*23 year old male Student*)

Furthermore, because Facebook is banned in China, it is not deemed necessary for PRC nationals to open Facebook accounts for building up their virtual social network. The reality of PRC Chinese keeping to themselves within Liverpool in the virtual realm extends to the transnational dimension too. The World Wide Web is a powerful tool in rooting overseas citizens to their families back home and to their own home countries. There are scores of Chinese news websites that PRC nationals in the UK can browse. Filled with news about home, it is thus understandable that PRC nationals keep themselves updated with the happenings at home. Even entertainment news from home is superimposed onto the PRC Chinese community's social scene within Liverpool.

Interviewee 17: I think most of the things that are in fashion in China would also be in vogue here. You may not be aware but for example, there are some very 'in' words at the moment in China. For instance, during a period of time, it was very common in China to say, 'I am not eating rice. I am eating loneliness'. I'm not sure if you have heard of this before?

SC: (Shakes head).

Interviewee 17: A lot of these kind of 'in' phrases are also used when talking amongst friends. With friends from Malaysia, Hong Kong, even though they may know Mandarin, they will not understand why people would burst out laughing upon hearing such phrases. And another example that was highly in fashion which I coincidentally overheard a friend of mine say, is 'I'm not writing a thesis, I'm writing loneliness'. The friends in China after hearing one of us here use it say that we are very advanced with the trends in China. It really feels that there is no distance between home and here at all. The words that are so trendy there now are being used by us over here. Another example is celebrity news. Presently, a celebrity that is in the news most of the time is 'Feng Jie'. I'm not sure you know her as well?

SC: (Shakes head).

Interviewee 17: She's a, you can't say she's especially ugly. She's a very confident woman who is looking for a potential marriage partner. She stipulates very stringent criteria for her partner and from audience's point of view; she is not much of a looker herself. She is very ugly but she is extremely confident of herself, looking for Beijing, Tsinghua university graduates etc. so a trendy Chinese phrase that came up was 'Xin Feng Jie, Zhao Zi Xin' (you will find confidence by having faith in Feng Jie). (*27 year old female Student)*

From the interview excerpt with Interviewee 17 from Shandong, PRC, the PRC Chinese community in Liverpool is not merely aware of the latest trends back in PRC, they actually *adopt* these trends here in Liverpool. "*The friends in China after hearing one of us here use it say that we are very advanced with the trends in China. It really feels that there is no distance between home and here at all. The words that are so trendy there now are being used by us over here.*" In essence, these PRC migrants have *transplanted* their societal norms from home onto their lives here in the UK.

The ramification of keeping in step with the trends back at home is a double-edged sword. Firstly, it reduces the virtual distance between overseas migrants and their families and friends back home. Being kept abreast of current affairs, migrants are able to engage their family and friends at home on many conversational topics with ease. Secondly, it strengthens the unity of the PRC community within Liverpool at the expense of further fragmenting the Chinese community in Liverpool. Sometimes, this fragmentation is generated *even before* the PRC migrants leave their home countries. This is particularly the case for students.

SC: Since you mentioned you were doing quite well at home, why did you agree to come overseas to further your studies?

Interviewee 17: Er, it's like this. Er, at first, I have never considered coming to the UK. Before I started work, I was very interested in English and have thought about going abroad but not to the UK. Because comparatively, the school fees here are much higher than in Australia, Singapore and Malaysia. The cost of living is also much higher and it is harder to apply here. I have a distant relative who was studying in Loughborough. After

graduation, she returned home and looked for a middleman. It was difficult to find a job then so she worked in the middleman (education) agency. And I was not working in my hometown then. My mum talked to her and as my mum has always had the intention to send me overseas but didn't find a suitable opportunity. After talking to that relative, she thought that the economic and financial situation would be affordable to support my going overseas. She discussed it with me. Initially, I did not agree but my mum persuaded me for a very long time. Eventually, it's such a rare opportunity that your parents are able to provide such a chance for you and compared to the friends around me, I felt so much more fortunate than them. So I resigned from my job and took the SATS exams etc.

SC: When you first came to Liverpool, did you already have a support network here? Did you already know a couple of Chinese friends or did you only make new friends after you arrived here?

Interviewee 17: Er, it's like this. When I first came, my boyfriend's very good friend has a friend who is at University here. Before I came, I was already put in touch with that friend. We talked a lot online and he told me not to worry about anything at all. He told me not to bring anything at all except my personal effects and some clothes. He will settle everything else and he will fetch me when I first arrive. I told him the time of my arrival at Manchester (airport) and he came to fetch me. He even settled my hostel accommodation issues. After settling me in for the first day, he brought me out the second day around Liverpool. Brought me shopping and introduced a few restaurants and eateries where I can have my meals. He accompanied me for more than a week and I slowly got familiar with this place. (*26 year old female Student*)

Before many PRC students leave for their overseas tertiary education, their respective

support systems in Liverpool have already been established. For XJTLU students, because it

is a tie-up between two institutions, the support is administratively instituted. For non-XJTLU

students such as Interviewee 17 above, some of them are in Liverpool through an agent. For

this group of people, their course, university and accommodation were settled for them and

preparations were well in place to ease their transition when they came over to the UK. For

those who are here on their own, the support and prior knowledge available to them are not

less comprehensive. Besides relying on friends and family who are already in the UK, the

internet is a useful engine they leverage. There is an overseas PRC students' webpage that is

set up and maintained by the students themselves. It comprises contributions from students

who are studying all over the world.

Interviewee 30: There is a website for people in China going overseas to study. It has snippets of news and at that time, they introduced a very popular, I can't remember now it's been so long…It was a website via which you can interact with different people, to link up with people who are going there to study or with people who are already there. And Liverpool University also had a website for overseas students, called 'Tong Xue Lu' (Students' Website). It's been ages since I logged onto that website I have forgotten…it's 'uker.net'. I have not logged onto that for a very long time. The website was very good and was filled with information then. It's basically created by people who have already been here. They did a write-up on various universities. It was created by students and at that time, I joined the site together with many other people who were bound for the UK. That was how I also got to know people coming to Liverpool. (*30 year old female Professional*)

Whether it is advice with regard to going overseas, living in a foreign land, light-hearted snippets about coping on one's own or more practical advice pertaining to a specific course, a specific university or campus, this information is readily available. In addition to merely providing advice and information, the website also allows for potential students to touch base with existing students in an institution. Therefore, even before one leaves for university, there is already a connection made virtually. They are able to engage further in virtual communications which will result in face-to-face interactions should the prospective student decide to go to a particular university eventually. In other words, their virtual networks transform into actual networks when they migrate overseas.

7.4   Transnational Coping Strategies and Segregation

Samers (2010) mentioned that the success of migrants' coping strategies in host societies will have a bearing on their sense of belonging and integration into host countries. He suggests that if migrants are coping well, they will have greater ownership of their host societies and thus be better integrated. There are however two distinct aspects of what Samers' (2010) 'successful coping strategies' refer to. Firstly, if migrants are successful in

231

coping by having acculturated – by assimilating the cultural traits of the host societies, it is assumed that they would have a greater sense of belonging of, and integration into, host societies. Secondly, coping well could also be achieved by migrants deploying adaptive strategies that are inimitable to their home countries. If this is the scenario, my argument then is that coping well will not necessarily lead to integration into the host society. Although I acknowledge that integration into host society and a sense of belonging to home country may not be mutually exclusive (because a person can have multiple identities), a constant utilisation of coping strategies related to their home countries is at the expense of a greater interface with host society. Indeed, a number of researchers have claimed that remaining close to one's culture of origin may actually retard adjustment to the new culture (Kim, 1990; Ying and Liese, 1991).

7.4.1 Keeping in Touch with Home Countries via Information Communications Technology

The world wide web has presented us with vast possibilities. News from all over the world is available at the click of a mouse and many migrants continually read up news from their home countries regardless of the length of time they have been in Liverpool.

Interviewee 07: I enjoy current news. I enjoy following up all the current news, what is going on but I have to say, mainly it's on my own country. Mainly it's on Malaysia current news. And I like to see how are things going on. It doesn't mean that I don't follow the international news, just that Malaysian news always catch my mind. In my laptop, you know, you have the…open the internet explorer or Firefox right? You have your homepage right? So I have like seven homepages in my Firefox and another seven homepages in my internet explorer. So every time in the morning, I just click and open seven homepages here and there. They are all different Malaysian newspapers on the internet and also different Malaysian bloggers on the internet, all the independent news on the internet. So once I open, all up. (*27 year old male Professional*)

This 27 year old male doctor from Malaysia exemplifies the interest most migrants have with the current affairs back in their countries of origin. The phenomenon of being able to access home news readily anywhere in the world is a double edged sword. On one hand, because of being able to constantly keep up to date with home news, there may be a sentiment of wanting to go back to their home countries because connections with home are kept alive and there may not be many reintegration issues since the transition will be partly eased with updates throughout one's departure from home. On the other hand, because of the accessibility of home news, it can be the case that a migrant feels at home anywhere. Regardless of their locations, they continue to feel involved in the happenings of their home countries. As they maintain close links with their home countries, they can feel at home anywhere. This type of situation is most apt of a cosmopolitan's lifestyle. As Hedetoft (2004) pointed out, they belong to the group of 'movers' who are engaged in a process of infinitely accumulating homes, networks and possessions. Indeed, because the migrant is constantly updating himself / herself with news from home, he / she will stay involved with the lives of his / her families and friends back in their home countries, in the process nurturing the networks he / she has accumulated.

IT has indeed proven to be a very useful tool in narrowing distance and therefore, segregating migrants from host societies. The tools of a computer, such as the web camera, enable migrants to keep in constant touch with friends and family back in their own home countries without migrants having to undertake the passage back to their home countries. With free internet telephone calls or very low rates of internet subscription charges, real time interaction with moving images is possible in our world today in which distances have virtually narrowed and links with home maintained, if not reinforced. IT is a tool that is not

only utilised by the younger generation, but it is also used by the seniors. The following is an interview excerpt with a 78 year old senior who is completely at ease when using the computer.

SC: How do you keep in touch with your family and children?

Interviewee 68: There's the computer now. Webcam! (Laughs). I webcam with them every day. Depending on who's online, I would catch hold of them and ask them how are they, how is their health, I would ask after them.

SC: You are very technologically advanced, for a 78 year old!

Interviewee 68: (Laughs). You have to find the opportunity. For example, my younger brother in Hong Kong. He has many friends and I have many classmates in Hong Kong too. They have a monthly gathering and I would ask when is the gathering. We need to keep up the interaction.

SC: Do you find yourself looking up news or watch TV about and from Vietnam or China?

Interviewee 68: I watch because I installed a satellite that receives Vietnamese channels. I also have a 'Zhong Yang Shi Tai' (Central Channel) and a Phoenix Channel and another is a Taiwanese Channel. Very impressive, isn't it? (*78 year old male Service and Administrative Worker*)

Interviewee 68 is a 78 year old male Vietnamese. He has been in the UK since 1980 and has been in Liverpool for 20 years. Despite having been in Liverpool for a long time, Interviewee 68 actively engages with his Vietnamese friends and families online. He 'catches hold' of them online and takes the initiative to find out about their lives in Vietnam. The fact that he is very comfortable with his lifestyle here alludes to the reality that he is coping well. However, as I have argued earlier, his coping well does not mean he has acculturated. By constantly engaging his social and familial contacts from home, he is actually deploying coping strategies that are unique to his home country. Therefore, coping well in terms of invoking strategies associated with origin countries may not lead to his sense of belonging to and integration into host society. As Cemalcilar, Falbo and Stapleton (2005) and Wilding (2006)

have found in their studies, ICT creates more opportunities for strengthening ties with those kin, for creating a stronger sense of shared social field and for the maintenance of home identity.

Interviewee 68 is one of the less common examples of IT usage by an elderly person. The conventional telephone is still a very important tool, especially for the older generation. Being less IT savvy, the phone is still crucial for them in maintaining contact with friends and relatives overseas. Although elder-friendly IT gadgets are increasingly common and although there are IT classes to equip seniors with the requisite IT skills, it is nevertheless more difficult for seniors to become very adept in IT.

SC: Do you keep in close touch with your family back in Myanmar and siblings in America and Singapore?

Interviewee 16: Yah, we talk quite often.

SC: Through what means?

Interviewee 16: Erm, phones….my parents, grandparents usually telephone because they don't really know how to use the computer. Mmm, my sisters usually….I'll see her online and she's on Facebook also so we just chat sometimes and my brothers and friends too. (*24 year old male Student*)

With low international phone charges, there is no additional impetus for seniors to master IT in order to interact with their overseas kin. As a result, although many migrants utilise IT to a large extent, they would still revert to using the phone when contacting their parents or grandparents. This is common across all categories of my research participants.

SC: You mentioned that you keep in touch with your family and friends in China?

Interviewee 54: Friends very seldom. Usually family. We haven't been back for ages. My father's health is also failing. My greatest dream this year is to get PR so that I can go back to visit my family. To see my parents but I'm really not sure. I do not know. It's difficult to say.

SC: When you communicate with them, do you usually use the phone or internet and webcam?

Interviewee 54: Er, my parents have no, er, are not very 'cultured'. So if we were to use the internet and webcam, we would have to first arrange a time and get our neighbour's children to help them with it. Most of the time, we would use the phone.

SC: Isn't it expensive to use the phone?

Interviewee 54: Using the computer isn't very good either. And it's not convenient. Phonecalls are still ok. Financially, it's still within our means. (*30 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

For irregular migrants, telephone communication is usually the main conduit via which they keep in touch with their family, and especially with elderly parents, back home in PRC. Apart from IT literacy issues, it is also because of affordability issues that the phone is relied upon. Very few families would have computer and internet access in a village and even if there is one in the household, it is in households with young children. Therefore, when irregular migrants want to carry out a video conversation with their families back in PRC, it is common for the latter to seek the help of their neighbours who own computers. The video call would then take place in the neighbour's home, assisted by the young children. Not only is the phone crucial for maintaining contact with family back home, it is also paramount for this group of people to keep in touch with the friends and family within the UK. Without doubt, the mobile phone is of critical importance to them. If there is a change of their phone numbers, the migrants would be very conscious of the need to update family and friends of the change here and abroad. The heavy reliance on mobile phones for this group of individuals was highlighted in Pai's (2008) ethnographic research on irregular Chinese

migrants in the UK. It has been found that the mobile phone is very important for them. The long list of stored contacts which is accumulated over the years from various places of work all over the UK is vital. They safeguard it because they never know when they would need to tap one of their contacts for future job or livelihood assistance.

Generally, the majority of irregular migrants from PRC whom I interviewed and whom I had access to through working in the catering industry as well as through social gatherings are from specific regions in mainland China. They have fewer economic resources and one of the major factors spurring their move overseas is financial difficulty. With the motivation to eke out a better living, they are driven to earn as much money as they can so that they can remit money home. Remittances are generally defined as the portion of migrants' earnings sent from their destination to origin countries for families and their communities (Sorensen, 2004). Remittances encapsulate the array of money, goods and gifts (Adams, 2007). Other definitions that have emerged include Social Remittances such as ideas and cultural practices (Levitt, 1998) and Technological Remittances such as knowledge and skills of technology and the technology itself (Nichols, 2002).

SC: I have a Fujianese friend who showed me a DVD of the house they are building back home with the money they remitted back. Is this the situation in Fujian?

Interviewee 54: This is…my parents' generation would feel that having big houses would bring them great glory. If you go overseas and are not able to build those houses, the perception would be that you have gone there to gamble away your money, you are not a good kid.

SC: Do you feel an obligation to remit money to them?

Interviewee 54: We would remit money. My parents put me as their priority. My parents feel that it is important to bear sons and to build a big house. Many people in my hometown are like that. They go overseas to firstly, repay debts, secondly, build a big house back home and thirdly, leave some money for their future generations. They may have to work for 10 or 20 years before they can be reunited with their family. This is extremely tough.

SC: Are there any pressure from your in-laws?

Interviewee 54: Praise the Lord, my mother-in-law is very good. She and her whole family, including my husband, are Christians. I am not and my parents are not. My mother-in-law is very understanding and doesn't give me any financial pressure at all. However, my mother is different. She still wants her big house. (*30 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

And one way in which the money received is used is for building houses. Interviewee 54's priorities to accumulate enough savings so that she can build a house in PRC for her parents is common amongst many of these migrants. Chinese people who leave their villages are said to have only succeeded if they are able to remit money home for their elderly parents. Otherwise, they would have been deemed to have failed in their overseas endeavours.

Similar to the Brazilian community in Galway, Ireland, the migrants regularly remit money and goods to their home country for the betterment of the lives of their families back home as well as for themselves when they eventually return (Maher, 2010). The difference between Maher's (2010) and my findings lies in the beneficiary of the more luxurious accommodation. For the Brazilians, there is the non-altruistic motive in sending large sums of money home. A bulk of it is used to build big houses for the migrants' eventual return home. However, for Chinese people whom I interviewed, the intended beneficiary of these houses is different.

Interviewee 02: Most houses where I live in China are big. Eight out of ten are big. The exterior is impressive but they are only shells. Most people will not have enough money to furnish the inside. They do it for face value. But then again, only my husband's parents are living inside you don't really need to do up all the rooms. It's a waste of money anyway. You can do the interior slowly, over time. So we work hard here and send the money back to build them a house. Next time, my children can inherit the house and if they go back to China, at least they will have some asset. *(28 year old female Service and Administrative Worker)*

The houses that are built are for their ageing parents in their home countries and not necessarily for themselves because most of them do not have the intention of returning in the short term. Rather, they are content with continuing to work in the UK for the sake of their children's education. In the longer term, their children would inherit the houses. Should their children want to return to PRC in future, leaving them a house would help their children secure a certain amount of capital and hopefully they would be able to move up the rungs of society. In other words, by going overseas, many irregular migrants are trying to break out of their poverty cycle and trying to push their children up the social ladder.

7.4.2   Reverse Remittances

Remittances home are featured expansively in academic research but '*reverse remittances*' are often missing from these studies. Remittances are often used for purposes of improving family members' standard of living back home but we have neglected the fact that family members send things to the migrants with the same objectives too. In my research, I came to appreciate that migrants rely heavily on information and goods that are sent from their home countries to their destination countries. Information and news is one such flow.

SC: Do you find yourself actively looking out for news of Hong Kong or of Malaysia?

Interviewee 12: Um, not really. Because uh, I don't have to do it actively actually (laughs) because what happens is my mum, my mum keeps me up-to-date. When we talk, she will tell me what is happening back home and she will also send me all these news articles through, my email, yah, for me to read. (*24 year old female Student*)

Through phone conversations, parents supply their children with news from home and, in a way, these frequent news updates serve to continually tie the children back to their own home countries. The sense of dislocation from their countries of origin would thus be minimised. Potentially, this has some ramifications on migrants' sense of belonging to their home countries and the so-called 'nostalgia pull' (Zwingmann, 1973).

Apart from information and news, physical goods are sent to migrants in Liverpool too. Common items that are received include food stuff from their hometown. Although some of these food items can be found in Liverpool's Chinatown, those that are sent are usually relatively more expensive food items. Furthermore, from my various social interactions at parties, celebrations, informal meet-ups etc with interviewees and their social circles from 2007 to 2010, I came to appreciate that family members at home might also send things such as pressure cookers and Mandarin Digital Video Discs (DVDs) for children's educational purposes. Educational Mandarin DVDs are not readily available in Liverpool and neither are Chinese vegetable seeds. These items are sometimes requested by the migrants so that they can make their lives in the UK more similar to what they would normally experience in their home countries. Money that migrants make and send home is thus not wholly used to better the lives of family members back in the country of origin. Part of it is used to purchase items, albeit through family's help, that they want air freighted over to them in order for the migrants to simulate a more comfortable lifestyle *for themselves* here.

Apart from physical goods, Nichols (2002) spoke of technological remittances. In terms of reverse remittances, technological help and advice is offered by family and friends in the home country to migrants in the destination country as we see below.

SC: So you find there is no distance at all?

Interviewee 17: Absolutely no distance at all…Some time back, there was some problem with my computer and I was particularly upset because I do not know anything about repairing computers. And I used Skype to talk to my boyfriend as he is in the computer line and was transnationally helping to fix the problem on my computer. At that time I really think the internet is such a marvellous thing. I do not have to spend any money and could get my computer fixed. And he was helping me fix the computer from so far away. The feeling one gets really is that there is absolutely no distance at all. We may feel homesick now and then but compared to yesteryears, it is so much better now. (*27 year old female Student*)

An example of how IT has bridged distances was narrated by Interviewee 17, a 27 year old female pre-Masters programme student from Shandong. Her boyfriend helped her to de-bug her computer from miles away. Being in different time zones has not deterred the reverse remittances being made at a most timely juncture. Due to the instantaneous help received, she felt as if they were in the same place. Technological advancements have indeed drastically narrowed distances in today's context. Maintaining strong and easily accessible links with home, many migrants today therefore do not feel as if they have uprooted. There is thus little impetus for them to desire 'sinking roots' in the destination countries, as a result, lessened deepening of their stake in, and ownership of, host societies. Consequentially, IT has further entrenched their segregation from host society.

7.4.3   Air Travels and Familial Cultural Preservation Strategies

Mentioned in *Chapter Five*, the occupational profiles of Chinese migrants into Liverpool have changed over the years. A parallel development to the varied occupational backgrounds is the increase in the number of women who have migrated here. Back in the seafaring days, very few Chinese women came to the UK. Today, women migrants are common. Not only is there an increase in the number of women migrants, we see more women migrants who are

not economic migrants, but are in fact accompanying their husbands and partners in the latter's overseas career / education pursuits. Although not a recent phenomenon, there is the occurrence of the 'trailing spouse' (Bonney and Love, 1991; Halfacree, 1995; Li and Findlay, 1999). In an increasingly globalised world, it is commonplace for international travel to be part of a job package. A common trend is that of women following their husbands in their international travels. Between husband and wife, the opportunity cost of a particular spouse giving up his / her career to accompany the other is determined. The husbands are usually, but not always, drawing relatively higher salaries and working in comparatively better occupations. Therefore, it is more common for the wife to be the trailing spouse. Indeed, as many studies have found, women are more likely to be trailing spouses and migrate with their husbands in favour of the men's career (Mincer, 1978; Markham and Pleck, 1986; Bonney and Love, 1991; Bielby and Bielby, 1992; Cooke, 2003).

SC: And then why did you decide to come?

Interviewee 49: Come, ahem, I came with my husband yeah because he took on a job at the university.

SC: What are some of the things that you do in your leisure and recreation time?

Interviewee 49: Oh, yeah actually I would cook everything. Ahem because I find that we've travelled a lot and I find that food is very important to us in that food helps me to…you know helps me to remember my…you know, it helps me to like re-enact my past, my heritage, to my daughter. (*43 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

An offshoot of the phenomenon of trailing spouses is that often, women such as Interviewee 49 are also usually the proactive ones to undertake cultural preservation strategies. They are therefore instrumental in rooting the family to their home countries and in inculcating cultural values to their children, for example, such as creating food dishes from home. In addition to

the trailing spouses depicted in the paragraphs above, there are also astronaut families in which one of the parent or both parents live apart from their children.

On other occasions, children are sent abroad on their own. Even then, this caretaking arrangement and the preservation of cultural values would sometimes *extend* beyond the nuclear family. Many Hong Kongers would also entrust their children to their adult relatives who are already in the destination countries. On top of looking after their own children, these adult relatives would also care for their nephews and nieces who are sent here to receive a Western education. For well-to-do families, living apart from their children is their strategy to enjoy the best of both worlds – good education for their children and commensurable job positions in their home countries.

> Interviewee 64: Of course my first, my goal is I hope my children can go to a better university, find a good job. The reason I come is because of my children. If I have one child, I would stay in Hong Kong. But I have three. Hong Kong is very competitive to find a job, to find a good school. (*45 year old female Service and Administrative Worker*)

Especially for Hong Kongers, such as Interviewee 64 who was formerly an accountant, sending their children overseas to pre-University boarding schools in Canada, the United States and the UK is a phenomenon that is not new (Waters, 2002, 2005). Middle class families or families in which the parent / parents have tertiary education and have the means to send their children overseas would do so. This choice is undertaken because of the highly competitive educational system in Hong Kong. There are only five universities in Hong Kong and places are limited in the more prestigious universities. Instead of enrolling into alternative educational institutions, financially well-off parents would choose to send their children for an overseas education with the hope of levelling their playing field when the

latter enter the job market after graduation. For themselves, the more well-off parents often desire to make the UK their second home but only for retirement. Even then, they want to be constantly involved in the relationships with friends and families back home. As a result, they would undertake travels to and from the home countries. They spend half their time here in Liverpool and half their time back in their home countries.

In astronaut families, the well-off Hong Kong parents who have more attractive job opportunities in their home countries send their children for a more expensive overseas education while they continue working back home. Earning more in their respective professions at home, they choose to continue in their jobs rather than to give it up to accompany their children overseas. However, they do not compromise the importance of inculcating Asian cultural values into their children either by undertaking frequent air travels or seeking child-minding assistance from overseas family members. For less well-off families that are separated because of economic reasons, the priority accorded to ingraining in their children Asian cultural values is similarly upheld. For these families, parents are the ones who leave for the UK and their children are left behind. Channelling all their energies into work, it is a more feasible arrangement if they left their children with their parents or parents-in-law back home. For those who bore children in the destination country, they would not rule out the option of sending their children back home to be cared for by the latter's grandparents.

SC: You applied for your mother to come over?

Interviewee 44: I applied for her to come on a travel visa. She came when my child was two months old and she stayed for five months up till the Chinese New Year period when we all went back together. Initially, we didn't want to bring the child back but the nanny's own children were in Secondary School already and she had to bring her children for tuition classes, for swimming lessons. She foresaw that she would be very busy and might not be able to manage. Furthermore, because she did not take care of the child for five

244

months, she was afraid that the child would be unfamiliar with her and it would be difficult caring for the child. We tried to find another nanny but really couldn't find any suitable ones so my mother suggested that she would bring the child up in China and we could apply for her to come over again with the child.

SC: So how long has the child been with your mother now?

Interviewee 44: They went back in February, now it's more than three months.

SC: Do you miss your child?

Interviewee 44: Of course! I really regretted my decision then. At that point in time, I needed to work. My husband would have one less helper and will need to employ someone to help him. There was no other choice. After I got back from China, I realised how very much I missed my child. But I think it's better that my mother takes care of my child rather someone else. My child is after all her grandchild and I can be fully assured that she will take great care of my child. Every time when I talk to my mother, she would reassure me that the child is doing very well. She would tell me to concentrate on my work and to take care of my health. *(31 year old female Service and Administrative Worker)*

Furthermore, the working parents, such as Interviewee 44, can be assured that their children are well taken care of and that they are being inculcated the Asian values. In a sense, these parents who left their children back home for the time being do not feel that they have made a wrong choice in their respective life stages. The importance of an Asian upbringing has not been compromised because the relatives help to provide an environment in the home countries for inculcating the values the parents desire while the parents focus on their work in the destination countries. With this overriding objective of rooting their children to their home countries, many less well-off parents have no qualms about leaving their children back home while they ventured overseas.

For some of the irregular migrants whose main priority is to earn as much money as possible in the UK, many desire to obtain permanent residency status in the UK and travel back to PRC once in a while to see their family members. In contrast, the rest of the interviewed migrants, however, are able to do so easily. If financial constraints are not a

problem, many migrants usually undertake air travels back home at least once a year. When they do so, they would usually bring back with them, things from home. These could range from daily necessities to foodstuff that they enjoy. Having familiar items and comfort food alleviates homesickness. It has also been found that with the greater accessibility of air travel, migrants, especially professionals and some of the service and administrative workers, travel to their home countries during key festivities. One such festival is the Chinese New Year. If possible, migrants would return home for the celebrations. Engaging in such events with their family once again minimises the distance between these migrants and their family. Although they may meet up with the rest of the extended family only once or twice a year, they may not have missed out much on one another's lives since it is increasingly the norm for extended families which stay in the same country to meet only during key events.

Additionally, with the rise of the PRC, the significance of the Mandarin language has risen. English is still the lingua franca of the world but increasingly, parents are recognising that they need to deepen their children's knowledge in the Mandarin language and culture. For instance, one of the interviewees who is from PRC and married to an Englishman in Liverpool has decided to move back to the PRC for the sake of their three year old daughter.

> Interviewee 59: You know, we think going back to China to live is probably much better for my child, because she doesn't speak Mandarin much now. Er, there is not enough environment, and I'm the only person. Actually I got only one more friend who speaks Mandarin. And she doesn't come often. And we don't meet up often, so never get to…That's why, that's the reason why I always call home, and I put the loudspeaker on so that she can listen. Although she doesn't speak it, but she will still understand a lot. And, um, education over there is really good for the foundation. And plus the family, and you know, the, that sort of er, principle wise, I think Chinese people have a better traditional values and things like that. Although it changed a lot in China, but for her, er, it's quite dreadful to see some young people here, what they do. So for me, when she's young, probably we need to go to China, just to give her a little bit of a solid Chinese education first. And later when comes over, you know, when she comes over, say when she is fifteen or something, go to university also. (*34 year old female Service and Administrative worker*)

Interviewee 59 (from Shanghai) wants her daughter's Mandarin language ability to be robust and her Chinese cultural values ingrained from a young age. When her child is much older, she would then contemplate moving back to Liverpool. Apart from totally uprooting the entire family, some families would undertake the strategy of visiting their home countries regularly so that their children would be in touch with their cultural roots. In such instances, these cultural preservation strategies are often undertaken by the mothers. The women would bring their children home during the school holidays while the men stayed behind to continue working. This is the case especially when the men's elderly parents have passed away. Otherwise, the visitations home would usually involve the whole family if the husband's parents were still alive and if he was on good terms with his siblings. With air travel being made affordable to a wider segment of the population, international passages can be easily made to facilitate one's keeping in touch with one's roots. In the process, homesickness when they are overseas is alleviated, and as a result, a reliance on Liverpool's Chinatown for familiar cultural tangibles and intangibles is ameliorated.

7.5   Conclusion

Due to the ease of getting news, information and goods from home, many migrants in fact do not feel that they are very alienated from their countries of origin since being away. Regular interactions with family members aside, many of them undertake air travels home and cultural values and connections with one's hometown are preserved and / or reinforced in this way. Wilding (2006) found that the introduction of ICT did create more opportunities for keeping in touch with those kin, and for creating a stronger sense of shared social field. The heightened awareness of physical distance between these individuals made the relationships

247

feel much more intimately connected and thus contributes to a stronger sense of connectedness between them. Akin to remittances sent towards migrants' countries of origin, the reality of goods and items sent from home countries to the host nations is often ignored in many academic studies. From this research, it has been found that 'reverse remittances' are equally, if not more widespread for individuals across all occupational groups. These items play important roles in helping migrants better adapt to their new environments through the access of familiar items, usually food items, in a foreign land. Samers (2010) mentioned that the success of migrants' coping strategies will impact their sense of belonging and extent of integration into host societies. It is assumed that Samers (2010) correlates successful coping strategies with a sense of belonging and integration to host society. However, it is unclear what the 'nature' of coping strategies Samers (2010) is referring to. My research found that first generation Chinese migrants are coping well. However, their coping strategies are not derived from harnessing tools of the host society, i.e. having acculturated. Instead, their strategies are derived from resources that are unique to their home countries and advancements in ICT and air travels have greatly facilitated this. A constant utilisation of coping strategies related to their home countries is at the expense of a greater interface with host society and wider communities in Liverpool. Indeed, a number of researchers have claimed that remaining close to one's culture of origin may actually retard adjustment to the new culture (Kim, 1990; Ying and Liese, 1991). The migrants are coping well but contrary to Samers' (2010) argument, they are in fact segregated from the host society. The Chinese community is also fragmented within itself. The fragmentation and segregation have intensified with the advancement in technology in our contemporary world. Because of the ease of accessing familiar cultural tangibles and intangibles via ICT and air travels, the reliance on Liverpool's Chinatown for homesickness relief has thus diminished. Coupled

with the non-progressive nature of the catering industry, Liverpool's Chinatown will thus persist but it will not flourish.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

Chapter Eight – Conclusion

  This research set out primarily to provide an in-depth understanding of the state of the first generation Chinese community in Liverpool and its changing connection to Liverpool's Chinatown. In also studying Liverpool's Chinatown, a secondary objective is to explore Chinatown's history to date, in order to achieve a holistic account of the development of Liverpool's Chinatown. There are therefore two parts to my thesis – the historical and the contemporary portions. Undergirding the analyses in my research throughout the two segments is a central focus on the agency of the Chinese community. In the historical component of my thesis, I argued that the construction and re-constructions of Liverpool's Chinatown is a product of Western political domination that is motivated by economic considerations. In the contemporary portion of my thesis, I argued that Liverpool's Chinatown, characterised by Chinese associations and Chinese cuisine, will continue to persist but not flourish. The persistence of Liverpool's Chinatown is associated with a Chinese community that is not only fragmented within itself but also segregated from mainstream society. This fragmentation within and segregation without are accentuated by the advancements in ICT and air travel.

  In Anderson's 1995 seminal study, she puts forth the argument that Vancouver's Chinatown is a product of Western political domination driven by Western cultural hegemony. Although she factored in the actions of Chinese leaders in manoeuvring the continual power negotiations, this was considered to a much reduced extent. It could be because Anderson did not have access to Chinese sources to take into account Chinese agency thus preventing her from delivering a more comprehensive appreciation of Vancouver's Chinatown. As a result, the Chinese community is portrayed as being passive and only reacts to developments

imposed upon them. As I also analysed Chinese archival sources for the historical findings in my thesis, I was able to accord sufficient agency to the Chinese in Liverpool. Therefore, we see that the power assertions of the White community are contested, negotiated and embraced by the Chinese community at varying points in time. The perspectives from Chinese actors are vital not only for appreciating how Liverpool's Chinatown has evolved thus far, but also for casting insights into how Liverpool's Chinatown is projected to develop. Similarly, the agency of the Chinese people continues to be the focus for my contemporary analyses.

Therefore, contrary to Lee's (1949) hypothesis that we will witness the demise of Chinatowns over time, my argument then is that the outlook is neither pessimistic nor optimistic. In other words, Liverpool's Chinatown will persist but not flourish. In considering the developmental pathways of American Chinatowns, Lee (1949) overlooked the role of first generation Chinese migrants in impacting the evolution of Chinatowns. The important role of first generation Chinese migrants is also not factored in studies by more recent scholars such as Laguerre (2000) and Lai (2009). Laguerre (2000) and Lai (2009) put forth the idea of themeparkisation for Chinatowns. Their focus on Chinatown as an artificial construct leveraged by hegemonic social groups overlooks the everyday lived experiences of Chinatown by Chinese people. My emphasis on first generation Chinese migrants and especially for the modern day analysis, ordinary Chinese people, makes it possible to accord agency to the Chinese community thus enabling me to deliver not only an in-depth understanding of the Liverpool Chinese community and its changing connection with Liverpool's Chinatown as a primary aim, but also as a secondary objective, a holistic and realistic account of the development of Liverpool's Chinatown.

Why a study on Liverpool's Chinese community and Chinatown at all? Apart from the intense changes that Liverpool's Chinatown has experienced over the years, Britain presently has the greatest number of Chinatowns in Europe (Luk, 2008). Despite the prominence of Chinatowns in Britain and especially of Liverpool Chinatown's historical significance, Chinatowns in the US, Canada, Caribbean and the West Indies have received relatively more academic attention in contrast to Chinatowns in Europe, and specifically, the UK. Therefore, a study of Liverpool's Chinatown helps to plug this lacuna in academic discourse. Understanding the historical inception of Liverpool's Chinatown, how it has evolved over the years and how it might possibly change in years to come will cast some insights for the development of other Chinatowns worldwide that have conditions similar to Liverpool's.

With an appreciation of the development of Liverpool's Chinatown, a deeper knowledge of the Chinese community has also been achieved. By expanding our lens to look at the first generation Chinese migrants in general, we overcome the criticism of the study being too specific / unrepresentative by considering only the association of a particular group with Chinatown (e.g. workforce in the Chinese catering industry). The varied profiles of Chinese migrants over a long time period aside, there are distinct groups within the community at a particular point in time too. From seafaring to hand launderette businesses to predominantly ethnic catering today, Chinese people are not only engaged in the Chinese food business presently, there are also professionals and international students who were once not a significant category within the first generation Chinese migrants in the 1800s / early 1900s. We have also seen that there are many internal diversities within the Chinese community. This reinforces the importance of not essentialising a community for robust inquiries. This research has also illuminated the segregation of a minority group in a host society. With technological advancement, the segregation may be intensified. The meaning of 'home',

one's identity and sense of belonging will take on new dimensions. The governments of host countries will have to contend with integration issues and devise new strategies to meet the emerging challenges of an increasingly globalised world. To recap, this research is an inquiry into the following questions:

(1) How is the development of Liverpool's Chinatown situated within the wider, Western-dominated culture of the city?

(2) What are the roles of 'traditional' Chinese activities (e.g. Chinese community centres, catering industry) based in and around Liverpool's Chinatown in Liverpool's contemporary Chinese community?

(3) Given Liverpool's changing relationship to the People's Republic of China, how are these patterns changing over time?

Based on archival sources, it has been argued that Liverpool's Chinatown is a product of Western political domination and economic factors underlie the power relations. Historically, prevailing worldwide xenophobia and sensationalist journalism allowed some politicians to exploit concern about Chinese immigration to advance their political agendas amidst economic uncertainties. Economic considerations continue to be the driver of subsequent developments of Liverpool's Chinatown. After the world wars, public optimism contributed to an emerging consumer demand for 'exotic' ethnic food experiences and the Chinese catering industry thus boomed. It has continued to be the dominant economic characterisation of Liverpool's Chinatown today. Deviating from the earlier historical observation of perpetual tensions between the host society and the Chinese community, more recent

developments have resulted in co-operations between the two groups. With a mutually-shared objective to sow and reap economic gains from a rising China, the host society and minority group are coming together to collaborate. We thus witnessed strategic essentialism not only by Chinese people of their 'Chineseness' but also by Britain of her links and historical associations with China. These findings in the later stages of Liverpool Chinatown's development have tended to focus on the relationships between leaders / persons in positions of power from both the White and Chinese communities. The subsequent paragraphs will summarise the findings with a greater focus on the contemporary *ordinary* first generation Chinese migrants who have an equally important role in influencing the evolution of Liverpool's Chinatown.

Defining Chinatown is fraught with many difficulties as highlighted in the literature review so my interviewees' ascriptions of Liverpool's Chinatown are thus used as lenses for analysing their everyday experiences in order for conclusions about what these mean for Liverpool's Chinese community and the development of Liverpool's Chinatown to be drawn. In my participants' mental frames of Liverpool, Chinatown is positioned within a geographical location, the two recurring linkages being Chinese food and Chinese associations. Chinese associations can be broadly categorised into two groups – those that were established in the early 1900s and those that were established in the 1980s and 1990s. The earlier generation of Chinese associations admit members based on lineage (predominantly Cantonese speakers) whilst the later generation of Chinese associations have more open membership criteria and may also render services to non-members as well as non-Chinese. Many, if not all, of the Chinese associations today are helmed by first generation Chinese migrants.

Although some associations are not actively renewing leadership and may thus decline over time, some are re-aligning themselves to stay relevant in the present day. New organisations that have been established can also retard or reverse the declining fate of Chinese associations as a whole. However, generally, Chinese associations are facing a decline considering the majority of migrants' migration motivations. Many of the better-equipped migrants who can take on leadership roles in Chinese associations have a sojourning mindset and have neither stake in, nor ownership of, Chinese associations. In other words, this group of individuals is not as closely connected to Liverpool's Chinese associations. Additionally, because of the fragmentation within the community, many of these interviewees' needs are served by platforms other than Chinese associations. Those migrants with more resources generally access mainstream services and facilities and those less well-off non-Cantonese speaking migrants have developed support networks albeit outside the physical confines of Liverpool's Chinatown. From this perspective, a diminishing pool of Chinese people has a stake in, and ownership of, Liverpool's Chinatown. I therefore suggest that Liverpool's Chinatown, as characterised by Chinese associations, will thus die out.

The other connection interview respondents for this study made for Liverpool's Chinatown was Chinese food. The Chinese catering industry in many studies has been postulated as regressive, exploitative sites, typified by poor working environments, incommensurable compensation and a lack of staff welfare. However, my research found that many participants in this line of work purposefully chose to work in this industry. Although structural imperatives such as the difficulty with finding mainstream jobs exist, many of them chose to work in the ethnic cuisine industry because it afforded them a lifestyle that they desired – primarily to make as much money as they could overseas.

Nevertheless, due to the nature of the job duties and work culture, many of them have limited, if any, opportunity to meaningfully mingle with members of the host society and to learn about and appreciate the Western culture. Even for professionals and students who have more chances to integrate into the Western way of life, the reality is that they are segregated from the host society. Apart from incidents of racial discrimination, many Chinese migrants chose to socialise with fellow Chinese due to 'comfort level' and a feeling of familiarity. In their gatherings, Chinese dining experience, regardless of it being held in a Chinese restaurant or replicated in their own homes, features prominently. The demand from the Chinese community for Chinese cuisine as an epitome of cultural familiarity will thus be a key driver in ensuring the persistence of the Chinese catering industry. However, because of the non-progressive labour practices in the industry, I predict that Liverpool's Chinatown, as characterised by Chinese food, will persist but not flourish.

The widespread accessibility and usage of IT have caused greater fragmentation within the Chinese community, resulting in a PRC Chinese – non-PRC Chinese division. Some of the IT tools used by PRC Chinese people such as QQ are peculiar to PRC Chinese people. Moreover, because Facebook, a widely used virtual social networking media, is banned in PRC, PRC Chinese people do not make use of that website. Additionally, migrants' segregation from the host society was further exacerbated with the tools of ICT. Being able to maintain constant and timely contact with friends and families back in their own home countries resulted in migrants not feeling the distance despite being thousands of miles away from their places of origin. Furthermore, the increasingly affordable air travels have made trips to and from home countries relatively commonplace. For those who have fewer financial resources, 'reverse remittances' in the sense of goods, information and knowledge being sent to the destination countries from their home countries, have helped to alleviate migrants' homesickness and

smoothed their transition to another land. In fact, many of them have transplanted their lifestyles back in their home countries, onto their lives in Liverpool. As a result, with the ease of feeling at home away from home in their own places of residence and becoming more independent, Liverpool Chinatown's function as a provider of a resemblance of cultural familiarity is not as significant as before when ICT use was less widespread.

Having summarised the findings from, and implications of, this research in the preceding paragraphs, it is appropriate to reflect on the limitations of this particular study as well as the possible future areas of work. A limitation of this piece of research is that it has not considered another category of first generation Chinese migrants – the irregular migrants. Some of them come to the UK without having gone through the legal channels. Some of them might also have breached their visa conditions and overstayed. These individuals also make up the first generation Chinese migrants and the research would have been more comprehensive if they had been approached for interviews. Additionally, irregularities / illegalities are bound to be present in any facet of society and it is thus not a surprise that I have come to be aware of some of them throughout the research process. However, because the ethical guidelines stipulate that I cannot discuss these materials, this information unfortunately has to be disregarded and the richness of this information therefore cannot be usefully harnessed in my analyses.

Going ahead, there are various other areas that can be explored for contribution towards academic discourse on Chinatowns. The contemporary portion of this piece of research has taken a focus on the perspectives of ordinary Chinese migrants. A greater number of Chinese leaders can also be approached for a comparative study on the differences / similarities between these groups. This study can then cast insights into possible disjoints between the

Chinese leaders and ordinary Chinese people and therefore, highlight areas for development which may benefit Liverpool Chinatown's progress. The British-born Chinese population is also another group of individuals that can be further studied. Having been brought up and socialised in British society, these 'Chinese' people may have very different outlooks and perspectives from first generation Chinese migrants. An in-depth scrutiny of their educational, social and economic situations can illuminate the inroads made in integration into British society and its impact on the future of Liverpool's Chinatown. Additionally, the emerging exclusive support system outside of Liverpool's Chinatown comprising of and supporting the Fujianese is a very interesting area to explore. Understanding the rational, dynamics and implications of the support system will be very useful for Chinese leaders as well as the host society. Finally, apart from concentrating on the Chinese populace, a separate study on the perspectives of the host community – leaders as well as ordinary British people – will complement the study on Chinatowns greatly. Chinatowns as a physical place inhabit an area within their society and their perspectives are equally significant in influencing the re-constructions and future developments of Liverpool's Chinatown.

APPENDICES

RECRUITMENT ADVERTISEMENT

<u>Advertisements in mass email that were sent via administrators of Universities' international student bodies and student societies</u>

International Chinese Students

I am a researcher at the University of Liverpool who is studying the cultural geographies of Liverpool's Chinatown. I am interested to find out your day-to-day living experiences in Liverpool and in what way, if at all, is Liverpool's Chinatown relevant to you.

All information you provide at the interview, lasting around an hour, will be kept strictly confidential and all details will be anonymised so as to protect the identity of my interviewees.

If you would like to be involved in my research, I would be most grateful if you could email me at <u>s.soon@liverpool.ac.uk</u>

Thank you.

呼吁所有国际华籍学生

我是利物浦大学的研究者；研究课题是利物浦唐人街的文化地理。我想了解你在利物浦的生活经历和利物浦唐人街对你有什么关联。

你在长达一个小时左右的访谈所提供的资料和你个人资料都会完全保密并是无名的。这是为了保护受访问者的身份。

如果你愿意受访问，我将非常感激你可以跟我联络。

电邮址：s.soon@liverpool.ac.uk

谢谢。

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Study title: A 'Chinatown' system? Cultural geographies of Liverpool's 'Chinatown'.

Researchers: Ms Su-Chuin Soon (Investigator)
Dr Johanna Waters (Supervisor)
Dr Richard Powell (Supervisor)

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and feel free to ask us if you would like more information or if there is anything that you do not understand. We would like to stress that you do not have to accept this invitation and should only agree to take part if you want to.

Thank you for reading this.

Purpose of study
The aim of this study is to understand the evolution of Liverpool's 'Chinatown' – a system that incorporates different spaces: ideological, actualised and transnational.

Why have I been chosen to take part?
You have been asked to participate because Liverpool has the oldest Chinatown in Europe and migrants play a key role in shaping the development of Liverpool's' Chinatown.

Do I have to take part?
Participation in the research is voluntary, and should you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any point during the interview.

What will happen if I take part?
If you decide to take part, you will be interviewed.

The interviews, lasting about an hour each, will be conducted by the student investigator, Su-Chuin Soon, and will take place at mutually agreed time and venue.

Payments
No payment will be available.

Are there any risks in taking part?
There are no known physical, mental or commercial risks associated with the research.

Are there any benefits in taking part?
There are no intended benefits in taking part in the research.

What if I am unhappy or if there is a problem?
If you are unhappy, or if there is a problem, please feel free to let us know by contacting Dr. Johanna Waters (waters@liverpool.ac.uk) and we will try to help. If you remain unhappy or have a complaint which you feel you cannot come to us with then you should contact the Research Governance Officer on 0151 794 8290 (ethics@liv.ac.uk). When contacting the Research Governance Officer, please provide details of the name or description of the study

(so that it can be identified), the researcher(s) involved, and the details of the complaint you wish to make.

Will my participation be kept confidential?
The materials collected will be stored and later analysed. The data will be anonymised and no personal identifying data will be stored. Only the student researcher will have access to the data, which will be stored on her personal computer.

What will happen to the results of the study?
The results of the present study will be submitted as a Ph.D. thesis and a copy kept in the University of Liverpool Library.

What will happen if I want to stop taking part?
You may withdraw at any time without having to give a reason. If you decide to withdraw before the completion of the interview, any data collected will not be used and will be electronically deleted.

Who can I contact if I have further questions?
Please address any immediate concerns or questions to the student investigator.

Ms. Su-Chuin Soon
Department of Geography,
University of Liverpool,
Roxby Building,
Liverpool
L69 7ZT
s.soon@liv.ac.uk

If you have any further questions that cannot be addressed by Su-Chuin, please contact:

Dr. Johanna Waters
Department of Geography,
University of Liverpool,
Roxby Building,
Liverpool
L69 7ZT
waters@liverpool.ac.uk

参与者咨询表

研究课题: 唐人街制度？利物浦的唐人街文化地里。

研究者: 孙淑君 (学生研究者)
Dr Johanna Waters (督察官)
Dr Richard Powell (督察官)

你将被邀请参与这项研究。在你决定是否要参与之前，你必须了解我们进行研究的原因和研究所包含的事项。请仔细读以下的咨询并澄清任何不明确的资料或有更多想了解的资料。我们要强调你不一定要接受这个邀请而参与研究是自愿的。

谢谢你阅读。

研究目的
研究的目的是为了了解利物浦唐人街的进展，一个含有不同空间的制度：意识形态的，现实的，跨过空间的。

为何我受邀参与?
你受邀是因为利物浦有欧洲最老的唐人街并且移名者对利物浦唐人街的发展有很重要的角色。

我需要参与吗?
参与研究是自愿的而如果你愿意参与的话，你将可以在任何时候退出访问。

如果我愿意参与将会发生什么?
如果你决定参与，你会被访问。

长达一个小时左右的访问会被学生研究者，孙淑君，在适合访问者的时间和地点举行访问。

赔赏
访问者不会收到赏金。

参与会有任何冒险吗?
参与研究没有任何所知有关身体，精神或商业的冒险。

参与有任何利益吗?
参与研究没有任何利益。

如果我不满意研究或有问题呢?
如果你不满意研究或有问题的话，请随时联络 Dr. Johanna Waters (waters@liverpool.ac.uk)。她将帮你解答。如果你还是不满或想向第三者投诉的话，你可以拨电 0151 794 8290 或发电邮（ethics@liv.ac.uk）联络 Research Governance Officer. 在联络 Research Governance Officer 时，请提供研究课题或目地（以方便查认），所有有关研究者的名字和你投诉的祥情。

我的参与会保密吗？

所有收集的资料会被保存和分析。资料将是无名的而认得出参与者的个人资料不会被收存。只有学生研究者可以拿得到在她个人电脑里所保存的资料。

什么是研究课题的成果？

研究课题的成果将是博士课程的一份报告而一份会在利物浦大学图书馆里放存。

如果我要停止参与将会有什么后果？

你可以在任何时候退出研究而不许给任何理由。如果你在访问完毕之前退出的话，所有收集的资料不会被采用而会被删除。

如果我有问题我可以联络谁？

请联络学生研究者关于你在访问时期有的顾虑和问题。

Ms. Su-Chuin Soon
Department of Geography,
University of Liverpool,
Roxby Building,
Liverpool
L69 7ZT
s.soon@liv.ac.uk

如果在访问完毕之后你还有问题的话，请联络督察官：

Dr. Johanna Waters
Department of Geography,
University of Liverpool,
Roxby Building,
Liverpool
L69 7ZT
waters@liverpool.ac.uk

CONSENT FORM

Title of Research Project:	A 'Chinatown' system? Cultural geographies of Liverpool's 'Chinatown'.	
Researcher(s):	Ms Su-Chuin Soon (Student Investigator) Dr Johanna Waters (Supervisor) Dr Richard Powell (Supervisor)	**Please initial box**

1. I confirm that I have read and have understood the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without my rights being affected.

☐

3. I understand that none of my personal details will be recorded and that findings are anonymous.

☐

4. I agree to take part in the above study.

☐

_____ _____ _____
Participant Name   Date   Signature

_____ _____ _____
Name of Person taking consent   Date   Signature

_____ _____ _____
Student Investigator   Date   Signature

同意表格

研究课题:　　　　　　**唐人街制度？利物浦的唐人街文化地里。**

研究者:　　　　　　孙淑君 （学生研究者）
　　　　　　　　　　Dr Johanna Waters (督察官)　　　　　**请勾阁**
　　　　　　　　　　Dr Richard Powell (督察官)

1. 我确认我已经阅读并明白以上研究课题的咨询表。我有机会　　☐
   考虑咨询，问问题并得到合理的答案。

2. 我明白我的参与是自愿的而我随时，在不许给任何理由，全　　☐
   力不会受到影响的情况下，退出研究。

3. 我明白我个人的资料不会被记载，而分析后的资料是无名　　☐
   的。

4. 我愿意参与以上的研究。　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　☐

_____　　_____　　_____
参与者姓名　　　　　　　　　日期　　　　签名

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拿同意者的姓名　　　　　　　日期　　　　签名

_____　　_____　　_____
学生研究者　　　　　　　　　日期　　　　签名

ANONYMISED TABLE OF INTERVIEWEES

Interviewee No.	Name[20]	Age[21]	Gender[22]	Country of Origin
Professionals and Business Owners				
1	Dennis	30	M	Singapore
5	Matt	26	M	Hong Kong
7	Leo	27	M	Malaysia
13	Jin	28	M	Malaysia
14	Kan	32	M	PRC
22	Peter	61	M	Hong Kong
28	Daniel	39	M	PRC
34	James	64	M	Singapore
35	Johnathan	27	M	Malaysia
36	Jason	50	M	Malaysia
38	Toni	27	W	PRC
39	Jerry	37	M	PRC
40	Tang	47	M	PRC
41	Evelyn	29	W	Malaysia
42	Judy	57	W	Hong Kong
43	Mr Wu	53	M	Hong Kong
46	Rita	49	W	Hong Kong
47	Daniel N	36	M	Singapore
60	Han	30	M	PRC
62	Simon	37	M	Malaysia
63	Mr Liu	73	M	Malaysia
67	Alan	41	M	Hong Kong
Service and Administrative Workers				
2	Meiyin	28	W	PRC
6	F Qiang	28	M	PRC
26	W Qiang	28	M	PRC
27	Yin	41	W	Hong Kong
29	Kenny	24	M	Malaysia
30	Sunny	30	W	PRC
37	Tiffany	29	W	Malaysia
44	Coco	31	W	PRC
45	H Jun	43	W	PRC
48	Annie	56	W	Hong Kong
49	Karen	43	W	Singapore
50	Hui Y	51	W	PRC
51	Angus	25	W	Hong Kong
52	W San	28	W	Malaysia
54	Mdm Chen	30	W	PRC
55	Priscilla	34	W	Malaysia
56	Xiao F	40	W	Hong Kong

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[20] Names are not participants' real or full names.

[21] Age of participant as at 2010 during which fieldwork took place.

[22] 'M' represents man while 'W' represents woman.

57	C Min	45	W	PRC
58	W Ming	33	W	PRC
59	Carol	34	W	PRC
61	Mrs Liu	28	W	PRC
64	Yvonne	45	W	Hong Kong
65	Mr Wong	75	M	PRC
66	Mrs Wong	68	W	PRC
68	Mr Sin	78	M	Vietnam
Students				
3	S Ting	23	M	PRC
4	Estelle	22	W	PRC
8	Stephanie	32	W	Malaysia
9	Lina	28	W	PRC
10	G Min	24	W	Malaysia
11	Jia L	25	M	Malaysia
12	Shenley	24	W	Malaysia
15	Charles	37	M	Singapore
16	Koz	24	M	Myanmar
17	Penny	27	W	PRC
18	Ching	30	M	Taiwan
19	Fend	27	M	Singapore
20	Wu Y	23	W	PRC
21	Selina	30	W	PRC
23	Klaire	28	W	PRC
24	Sus	23	M	Indonesia
25	Ben	22	M	Malaysia
31	Kin	27	M	Singapore
32	R Ying	21	W	Singapore
33	Felix	19	M	Hong Kong
53	Hany	23	W	Singapore

LIST OF CODES

Professionals and Business Owners

Coding	Theme
A	Migration process
Aa	*Reasons for migrating*
Aa1	Better career prospects
Aa2	Overseas work experience
Aa3	Better future
Aa4	Less hectic lifestyle, peaceful
Aa5	Better quality of life
Aa6	Different experience
Aa7	Different life goals
Aa8	Overseas experience whilst young and carefree
Aa9	No better alternative
Aa10	Children's education
Aa11	Shorter education
Aa12	Cost of living lower
Aa13	Bigger house
Aa14	Weather
Ab	*Decision making process*
Ab1	Family has culture of going overseas
Ab2	Parents' decision for children to go overseas
Ab3	Know people before coming
Ac	*Later life aspirations*
Ac1	Go home eventually
Ac2	Move closer to home
Ac3	Career options determine more
Ac4	Hometown becomes 2nd home, no house (no stake)
B	What are their experiences here?
Ba	*Difficulties*
Ba1	Accent
Ba2	Language barrier
Ba3	Cultural difference
Ba4	Different working styles
Ba5	More instructive mode of teaching
Ba6	Competitive work environment
Ba7	Boring lifestyle
Bb	*Institutional factors*
Bb1	Already in own cliques
Bb2	Changes in border policy
Bb3	Systematic bureaucracy
Bb4	Twining structure of studies parent institution

Bc	*Realities of minority*
Bc1	Racism but tolerable
Bc2	Feels like an outsider in the system
Bc3	Chinese are at the fringe of society
Bc4	Over-qualification and difficulty in getting mainstream jobs
Bd	*Spouses' coping situation*
Bd1	Trailing spouse hard to adapt initially
C	Migrants' social circles
Ca	*Natural affinity / comfort / familiarity*
Ca1	Ethnic friends
Ca2	National friends
Cb	*Similar life experiences*
Cb1	Fellow overseas students
Cb2	Course mates
Cb3	Job nature
Cb4	Similar life experiences
Cb5	Similar interest groups
Cc	*Environment driven*
Cc1	Accommodation
Cc2	Neighbourhood
Cc3	Church
Cc4	Colleagues
Cc5	English
Cd	*PRC Chinese unity, segregation by socio-economic situation*
Cd1	Job status effects influence the Chinese community
D	Where are the localities of their social circles: Chinatown and the Chinese community?
Da	*Definition of contact*
Da1	Few streets and the arch
Da2	A street
Da3	Organisation
Da4	Liverpool Chinese community
Da5	Chinatown symbolises acceptance of Chinese presence because of familiarity, convenient, belonging
Db	*Relevance of Chinatown*
Db1	Chinatown for shopping, eating
Db2	Chinatown for an authentic experience
Db3	Preference for Chinese food and eating style buffet experience
Db4	Chinatown for karaoke

Dc	*Irrelevance of Chinatown*
Dc1	Location change over time
Dc2	Chinese restaurant food not as good as the rest
Dc3	Associations irrelevant
Dc4	Overtime, less interest so go home
Dc5	Online shopping
Dc6	British shops versus Chinese shops
Dc7	10 years ago fewer Chinese restaurant so go to coffee shops
Dd	*Chinatown then and now*
Dd1	Unchanging Chinatown (hampered by various stakeholders)
Dd2	Parking problems, poor security
Dd3	Chinatown 40 years ago more vibrant
De	*Future of Chinatown*
De1	Geographical dead-end
E	What do they do?
Ea	*Leisure*
Ea1	Travelling
Ea2	Shopping
Ea3	Gambling (casinos)
Ea4	Sports
Eb	*Home-based activities*
Eb1	Home-based activities
Eb2	Cable TV
Eb3	Local news
Ec	*Transnational links with home (host city originated)*
Ec1	Phone and IT
Ec2	Home news from IT
Ec3	Regular visits home only if parents around
Dd	*Transnational links with home (home city orientated)*
Ed1	Home news from family
Ed2	Books from home
Ed3	Ask for things from home
Ed4	Send things home (example fish oil)
F	Others
Fa	*Segmentation within the Chinese community*
Fa1	Older generation tend to stick to together
Fa2	Chinese community fragmented and profile very different, language ability, nationality, dialect
Fa3	Nationals over ethnics
Fa4	Chinese community small (but only because of insiders)

Fb	*Impact of newly-arrived immigrants*
Fb1	Chinese influence recently – numbers as well as rich, bosses, resilient
Fb2	Hands-off management for more educated PRC (bosses than workers)
Fb3	Mutual help amongst Chinese stronger before, now no evidence of mutual help
Fc	*Low profile of the Chinese community within Chinese community as well as to host city*
Fc1	Chinese profiling is low, publicity on services, culture is also low
Fc2	Jobs through word of mouth
Fc3	Inaccessible organisation, example church
Fc4	Invisibility of the Chinese is an illusion (not open to all but organisation seems united and insular
Fc4.1	Wah Sing – Cantonese education and Chinese culture, especially for British Born Chinese
Fc4.2	Pagoda – more general community services
Fc4.3	Chee Kung Tong – elderly
Fc4.4	LCBA – Business other than catering
Fd	*Family coping strategies*
Fd1	Family dynamics – wife preserves culture (languages, visits)
Fd2	Trailing spouse
Fd3	Family strategy – kids left at home or with a relative in destination
Fe	*Integration over time?*
Fe1	Cost of travelling for families high – so trips home lesser
Fe2	Marriage reduces wider social interactions
Ff	*Returning to one's roots*
Ff1	Always interact with English so want to get in touch with Chinese
Fg	*Catering work changes over the years*
Fg1	Unsatisfactory, tough restaurant work

Service and Administrative Workers

Coding	Theme
G	Migration process
Ga	*Search for better life*
Ga1	Migration culture at home (family and friends)
Ga2	Tough life at home (more hectic, simple here less convenient and distractions)
Ga3	Earn more money
Ga4	No better alternative at home (no jobs, more competition, less guanxi, more pressure)
Ga5	Better future prospects
Ga6	Weather better (air quality)
Ga7	Work for parents back home and future generations
Gb	*Attraction of welfare system*
Gb1	Better quality of life, benefits especially for retirement and less complicated here
Gc	*Children's education and future*
Gc1	Children's education better future (better here because of high competition in Hong Kong, PRC more well developed and costly)
Gd	*Overseas experience*
Gd1	Experience overseas culture (freedom)
Gd2	Experience overseas work too
Gd3	Go overseas whilst young
Ge	*Trailing spouse*
Ge1	Trailing spouse (transnational marriage including marrying down – their aspirations, career goals, psychology)
Gf	*Chain migration and connections*
Gf1	Destination determined by chain migration
Gf2	Leaving is a family decision
Gf3	Connections ease initial transition
Gg	*Border policies*
Gg1	Make use of working holiday visa
Gh	*Desire for mainstream job*
Gh1	Want mainstream job
Gi	*Settlement aspirations*
Gi1	Return eventually if made enough money or can't make a proper living because of family, elderly parents
Gi2	Good development opportunities and lifestyle determine whether to stay or not / where to relocate

H	What are their experiences here?
Ha	*Isolated*
Ha1	Liverpool pay high but work tougher
Ha2	Boring (few leisure, friends)
Ha3	Walk because cheap, good exercise and language barrier
Ha4	No time to learn English
Ha5	Access to medical facilities a problem because of working hours / poor advice
Ha6	Culture differences (for example, drinking, lifestyle, food)
HA7	Stressed
Ha8	People on the fringe (bad service)
Hb	*Save and scrimp*
Hb1	Shop cheaply and source for bargains (wholesalers, things westerners don't want)
Hb2	Quick way to earn money (catering)
Hb3	Cost of living low so can save more money (savings priority)
Hc	*Communication difficulties*
Hc1	Language barrier also within Chinese community
Hc2	Accent issues
Hd	*Discrimination*
Hd1	Racial discrimination and security problems more severe
Hd2	Colour apprehension because of language barrier
He	*Chinese culture*
He1	Cooks Chinese at home
Hf	*Opportunity cost of mainstream jobs*
Hf1	Visa and high tax application process hinder education and mainstream entry
Hg	*Inefficiency of public service*
Hg1	Inefficiency of public service (police, medical)
I	Migrants' social circles
Ia	*Hometown*
Ia1	Fellow village men
Ia2	Extended family members
Ib	*Similar culture*
Ib1	National friends
Ib2	Ethnic group
Ic	*Similar experiences*
Ic1	Job-determined (for example, more Malaysians and PRC in kitchen and waiting jobs, Hong Kongers usually bosses)
Ic2	Accommodation-based
Ic3	Church

Ic4	Interest groups
Ic5	Lifestyle based
Ic6	Course mates
J	**Locality of migrants' social circles**
Ja	*Role of supermarkets*
Ja1	Chinese supermarkets very often
Ja2	British supermarkets more for browsing, cheap finds and meeting friends
Ja3	Chinese supermarkets for meeting up with friends and get Chinese newspapers
Ja4	British supermarket more often than Chinese
Ja5	Chinatown supermarket more well stocked
Jb	*Relevance and definition of Chinatown*
Jb1	Eating and grocery shopping
Jb2	Church (English, psychological support, shields them from discrimination)
Jb3	Chinatown is top of Bold street to Chuang Hwa
Jb4	Chinatown symbolic of Chinese existence and history (sense of belonging, familiarity)
Jb5	Chinatown is Nelson street
Jb6	Tradition / celebration good rallying point, platform for Chinese
Jb7	Chinatown is workplace
Jb8	Unchanging Chinatown
Jb9	Chinatown is the people, community, activities
Jb10	Associations relevance for older generation
Jc	*Characteristics of Chinatown*
Jc1	Chinatown seems dead, dismal, no real cultural elements, geography-related
Jc2	Chinatown is more relevant for overseas students and illegals (only if you think in terms of associations)
Jc3	Bad security in Chinatown
Jd	*Other areas*
Jd1	Liverpool One
K	**What do they do?**
Ka	*Phone is critical*
Ka1	Hand phone is critical for keeping in touch with friends and home
Kb	*Activities in the UK*
Kb1	Home-based activities (read, housework, music, potluck, mah-jong, gaming, internet) because of security
Kb2	Cable TV
Kb3	Travelling
Kb4	Picnic
Kb5	Sports
Kb6	Gambling (divorcee, remarrying)
Kc	*Transnational activities*

Kc1	Phone home very regularly
Kc2	IT
Kc3	News from home (IT)
Kc4	News from home (family)
Kc5	Sending things (example cod liver oil)
Kc6	Ask for things from home (Chinese foodstuff, pressure cookers, seeds)
Kc7	Remittances
Kc8	Visits home (less frequent also after parents pass away)
Kd	*Tendency to stick with Chinese*
Kd1	Voluntary (but because of certification)
Ke	*Family-centred activities*
Ke1	Family centred priorities (retain cultural roots, values, trends)
L	Others
La	*Insular community*
La1	Association membership through word of mouth
La2	Jobs through recommendation
La3	Too much gossip amongst Chinese (older generation Hong Kong and Guangdong)
Lb	*Fragmented community*
Lb1	Difference between Fujianese, Northeners, Bejing (language, culture, food etc) also within Chinese community depending on group unities
Lb2	Difference in labelling illegals / asylum seekers amongst PRC
Lb3	Difference between Malaysians and Hong Kongers workers versus PRC workers (English lousy)
Lb4	Chinese especially rich – influx
Lb5	Catering increasingly competitive
Lc	*Family strategies especially with childcare*
Lc1	Wife stops working for childcare (more time with child than husband)
Lc2	Child is back home
Lc3	Extended family migrating strategies (niece / nephews / confinement / childcare)
Ld	*Cultural roots*
Ld1	Wah Sing and church teaches Cantonese; one in city teaches Mandarin
Ld2	Standard of Chinese is still poor (writing and speaking)
Ld3	Food is a socialising tool and helps to connect the roots
Le	*Catering industry*
Le1	Chinese chiefs, 'leader' defined by experience
Lf	*Migrants' characteristics*
Lf1	Positive people (self sufficiency and easily contented, adaptable, resilient, self-reliant and independent

Lg	*Impact of economic recession*
Lg1	Impact of economic recession on migration and catering
Lg2	Long restaurant work [long inaccurate hours, minimum wage or ¼ to 1/3 the basic (including tips)]
Lh	*Changing government support*
Lh1	Growing home city and discriminating host city
Li	*Changing balance of global power*
Li1	Government support less in the past so greater reliance on relatives and friends

Students

Coding	Theme
M	Migration process
Ma	*Pull reasons for going overseas, to Liverpool and studying here*
Ma1	Understand / experience culture difference
Ma2	Improve English
Ma3	Take a break from hectic work routine
Ma4	University reputation not bad
Ma5	Choice of subject dependent on practical reasons, choice of course, length
Ma6	City living
Ma7	Affordability
Ma8	Career advancement, prospects
Mb	*Push reasons for going overseas, Further Education*
Mb1	No better educational opportunity
Mb2	Further education to achieve credibility and respect from others
Mc	*Career aspirations*
Mc1	Choose local jobs (practise English, enhance CV, benefits better)
Mc2	Get work experience before going back
Mc3	Want to stay if not for poor job market and grandparents are already old
Mc4	Choice of next destination depends on where there are better career prospects
Md	*Longer-term aspirations*
Md1	Go back eventually because of family and friends
Md2	Go back because more opportunities in PRC
Md3	Go back because prefer Asian varied lifestyle
Md4	Where cost of living is low
N	What are their experiences here?
Na	*Factors inhibiting integration*
Na1	Tend to stay in their own circle (more comfortable with similar cultural background, don't feel like left home)
Na2	Cultural difference (Pub, partying, able to mix because of drink, but go to clubbing with Singaporeans due to level of confidence, conversation topics)
Na3	Support network in place before coming over
Na4	Accent problem
Na5	Language barrier
Na6	Superficial interactions with locals
NA7	Topic conversation and styles of interaction differences
Nb	*Self segregation*
Nb1	Difficult for others to join their circle
Nc	*Desire to experience western culture*

Nc1	Try to interact with westerners on other platforms (e.g. interactions and activities)
Nd	*Pros and cons of life here*
Nd1	Life less interesting than in PRC
Nd2	Enjoy because similar to hometowns
Nd3	Enjoy lifestyle and slower pace of life
Nd4	Weather not ideal
Nd5	Little nightlife
Nd6	Racist attacks
Nd7	Perceived self-discrimination because of nationality and language awareness
Ne	*Food as a tool for socialising, nostalgia*
Ne1	Eat Chinese to alleviate missing home
Ne2	Food is a rallying point
Nf	*Colour ceiling*
Nf1	Difficult to break out of Chinese community for jobs and issue of over qualification
O	Migrants' social circles
Oa	*Environment - driven*
Oa1	National friends
Oa2	Accommodation-centre friends
Oa3	Childcare-centred
Oa4	Departmental, course mates, foundation year group
Oa5	Church
Oa6	Sports-Based
b	Familiarity / Similarity and comfort
Ob1	Ethnic friends
P	Locality of social circles
Pa	*Definition of Chinatown*
Pa1	Chinatown is restaurants, karaoke, supermarkets and festive celebrations, newspapers, frequent Chinese restaurants and karaoke more when staying together
Pa2	Chinatown is a street (actually less than a street. The other row is irrelevant.)
Pa3	Chinatown includes Berry Street
Pa4	Chinatown includes part of Bold Street
Pa5	Chinatown is arch
Pa6	Chinatown symbolises a strong Chinese presence
Pb	*Relevance and definition of Chinatown*
Pb1	Chinatown shops only for things available there (distance, convenience)
Pb2	Chinatown is a place to congregate / socialise for people living dispersedly
Pb3	Chinatown gives a familiar feel (feel more like Chinatown if there are more people and shops from home)

Pb4	Chinatown gives a sense of belonging, a focal point for help, meet with other Chinese and more useful for Chinese 5-10 years ago (psychological support)
Pb5	Chinatown more relevant for British Born Chinese and older Cantonese-speaking generations
Pc	*Irrelevance of Chinatown*
Pc1	Chinatown not a place to feel at home because of IT, news and communications
Pc2	Chinatown nothing to be proud of visually, quiet and fewer Chinese
Pc3	Lacks temple
Pd	*Segregation within Chinese community*
Pd1	Think many things going on in Chinatown but don't know what
Q	What do they do?
Qa	*Chinese activities*
Qa1	Chinese activities (dim sum, steamboat, mah-jong, karaoke)
Qa2	News feed from friends
Qb	*IT Tool*
Qb1	Phone and IT (IT closes distance)
Qb2	MSN, phone and others with others
Qb3	Home news from internet (only major ones, because home cities and PRC growing fast so news coverage by major newspapers)
Qc	*Home-based activities*
Qc1	Home-based activities (also, pray at home)
Qd	*Leisure-based*
Qd1	Travel
Qd2	Sports, food, movie
Qe	*PRC distinction*
Qe1	PRC social network platform
Qe2	Greatly in touch with friends at home
Qf	*Transnational links*
Qf1	Sends stuff to UK from home (more often in the beginning)
Qf2	News feed from home (feels like home when listen to news from home)
R	Others
Ra	*Chinese catering industry*
Ra1	Part-time job at Chinatown restaurant recommended by friends (tight institution)
Ra2	Kitchen work very physically demanding
Ra3	No entrainment for kitchen workers so drink, smoke, gamble
Ra4	Harsh Asian's reverse psychology; 'forgiving'
Ra5	Full-timers are Cantonese-speaking and part timers are students
Ra6	Front-line catering staff are Malaysians because of language ability
Ra7	Chinese restaurant not authentic, especially buffets, Japanese restaurants staffed

	by Chinese and Malaysians instead
Rb	*Differentiation within Chinese community*
Rb1	Language barrier within Chinese community
Rb2	PRC students relatively more spoilt and protected
Rb3	Distinction between PRC and non-PRC (language and PRC circle very tight knit)
Rc	*Structural factors (borders and educational policies)*
Rc1	Border policies (difficult to get into specialisations of choice for medicine because UK not keen to keep international students and cutting down transfer posts)
Rc2	Foundation year, pre-master to: 1) adapt to education system 2) get used to language 3) also because of crossed discipline
Rd	*Sufficiency of Liverpool's Chinatown*
Rd1	Liverpool lacks a Chinese temple
Rd2	Manchester's choice, quality and pay better
Rd3	Availability of Chinese products, food and restaurants reduces tendency to miss home
Re	*Definition of home*
Re1	Definition of home: 1) place of birth 2) where parents are 3) place where one spent a long time

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