

British Chinese Youth Transitions: Cultural Identity and Youth
Formations in Newcastle upon Tyne

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Abstract

Research with British Chinese young people has tended to focus on experiences of racism, the influence of catering, and more recently educational attainment. Focusing on young Chinese people growing up in Newcastle upon Tyne, North East England, this thesis brings these areas of scholarship into conversation in order to explore the youth transitions, cultural identities and everyday experiences of British Chinese youth. A key argument of this thesis is that integrating understandings of youth transitions with the everyday experiences of Chinese youth provides a critical contribution to the field. It not only expands the transitions debate that has centred primarily on white working class youth, but specifically enables a more holistic portrait of British Chinese youth to emerge. This study draws upon qualitative interviews with twenty four British born Chinese young people. The project is aimed at those aged 16-25 years. Four key influences on transition are explored: family and home; language and identity; education and aspirations; and leisure lifestyles. Home relations reveal many participants are expected to assist their families in catering work and therefore face a range of responsibilities whilst growing up, from supporting family businesses to caring for younger siblings. An analysis of language demonstrates many participants are actually ambivalent and lack confidence when it comes to Chinese linguistic competency. Nevertheless participants played significant roles as mediators, assisting their parents through English. In the education arena high levels of attainment at school and university reflect strong personal motivations to succeed, a desire to meet parental demands and an awareness of the sacrifices their parents had made to provide them with such opportunities. In their leisure time, British Chinese young people tended to engage with a broadly defined 'Asian' culture through global media including television, the internet and music. However, these experiences are found to be shaped by gender, young people's life-course positioning and broader educational commitments. Overall, by exploring the role of family, language, education and leisure, this thesis offers a rich series of insights into the cultural identities and youth formations of British Chinese young people in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my grandparents.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

This section puts forth the arguments in this thesis. The aims are laid out, study contextualised through a discussion of British Chinese as a 'silent minority' and their migration to the UK described. The place of young British Chinese in this is also detailed.

1.1 Introduction – young British Chinese, transitions and identity.

It seems recently that the issue of China has been evermore present in UK public discussion. Arguably fuelled by the economic changes in China I have watched attentively, as no doubt have others, as an increasing amount of documentaries and books have emerged professing to explain the 'rising of the Eastern Dragon'. Constant references to awakening, dragons, power, and politics, give the impression that Chinese relations with Britain are being somehow re-invented, or even re-invigorated.

There are individuals for whom the relationship between Britain and China is not a topic of new media or political interest. Many, but not all, of these individuals have been living in the UK for many years, if not decades. Some were born here, others are more recent migrants, but what they share in common is Chinese ethnicity and Britain as a home. It is at odds that we might be more likely to know recent events in China, than the conditions and life experiences of Chinese people living in Britain.

This thesis looks at the experiences of young British Chinese people, those on the cusp of adulthood, and going through particular transitions in their lives. Enquiry focuses on the key influences on individuals from an ethnic minority group which has been under researched. Recently a generation of British Born and young British Chinese have become more prominent, perhaps being present on television or in films (for example Gok Wan). But despite new generations growing up in the UK there has continued to be misunderstanding and a lack of depth in wider conceptions; perhaps for example a fixation on grade averages, rather than a look at the factors which might cause these results (notably Francis and Archer, 2005a, Francis et al., 2008 do explore this). By understanding young British Chinese there is the opportunity to contribute more fully

to youth research, experiences of ethnicity in the UK, as well as question the larger category of Chineseness.

That the experiences of young British Chinese continue to be unrecognised in wider British society stands in opposition to work which has been done; exploring the impact of migration and different cultural and identity values on young British Chinese people (Archer and Francis, 2007, 2009, Francis and Archer, 2005a, 2005b, Francis et al., 2008, Parker, 1995, 1998, 2000, Song, 1995, Song and Parker, 1995).

Vitality the thesis sets young British Chinese experiences in context, as well as addresses their place in wider discussions on Chinese identity. The lack of research on integrated British Chinese experiences is highlighted and addressed by citing and contributing to the work of youth transitions researchers, who have demonstrated the ways in which young people might be influenced in the choices they make at various points in life, how these might come to be shaped and what the consequences might be (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997, Hollands, 1990, Hollands and Chatterton, 2003, MacDonald and Marsh, 2004, MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007). In parallel, research which offers a rich source of discussion about ethnicity, the way it changes and is shaped, and the role of youth experience can be enhanced by study of the British Chinese. Therefore Stuart Hall and Ien Ang (Hall, 1990, 1992, Ang, 1993, 1998, 2001) in particular will be central to this thesis, as both authors have attempted to demonstrate that ethnicity (in Ang's case Chinese ethnicity in particular) is flexible, hybrid and subject to alteration.

1.2 Thesis questions

This thesis questions the way in which young British Chinese¹ see themselves today. Taking 16-25 years as a guideline for 'youth', participants were asked about their experiences, particularly around growing up, their lives now and the future. There are three main aims:

¹ I have taken young British Chinese to include both British Born Chinese and those whom have grown up here but were born elsewhere. British Chinese is defined specifically due to the difficulty likely in recruiting large numbers of British born Chinese, as well as birth place not necessarily being a factor for the experiences this project is interested in.

Firstly whilst there has been interest in the young British Chinese, the age group 16-25 has not been looked at in terms of a broader youth transitions approach. Other groups of young people in Britain have been the subject of transitions research, in which their routes through life are explored; particularly working class young men (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997, McDowell, 2000, 2002, Willis, 1977). Increasingly too other young people of minority ethnic backgrounds have featured in the work of youth researchers (Alexander, 2000, Hopkins, 2006b, Nayak, 2006, 2008). This research therefore seeks to add to understanding about a significant set of youth experiences which might be explored even more widely. Perhaps young British Chinese have similar transitions to other groups of young people, perhaps not. We already know that these young British Chinese do well in examinations at school and that many of their parents are employed in catering or are professionals, how might this also influence their transitions, particularly in light of the varied factors which might have caused parents to migrate to the UK?

Secondly there has been a tendency for the work featuring Chinese people to be focused on a narrow set of issues, namely around racism and social justice, catering and education. That existing research has been important is not in question, indeed these investigations have shed light on young Chinese as experiencing racism and other challenges which are overlooked in their conception as high achievers. Being the descendants of migrants might mean a new set of issues is emerging, and this is worthy of exploration if British society as a whole is to dispel previous stereotypes and misunderstandings.

Thirdly what might a better understanding of British Chinese experiences add to wider conceptions about ethnic Chinese outside of China? The thesis will relate its findings to global discussion of the nature of Chineseness, contextualising the experiences had by the young Chinese with those living elsewhere. Perhaps there is a case to be made for hybrid or localised experiences of Chinese ethnicity, which are only limited to the UK, or maybe the relationship with Hong Kong continues to feature strongly for young British Chinese. What too might the changing political situation in China, with the opening and reform policies since the 1980 and 90s, mean for young British Chinese - could this for example offer a new area of Chinese identity which young British Chinese

might look to? Or perhaps there is a more pan-Asian set of identifications focused around the developed and developing economies of Japan, South Korea and Taiwan.

1.3 Contextualising the study

This section addresses the research background and initial questions about researching British Chinese experiences. There are three main issues. Firstly, reasons for the obscurity of the British Chinese in wider discussion and research, referring to their status as a silent minority. Second the background of Chinese migration to the UK. Third the young British Chinese as a group and reasons for further enquiry.

1.3 - 1 British Chinese – silent minority status

A major belief about the British Chinese is that they are a ‘silent’ minority; that is they largely keep to themselves, rarely featuring in public debates or discussion. Contributing to this belief is that, compared to other ethnic minorities in the UK, the Chinese are less numerous and more dispersed. Despite the idea of Chinese people being a silent minority, this is not to say that the Chinese have always been seen as fully integrated in the UK; as Parker notes there have been a consistent set of stereotypes, and occasional media panics around the ‘yellow peril’² or ‘triads’³ (Parker, 1995, 1998).

During the 1990s a more concerted effort was made to understand the British Chinese experience. Partly this may have been driven by the 1991 census, which indicated a more sizable population within the UK than previously noted:

It was not until the 1991 census that a direct question on ethnicity was included. Information on ethnicity in previous surveys depended on a question which asked for the country of origin of the Head of Household. Thus, ethnic Chinese born in Britain would be recorded as British. Conversely, respondents of British origin born in China would be included as Chinese (Verma et al., 1999: 9).

Along with the growing interest in total population, academics researching the Chinese minority were realising that:

² The yellow peril is a stereotype based on the size of China and its believed potential to take over or conquer the world.

³ Triads are the popular given name for the Chinese mafia.

...due to the lack of attention the Chinese in Britain have received, information about them is scarce, scattered and often contradictory (Li, 1994: 37).

Pang and Lau perhaps went the furthest in this statement below, simultaneously expressing worry about research in general on the Chinese, problems of access and co-operation, and the nature of qualitative studies:

As it is, few studies have been conducted on this ethnic group and there still exists a state of relative ignorance and perhaps misconceptions surrounding the Chinese community in Britain. Until the 1990s there was the frustrating situation where even the most fundamental data about this group did not exist, posing innumerable methodological difficulties for (would-be) researchers - a situation exacerbated by the lack of co-operation on the part of the Chinese with such studies. The result is not only a paucity of knowledge on this group, but also that the types of researchers which have emerged have ultimately tended to be small-scale, qualitative studies, conducted by ethnic Chinese researchers, in specific locales (Pang and Lau, 1998: 863).

In challenging the notion of Chinese people in Britain as a 'silent' minority, it became clear this silence was related to problems of lack of awareness and data about Chinese people in the UK. Lack of research at a general and specific level as well as issues of getting participants to come forward have contributed. Although the situation might be assessed as having been bleak, the acknowledgment of a need for better research was an important stepping stone. In particular the recognition that 'Contrary to popular perceptions, the Chinese in Britain are not a homogenous group' (Li, 1994: 37) meant that academic discussion was able to start from a position which challenged problematic stereotypical conceptions, which were often based on racial features and not actual lived experiences.

Despite the worry, during the 1990s, over the lack of data information on the British Chinese, research would reveal more details over time. Principally, the issue of population composition began to open up debate on the backgrounds of Chinese residents:

Although not all of the Chinese people now living in Britain can trace their descent from ancestors who lived in Hong Kong, it would be true to say that most of them could (Verma et al., 1999: 8).

It was also acknowledged that there were several Chinese waves of migration to the UK, firstly seafarers linked to the ports in Liverpool and London, secondly Hong Kong economic migrants following changes in Hong Kong and thirdly more recent migrants, coming for education and professional work (Li, 1994). Within these three waves there have been varieties of ethnic and linguistic division, such as origins in Hong Kong, mainland China, Vietnam, Malaysia, and also the varied use of Hakka, Cantonese, Mandarin and other Chinese dialects (Li, 1994). In terms of location Chinese people are shown to be present across the whole of the UK, though numbers tend to be larger around the Manchester/Liverpool area and London (Verma et al., 1999: 11). Chau and Yu (2001: 114-115) note that the Chinese in Britain remain quite dispersed, this is due to their employment based in Chinese food selling, and the advantage dispersion can offer in reducing competition.

1.3 - 2 Chinese migration to the UK

Starting to question the status of British Chinese as silent therefore revealed a population with a variety of migratory backgrounds, experiences and identifications. Awareness of these differences within the Chinese population serves to demonstrate the dynamic and vibrant possibilities for understanding British Chinese people, not as a single homogenous community, but as a population worthy of greater nuanced understanding and research. Of pressing concern in the coming overall discussion will be what influence these sometimes chequered migrant histories have had on young British Chinese, and to what extent the British Chinese population is set to change.

Each country has its own definitions of national identity, and whilst they might be discussed continuously, migrants in particular raise the issue of how far a national identity can itself be defined and bounded. For Chinese migrants the size of China, paradoxically with its internal diversity, yet outward perception of homogeneity, has made Chinese identity an interesting topic for consideration in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Questioning Chinese identity has become more pressing due to combination of settled communities outside of China, as well as migrations in the modern period. Under various dynasties in China migration was frowned upon and those found to return, once leaving, may have faced 'severe punishment' (Wang, 2003: 57). But despite limitations on migration, China was a major trading nation. The

isolation of China in terms of outward migration was finally challenged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century's. Following the period of 'first' opening in the late nineteenth century, during which threats to continued Chinese closure resulted in wars, political humiliation and colonialism, migration out of China became increasingly possible. I use the term increasingly possible because, as Wang Gungwu (2003) and others have shown, the majority of Chinese nationals remained within the borders of China, if not within the borders of their own village or province (Pan, 1999: chapter 2, Skeldon, 2003).

The result of China's perhaps surprise awakening to the realities of western modernisation meant that many new migrants came from specific parts of China, bringing with them specific languages, social practices and cultural backgrounds (Li, 1994, Pan, 1994, Parker in Pan, 1999, Wang, 2000). There was then a certain group of people which made up migrants out of China, in the case of the UK the early Chinese migrants were 'seamen originating mainly from the southern coastal provinces of China...clustered around the dockland areas of Limehouse (East London) and Liverpool' (Parker in Pan, 1999: 304). Many of these first migrants were working in the British navy and later were functioning as support for artillery or weapons batteries in World War One. Often working under inhumane conditions, Chinese seamen did not always enjoy parity with British nationals and their pay was notably lower (Parker in Pan, 1999: 304).

Following the aftermath of World War One the fissures caused in Chinese society by encounter with the west, not only from the intrusions by Britain and European powers, but under new threats such as Russia and a modernising Japan, took a heavy toll. Besides colonial assets seized by Britain and France across Asia, Japan used its newly industrialising and modernised army to influence Manchuria (renamed Manchukuo). The result of colonialism in China was civil war. Early nationalists removed the Qing dynasty in the initial 1900s, this led to warlordism developing into further conflict between Communist and a consolidated Nationalist political force in the 1940s. During, and constitutive, of all of these changes in China World War One and then World War Two took place.

With the communists having won the civil war by 1950, Japanese and colonial forces were either removed, ejected through defeat in World War Two, or in the British case restricted to Hong Kong (Parker, 1995, Pan, 1999, Skeldon, 2003). A period of migration closure was again experienced on the Chinese mainland. Chinese migration was stemmed due to focus on rebuilding and modernisation, as well as communist ideology, which at that time led to self-sufficiency drives. Despite the new government in China, elements of colonialism such as the British at Hong Kong remained. Populations of Chinese people were also left outside 'mainland' China (Tu, 1994). Today we see these ethnic populations continue in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, the United States and increasingly Australia (Pan, 1994, Wang, 2000). Many ethnic Chinese had not necessarily chosen to remain in the new nations which were formed around them during this time, and were in some sense now trapped outside of mainland China.

Before this time, when new borders were hardening, many Chinese outside of China believed themselves sojourners; migrant workers with the eventual goal of returning to their places of birth. Sojourning is a phenomenon with a long history and 'including extended periods of stay, has been practiced by venturesome and entrepreneurial individuals and trading communities in a wide variety of historical contexts' (Wang, 2003: 55). I will return later to discuss how the changing conception of Chinese migrants from sojourners to settlers caused difficulty in them being accepted in host countries, and how this relates to Britain (see Chapter 2 regarding migration in the United States in particular).

As Wang and Skeldon (Skeldon, 2003, Wang, 1985, 1993, 2000) have illustrated the experience of sojourning only makes up one part of the migration experience of Chinese people. The connection between the UK and Hong Kong meant Hong Kong acted as a gateway for emigration away from the region; with many taking up the opportunity to either settle in the UK, following a period of seafaring with the navy, or enter the country before increasingly tightening immigration laws became too stringent. We can identify several waves or phases of mass migration, as Li (1994: 37-38, 43-45) notes: original descendants and members of the community pre World War One, later migrants post World War Two whom came through Hong Kong, students

and professionals coming after the 1960s-70s. A useful aid in understanding the migration history of Chinese people in the UK is provided by the British Museum who have produced a timeline indicating changes in Chinese settlement in the UK. The timeline illustrates the changes and waves of in-migration to the UK and I have drawn from this and illustrated below:

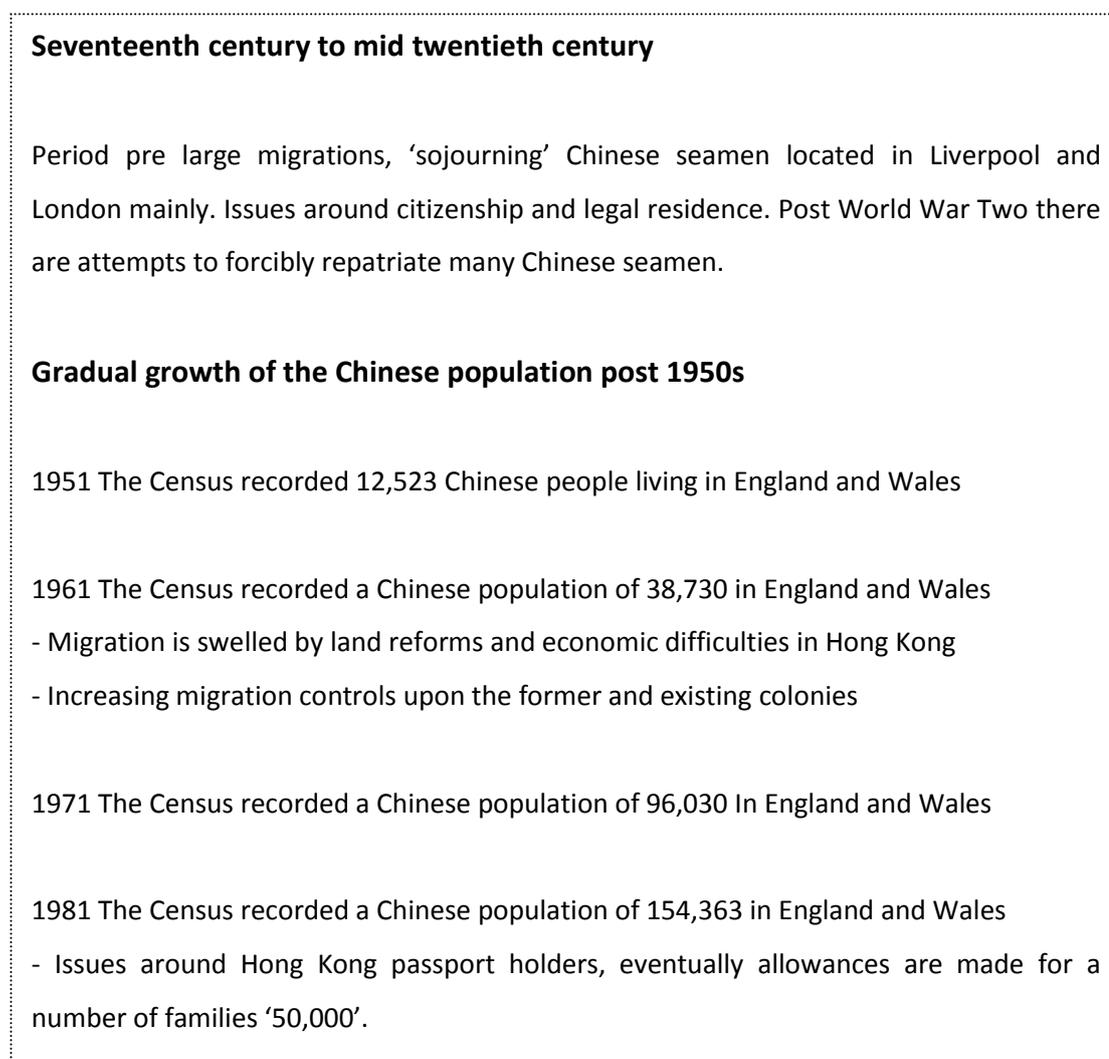


Figure 1 - Chinese settlement in the UK timeline based on 'Chinese diaspora in Britain' timeline (British Museum, 2008)

By 2001 the census recorded 247,403⁴ residents of Chinese ethnicity in the UK. In comparison to other ethnic groups in the UK - 'Other' 5%, 'Mixed' 15%, 'Black or Black British' 25%, 'Asian or Asian British' 50% - the 'Chinese', with 5%, represent the smallest of these groupings (Office for National Statistics, 2005). To put this in perspective there was a total of over 54 million residents of White ethnicity (92.1%) in

⁴ I am aware that several different assessments of the total Chinese population appear in this section; however I believe this is due to different estimates, and also changes in estimate, between official government document publications.

2001, with over 4.5 million in total of minority Ethnic peoples (7.9%) (Office for National Statistics, 2005).

With data beginning to be released from the 2011 census it is also possible to give a more recent account of ethnicity in the UK. However the data in the table below omits Scotland, significantly as well 'Chinese' has been moved into the 'Asian' category, which means that a direct comparison with data from 2001 needs to be done with care. In comparison to the 2001 totals there are now approximately 393,000 people of Chinese ethnicity in the UK.

Ethnic groups 2001 and 2011, England and Wales United Kingdom		Percentages	
		2001	2011
White	Irish	1.2	0.9
	Gypsy or Irish traveller ²	0	0.1
	Other White	2.6	4.4
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	White and Black Caribbean	0.5	0.8
	White and Asian	0.4	0.6
	White and Black African	0.2	0.3
	Other Mixed	0.3	0.5
	Indian	2.0	2.5
Asian/Asian British	Pakistani	1.4	2.0
	Bangladeshi	0.5	0.8
	Chinese ¹	0.4	0.7
	Other Asian ¹	0.5	1.5
Black/ African/ Caribbean /Black British	African	0.9	1.8
	Caribbean	1.1	1.1
	Other Black	0.2	0.5
Other ethnic group	Arab ²	0	0.4
	Any other ethnic group ¹	0.4	0.6

1. Comparability issues exist between these ethnic groups for the 2001 and 2011 Census

2. No comparable data exists for these ethnic groups in 2001 Census

Source: Census 2001 and 2011, Office for National Statistics

Figure 2 - Ethnicity in the UK from 2001-2011 census (Office for National Statistics, 2012)

Because of the relatively small size of the Chinese population in Britain, historically little attention has been paid to the internal differences within the group. Yet, as a result of the three main phases of migration discussed already, there are a set of varied experiences amongst the Chinese population. According to Pan (Pan, 1999:27, Skeldon, 2003: 57) the origins of many Chinese migrants are the South of China, areas such as Guangdong and Fujian. Although we can point to a specific region for much

migration, the Chinese as a group are still more diverse in terms of geographic origins and background. As example the table below illustrates the diversity of settled Chinese populations in the UK:

Chinese population: by region of birth, April 2001

Great Britain	Percentages
United Kingdom	28.7
England	25.2
Scotland	2.4
Wales	0.9
Northern Ireland	0.1
United Kingdom not specified ^{1,2}	-
Other Europe	0.6
Africa	1.0
Asia	68.0
Hong Kong	28.7
China	18.7
Malaysia	8.4
Vietnam	4.2
Singapore	3.2
Taiwan	2.2
Rest of Asia	2.6
North America³	0.7
South America	0.2
Oceania	0.3
Other	0.5
All Chinese	243,258

1 Includes respondents who didn't specify where in the United Kingdom.
2 '-' negligible (less than 0.05).
3 Includes the Caribbean and West Indies.
 Source: Census 2001, Office for National Statistics; Census 2001, General Register Office for Scotland

Figure 3 - UK Chinese residents' birth countries (taken from Office for National Statistics, 2006b: 36)

In 2001 the main countries of birth were Hong Kong (29%), England (25%) and China (19%), Malaysia (8%), Vietnam (4%) and Singapore (3%) (Office for National Statistics, 2006b: 35). Looking at figure 3, a study of Chinese people in the UK needs to be clear about the diversity within the Chinese population.

Along with these diverse countries of origin come a diverse set of linguistic backgrounds. The encyclopaedic approach taken by Pan (1999) indicates several major and minor language groups spoken by Chinese migrants, most of which came from South China: 'the linguistic diversity of South China is particularly marked. It is hard for a southerner to make himself understood by another southerner living in the next town, let alone by a northerner speaking Mandarin' (Pan, 1999: 22). Although an in-depth discussion is not possible in this section, language can be seen as a

differentiating factor within the early Chinese migrant populations, with some speaking mutually unintelligible dialects specific to certain regions or villages. With regard to the UK, Li's (1994) linguistic study notes a tripartite division between the majority of migrants, which speak mainly Cantonese (Yue or Guangdong Hua) but also Hakka (Kejia) and Mandarin (Hanyu, Putonghua) (Li, 1994: 41). Additionally it is important to note that written text, before the introduction of 'simplified' characters in the 1950s, was commonly shared across China. Despite the issue that many were illiterate, a common written text allowed for communication across linguistic boundaries in some sense. How language might influence this project is that the parents of many young British Chinese arrived before the educational changes which have taken place within both Hong Kong and mainland China; the communist government focusing in particular on the spread of literacy and speech, hence the translation of Putonghua, one name for Mandarin, as 'common speech'. Cantonese Chinese is then a specific factor in understanding what Chineseness is for many British Chinese.

The Chinese population has a distinct dispersion pattern, most being concentrated in London, the South East and North West as the data in Parker (1995) illustrates:

Region	Persons	Percentage of total Chinese population
Greater London	56,800	36.1
South East	27,100	27.1
North West	16,400	10.4
Scotland	9,500	6.1
West Midlands	8,600	5.5
Yorkshire/Humberside	8,100	5.2
East Midlands	6,400	4.1
South West	6,100	3.9
North	5,200	3.3
Wales	4,700	3
East Anglia	4,000	2.5

Figure 4 - Population distribution of Chinese people in Britain in 1991 (reproduced from Parker, 1995: 76, original based on data from Owen, 1993)

Although the census of 1991 data is problematic, as Parker notes the census was not sent in Chinese, leading to a suspected under-recording, altering the estimated 156,900 in 1991 to a possible 162,400 (Pan, 1999: 306), these figures still give a generally accurate picture of how Chinese people were distributed nationally, then and now. Adamson et al (Adamson et al., 2005b: 3) supports the trends in Parker’s work though the total figures offered are based on lower population estimates which omit Scotland (England given a total of 141,661) (Adamson et al., 2005b). Although the Chinese population is greatest around the London and Manchester metropolitan areas, there is generally felt to be a spread out distribution; with the Chinese living all across the nation and also being dispersed within the regions they are most highly concentrated in (Chau and Yu, 2001, Parker, 1995: 75, Parker in Pan, 1999: 306). Despite the geographic spread, the location of Chinatowns in cities such as London, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Birmingham and notable presences in Nottingham and Bristol, gives a natural focus for some members of the Chinese population, as well as possibly attracting community interest groups to be located here.

With the release of the 2011 census data a more up to date description of Chinese population distribution can be given. Whilst the totals are markedly higher than those in figure 4, it is notable that the general distribution with London, the South East and North West being most representative, remains (Office for National Statistics, 2012).

Area	Asian/Asian British: Chinese	
	Total	Percentage
ENGLAND AND WALES	393,141	0.7
ENGLAND	379,503	0.7
WALES	13,638	0.4
NORTH EAST	14,284	0.6
NORTH WEST	48,049	0.7
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER	28,435	0.5
WEST MIDLANDS	31,274	0.6
EAST	33,503	0.6
LONDON	124,250	1.5
SOUTH EAST	53,061	0.6
SOUTH WEST	22,243	0.4

Figure 5 - Current estimates for the ethnic Chinese population from the 2011 census; taken from table KS201EW (Office for National Statistics, 2013).

As of the 2001 census 243,258 Chinese people were recorded as living in the UK (Office for National Statistics, 2006b); this figure 393,000 in the 2011 census. Distinctly there are a large number of both British born Chinese (often referred to and self referring as BBCs, see www.britishchineseonline.com) and Hong Kong born Chinese, which form the younger generations. However, part of the huge growth in the Chinese population between 1991 and 2001, which at this point itself stands as ten years old and is therefore in need of revision, is due to an increase in the migration of Chinese nationals (most likely students) to the UK. As a National statistics feature on ethnicity and religion notes:

The proportion born in the UK (29 per cent) was the smallest of all non-White populations and has changed very little in the decade between 1991 and 2001. While the overall Chinese population increased from 157,000 to 243,000 between 1991 and 2001, the proportion born in the UK remained almost the same – 28 per cent in 1991 and 29 per cent in 2001. Over the same period, the proportion born in Hong Kong declined from 34 per cent to 29 per cent, along with smaller declines in the proportions born in Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam. Conversely, the proportion born in China and Taiwan increased from 13 per cent in 1991 to 21 per cent in 2001 (Office for National Statistics, 2009: 35-36).

This project will focus on the descendents of Chinese migrants, the so called British Born and British Chinese, raised here from childhood (which I refer to together as young British Chinese). The young British Chinese are most likely the children of those arriving in the 1960s to 1980s. A prominent feature of the Chinese migrants arriving during this period is their concentration in the catering sector. Concentration in catering has also contributed to the dispersion of Chinese families across the UK as a strategy to reduce competition in specialisation (Parker in Pan, 1999, Skeldon, 2003: 58). A combination of factors contributed to Chinese immigrants to the UK often going into catering work. Although a proportion did arrive as professionals, and were therefore able to work (many Malaysian Chinese came to be nurses) most migrants were from the working classes. Driven by economic hardships in Hong Kong and the political changes in China, most migrants came with few formal qualifications and a lack of good English. Despite the possible difficulty of finding work, Chinese migrants to the UK were able to take advantage of both a rising disposable income level and a corresponding interest in new food types; this would lead to the opening of Chinese take-aways and restaurants. Parker notes that as time went on the:

Requirement of having a job secured in advance furthered the concentration of Chinese settlers in catering, with restaurant owners filling openings in their businesses by recruiting newcomers through family and village connections (Parker in Pan, 1999: 305).

This trend meant that the settled Chinese population in the UK has tended to be self-supporting and based around family units. Chinese people are therefore dispersed in location but less dispersed in terms of occupation, as the figures for top five job positions indicate:

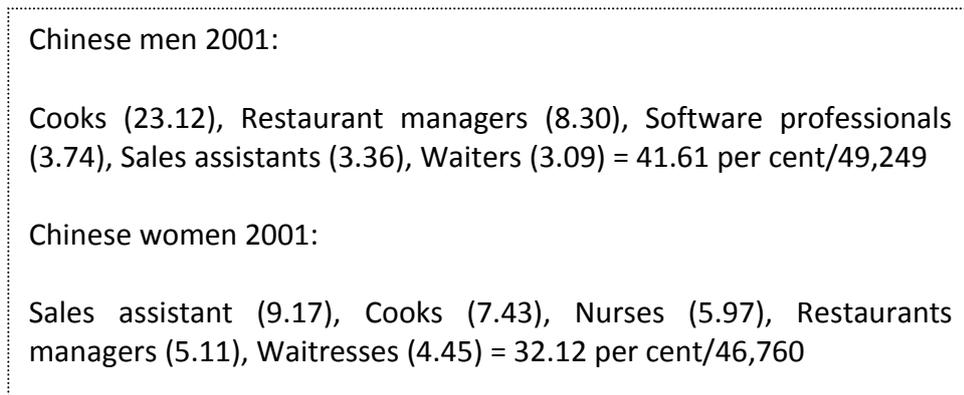


Figure 6 - Chinese people's occupations (figures from Office for National Statistics et al., 2005: 510)

Here 2001 figures for England and Wales suggest a strong (23.12%) occupation preference for cooks amongst Chinese men and we might also factor in the 8.30% of restaurant owners and 3.09% waiters, in total meaning 34.51% work within the catering sector. Chinese women's work is more differentiated than men's if we added the totals for cooks, restaurant managers and waitresses we find 16.99% work within catering. The continued reliance on the catering sector points to the relevancy of this experience for large numbers of British Chinese, in support of this the National Statistics feature on employment and segregation found 'The groups with fewest changes between 1991 and 2001 were the Chinese and Indian, for whom there were no new occupations in the five most common' (Office for National Statistics et al., 2005: 508).

However there has been some change in relation to the catering trade, if we look at 1991 census aggregates for cooks, restaurant managers and waiting staff we find 46.02 for Chinese men and 24.07 for Chinese women (-11.51 fall for men, -7.08 fall for

women). This change can be explained by the reduced numbers of Chinese now entering the UK to work in the catering sector, with a shift towards students and professionals. The evidence of qualitative research also suggests later generations are tending to work outside catering and diversifying in their choice of work (Archer and Francis, 2006, Francis and Archer, 2005a, Parker, 1995, 1998).

Whilst the statistical and historical background of the Chinese population is briefly given this far, it is also noteworthy to mention the experience and existence of illegal Chinese migrants in the UK. In particular the incident of Morecambe Bay 2004, when twenty-three (Chinese) cockle pickers drowned highlighting the risks illegal workers were taking and their treatment. Investigative journalist Hsiao-Hung Pai has written in detail about not only those involved in cockle picking, but a wide range of other trades, behind the scenes at restaurants and take-aways, picking vegetables, massage parlours, in the sex trade and factories (Hsiao-Hung, 2008). The 2006 film 'Ghosts' also dramatises the life of Chinese migrant workers in Britain. Pieke et al (Pieke, 2004) take a more academic look at the topic of Chinese migration and the hardships involved, with a focus on Fujianese migrants. Through fieldwork conducted in the UK, Italy, Hungary and Fujian a complex picture emerges of the specifics of Chinese migration amongst a particular group from a particular geographic region of China. All three of these works mentioned underscore the complexities of Chinese migration in the modern era, and even the existence of a hierarchy of Chinese settlement with illegal migrants decidedly at the bottom.

1.3 - 3 The young British Chinese

Having looked at the conditions of settlement in the UK it can perhaps be seen why British Chinese have often been overlooked, classed as 'silent', or separated from other ethnicities marked as troublesome. Indeed the dispersed nature of the Chinese population has meant they are rarely felt to be a threat to local populations, as they are not visible in large numbers. Employment within the catering trade means many Chinese families are self employed, thereby posing little threat to other employment sectors, and being insulated from discrimination within those; it should be noted though that one reason for concentration within catering was the difficulty of entering the employment sector in the first place.

As time has gone on employment concentration figures illustrate that catering is becoming less important for the Chinese population (Office for National Statistics et al., 2005). One reason for the change in employment choice is that being educated within the British system, and speaking English, successive generations of British Chinese may face fewer barriers to mainstream employment. Lynn Pan (Pan, 1994) argued in the early 1990s that the younger members of the Chinese population were not doing well:

[T]he dispersed nature of Chinese settlement results in Children being placed in schools with little or no experience of dealing with ethnic minorities. Yet others say that it is because the children are confused, alienated and unhappy, or they have to help out in the family catering business, or because they are so withdrawn that their difficulties are overlooked by their teachers (Pan, 1994: 279).

On the other hand Wang Gungwu's observation suggested the opposite:

The serious test will come when another generation grows up. Stable politics and a sound economy in Britain will guarantee a high degree of tolerance toward the Chinese, which should increase the opportunities to assimilate (Wang, 1999: 105).

In support of Wang's (1999: 105) optimistic forecast, Parker, who wrote extensively about young British Chinese issues, stated:

Educationally, the emerging generations seem to be doing well. In 1995 approximately three-quarters of Chinese students applying for entry into higher education institutions in Britain were successful, a greater proportion than any other ethnic group (Parker in Pan, 1999: 307).

Government statistics also reflected positively on British Chinese pupils, in 2004 'Chinese pupils were the most likely to achieve five or more GCSE grades A*-C in England, with 79 per cent of Chinese girls and 70 per cent of Chinese boys respectively' (Office for National Statistics, 2006a). This trend towards high attainment for Chinese students was also supported in 2005 in a National statistics 'focus on ethnicity and identity' (Office for National Statistics et al., 2005: 8). Most recent statistics support the trends of the past in terms of Chinese pupil attainment:

Chinese pupils are the highest attaining ethnic group. The attainment gap between Chinese pupils and the national level is 20.4 percentage points, unchanged from 2009/10. Whilst the proportion of Chinese pupils achieving 5 or

more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent *including* English and mathematics GCSEs has increased between 2006/07 and 2010/11, the rate of improvement is, slower than that seen nationally (Department of Education, 2012: 4).

However the question as to what the future of the British Chinese community will be remains. Historically there have been issues around fitting in and being accepted as British for ethnically Chinese people, issues which go beyond grade averages found in national statistics. Although many Chinese migrants came to the UK to seek employment, the majority are not from wealthy backgrounds and have had to work in catering to maintain themselves and raise their families (Archer and Francis, 2006, Francis and Archer, 2005a, Li, 1994: 47). Indeed with the long working hours required to make a living from many takeaways, socialising was not always possible for many individuals. Wang Gungwu laments that 'The story of the millions who remain poor is rarely reported on. And the fact that, until recently, wealth in itself was not a Chinese cultural value is also not understood' (Wang, 2000: 100). Stereotypes such as the 'Chinaman', a vague and perpetual foreigner in the west, alongside the fluctuating political situation in China, have made settlement and citizenship complicated questions, especially for those from ex-colonies, 'It would take decades of effort to dispel the picture of every Chinese as someone always loyal to China and never fully attached to his or her adopted home' (Wang, 2000: 80). Because many of the 1960 - 80s generations came without good English ability, this has also contributed to the difficulty of being seen as full British nationals; Indeed Lynn Pan commented, somewhat tongue in cheek I suspect, that 'Hong Kong Chinese have a block where English is concerned' (Pan, 1994: 279).

Whereas, for example, we have the overarching work of Wang Gungwu (1994, 2000, 2003) to point us in a general direction about Chinese adaptability outside of China, nationally based academics such as Parker (1995), Song (1995), Archer and Francis (2005a, 2005b, 2009) present the most in-depth studies for the UK. Parker (1995) has found racism has been prevalent in some catering establishments, often when young British Chinese work at the service counter. Younger generations may therefore be affected by the negative attitudes individuals hold towards their parents, despite many not directly sharing their migratory backgrounds and having spent much of their lives in the UK. What is evident though is the amount of hard work which many Chinese

migrants have put into settling in Britain (Archer and Francis, 2006). In what ways the British Born and British Chinese will reflect on their parents' experiences and how they understand their position for the future is of great interest, though it has only begun to be explored. Continuing to try to understand the experiences of young British Chinese people is crucial, if we are not to continue in ignorance about a significant set of experiences within the UK. Acknowledging the existing generations of young British Chinese is also important in the context of future migrations of Chinese peoples to the UK, for example students from mainland China, whom may have a different set of needs.

1.4 Conclusion and thesis structure

Evidence presented here shows that the British Chinese have a distinct make-up. Whilst many, from the majority Hong Kong migrants, have tended to work in catering, it would be incorrect to assume all British Chinese as sharing these experiences. Indeed the picture of the British Chinese population is one set increasingly to change for younger generations, it is here where the future of Chinese experiences in Britain lies. This investigation moves to apply the notion of youth transition to understand, and reveal, the ways in which the unique variety of backgrounds present have come to shape young people's lives, as well as searching out how they increasingly come to shape their own futures as well.

The thesis is structured as follows:

In the Literature review (chapter two) the background of the Chinese in Britain will be looked at in greater detail from a research perspective. This serves to assess the place of this thesis within existing literature in the UK. The chapter then turns to transnational, and theoretical, areas of research which inform this thesis, and have the potential to expand and link understanding of Chinese experiences in and outside of Britain.

The methodology (chapter three) then gives a breakdown of the planning, conducting and analysis of the projects fieldwork stages. Included are reflections on the process as a whole, and an assessment of the participants as a group.

Family is the topic of the first of four empirical chapters (chapter four). The chapter serves to illustrate the impact of processes of migration and settlement for British Chinese families. Young people's accounts are drawn on to discuss interactions with parents and in particular the chapter looks at the influence of catering work, which has been shown to be influential in British Chinese families in previous research.

Language and identity forms the focus of the next chapter (chapter five). In this section language and its influence on young British Chinese is analysed. The chapter opens with a look at interactions in and around Hong Kong, a significant site for a majority of British Chinese people. Interactions in Hong Kong were marked by feelings of both joy and ambivalence, these experiences therefore allow the concept of British Chinese identity to be opened up. Moving on, the chapter looks at why language comes to be important to many young people, or at least represents a significant part of their biographies which should be explored. The Chinese school is a central part of experiences of learning and possibly rejection of Chinese language. The Chinese school also forms an important and rare example of a place in which Chineseness might be encountered in the UK, yet as accounts demonstrate it is often a certain version of Chineseness. Finally the chapter breaks down some of the functions language plays, such as the facilitation of communication between parents and young people, and wider British society.

Education and transition (chapter six) are two topics which are central to the study of youth. In this chapter we find that these themes remain distinctly important to participants in this thesis as well. Significantly the chapter contextualises youth research and youth research on transition. British Chinese transitions have rarely been explored, if at all, and the chapter thereby makes an important contribution to ongoing debates in both youth research and studies related to (Chinese) ethnicity. As participants were mostly drawn from sixth forms and university, the chapter focuses mainly on the routes young people take through school to university and their hopes for the future. Underlying what seem to be a set of quite linear transitions, are the aspirations participants held, these emanated from discourses of parental 'sacrifice', as well as awareness of the problematic employment niche in catering, many young people had experienced and wished to avoid.

Leisure is the final empirical chapter (chapter seven). In this chapter discussion is broadened out to look at notions of free time and young peoples' use of space. An effect of the linear transitions young British Chinese were making is that little free time and leisure time was open to many of the participants whilst they were still in school. Other constraints such as the attitude of parents, money and time away from school contributed here. The educational transition from school to university marked a key shift in notions of identity for many, with more time to explore leisure. For some participants their leisure activities extended earlier interests in 'Asian' media, principally initiated by the TVB channel(s). This might lead to an interest in Anime or dramas. Alongside these experiences were less 'ethnically' inflected leisure pursuits, such as going to the gym, shopping and individual hobbies. Although these leisure experiences may not contribute so strongly to theoretical notions of Chineseness, they illustrate the processes of change between previous generations and the current ones, they also mark important periods in which hybrid forms of identity might emerge. Leisure has tended to be overlooked in the existing literature on British Chinese, and the chapter seeks to humanise participants as well as contribute to a better understanding of the significance of leisure to this group.

Finally the thesis concludes with a chapter discussing the findings (chapter eight). Key aims are addressed as are the contributions of the thesis to research.

Chapter 2 Literature review

As most of the settled British Chinese migrated to the UK during the 1960s to 1980s a logical review of the literature should seek to understand the possible influence of this heritage on young British Chinese. At the same time there is a need to encompass flexible notions of identity and ethnic identity, principally because Chinese migrants entered the UK to progress economically and provide a better future for their children. The literature review therefore functions to marry these two notions of past and present, being and becoming, framing the discussions to come and preparing the ground for participants' own accounts. How the literature might be brought together with youth transitions literature is made clear at the outset.

Following an initial appraisal of youth transitions literature I then divide my review of the literature into three parts. First a more thorough review of the existing research on British Chinese people is presented. My reading of the existing research suggests that key work has been done on the impact of racism and social justice issues on the British Chinese population, following this there has also been a nascent set of work around the importance of catering family backgrounds and education for future generations. Nevertheless, existing research on, and with, the young British Chinese is in need of a more comprehensive look at how multiple life experiences and transitions are important, this will become evident through the review presented. Following, the second part of the review focuses on how transnational experiences of Chinese families might highlight the particularities of the British Chinese situation. In particular a look at American Chinese and those of more recent transnational family formations serves to indicate the somewhat unique experience Chinese in Britain have had, the work reviewed also shows how identifications with China and Chineseness work in practice and are shaped through the everyday. Finally the review builds on the notion of Chineseness as a theoretical concept, looking across wider debates of social construction, diaspora, and hybridity.

Ultimately the suggestion is that British Chinese do not draw on a singular point of reference, or exist in a capsule, in which an ideal sense of self exists, is accessed and transmitted. The movement of humans across geographical spaces has necessarily

meant that life experiences come to be informed by time spent in these places, regardless of the degree of isolation which may be felt by some; particularly earlier migrants. The degree to which these migrant experiences come to shape future generations of young British Chinese shall become evident through the subsequent chapters, and this discussion is enriched through an appreciation of how other Chinese migrants have fared globally. Indeed by acknowledging that there are a range of Chinese migrations, experiences, and emergent identities, we can arguably better know the importance of researching what being Chinese means in various contexts; this avoids searching for elusive authentic/inauthentic cases.

2.1 - Transitions and coupling young Chinese experiences

This study contributes to the extension of the transitions and youth literature by following the arguments of Furlong and MacDonald, both have argued that transitions and youth cultural studies may benefit from greater understanding and integration (Furlong et al, 2006, Furlong et al, 2011, MacDonald, 2011). As will be demonstrated, the study of youth in Britain would also benefit from appreciating the specific experiences of young British Chinese, who have until now rarely featured in research, and not been a part of discussions on transition.

Youth transitions literature covers a range of approaches, in the UK study has tended to focus on the challenges and changes taking place in young peoples' lives. Shifts have occurred over time, with an emphasis in early research on school to work transitions being primary (Willis, 1977). Whilst this approach often analysed the inner workings of institutions and behaviours thought to influence a successful 'transition' being made from school to work, we have to ask the question to what extent was this mode of enquiry interested in interrogating and breaking from societal expectations, and assumptions, about the nature of both education and work. In principle the seemingly unshakable tether between the states' duty to provide education at least at school level, and the then hope that this will translate to more productive citizens post-school. Furlong and Cartmel (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997) have put that the educational bargain is an unequal one, attention needing to be paid to the inequalities inherent in the education system. Education is often complicated by the attitudes of teachers to

certain pupils, a structuring of learning which may not be flexible to encompass all forms of learning, and a curriculum which content is not necessarily of obvious value to those from varying social backgrounds. These notable challenges inherent in education may end up causing difficulties in the classroom, outside of it, and ultimately in the workplace.

Much like other aspects of social enquiry which straddle the post-modern turn, youth transitions research has similarly dealt with the profusion of areas in which enquiry might go. Initially, as mentioned, the simplistic move from school to work, alongside child to adult, were the main areas of research. However, with the challenge to increasingly incorporate studies of gendered experience, there has been a need to expand and specify the ways in which this is important. In some respects the study tended towards young men, because as the economic times were also shifting in the 1980s so called 'jobs for life' were increasingly scarce. This prompted a reassessment of the established notions of transition as linked to progress through school and to work. In the North East of England particular attention to the effects of a depressed labour market on youth transitions have been paid by researchers in Tyneside - examples include MacDonald et al's work, as well as that within Newcastle such as Hollands and Nayak (Hollands, 2002, 2003, MacDonald and Marsh, 2004, MacDonald et al, 2005, MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007, Nayak, 2006).

The work of authors such as Hollands (Hollands, 1990) and Furlong and Cartmel (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997) has illustrated that the role of work in youth transition was becoming less secure, if anything transitions were increasingly fragmented or elongated. A variety of descriptors have been used to illustrate these shifting sands; 'stickers' and 'switchers' for example. Some social commentators in sociology such as Giddens (Giddens, 1984) and Beck (Beck, 2000, 2008) argued that society in the west as a whole is in transition, and fragmentation has been occurring for some time. Perhaps this leads to 'choice biographies' in which the most secure way of illustrating the transitions young people are making is through an understanding at an individual level. Naturally though this focus on the individual sometimes omits the importance of time honoured categories for social analysis and explanation such as gender, class, and in terms of the transitions debate more recently, the role of ethnicity and culture.

Alongside the work on youth transitions has been a set of long running work on the cultural experiences of young people. Sometimes seen as sub-cultural but also looking at ethnic and minority groups experiences of youth, musical, gendered subcultures and even more generally at aspects of youth culture such as the bedroom and internet. Incorporation of these approaches, in response to both MacDonald and Furlong's calls for a more integrated and less separated approach, is valuable (Furlong et al, 2006, 2011, MacDonald et al, 2005, MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007). In terms of this study the drawing on of both a transitions approach as well as an understanding of the cultural backgrounds and approaches young people come from will be valuable, in not only addressing the problem of transitions being associated with a linear or bounded look at young peoples' lives, perhaps too reliant or focused on the areas of education and work, but also allow for exploration of hitherto under-referenced and under-incorporated aspects of lives and influences on them. An approach which is flexible to the modern conditions and expectations of young people in Britain is required, as is one which can accept the nuances between desires to follow a path and linear route, but at the same time express the realities sometimes captured in the phrase 'critical moment' or 'choice biography' (Furlong et al, 2006, Thompson, 2002).

In the coming literature review I seek to first demonstrate a number of existing works which may be drawn upon to understand British Chinese experiences. This research demonstrates the complexities, and variety of positions and influences, which can be taken into account within the later empirical study, and its interpretations of young peoples' interview accounts. Having demonstrated this existing set of literature I will build on this in the empirical chapters; the diagram below (figure 7) shows how the core concepts in youth transition on the left, and then the overlapping intricacies of young peoples' lives in the centre, which together can be said to comprise 'youth transitions' research, and its connected areas of youth study, can be taken forward through the concepts on the far right.

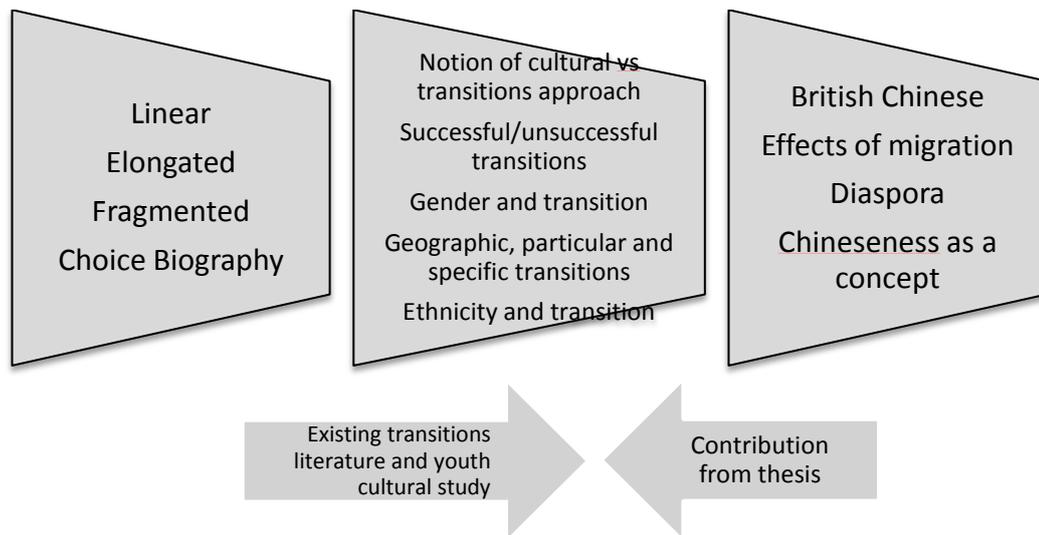


Figure 7 - Diagram of transitions key concepts, youth studies insights and thesis contribution

2.2 British Chinese/Chinese in Britain - assessing the research environment

In the introduction (chapter one) I briefly summarised research on British Chinese people in the UK; noting the desire to address the question of them as a ‘silent minority’, and also the commonly held notion of the Chinese population as homogenous. Indeed a popular way to begin papers and academic discussions of the Chinese population in Britain, is with the lament that the group is misunderstood and neglected. The conclusion of research has often been to demonstrate that a combination of population dispersion, population size (being relatively small), and difficulty fitting into British society, have produced a lack of understanding in wider society. Yet even within the small group of researchers looking at British Chinese there is still debate as to what the term British Chinese actually refers to, and to the meanings this has. Pang and Lau for example surmised that:

The Chinese in Britain are a fairly homogenous group, and until the last decade or so, the majority of them came from Hong Kong. Thus, due to their origins, the culture of the British Chinese can be traced back to the values and ethos of the Hong Kong Chinese, which has its own idiosyncrasies (Pang and Lau, 1998: 864).

Whilst with the benefit of greater research in the intervening period, Chan et al interpreted the dominance of Hong Kong Chinese migrants within British Chinese research differently:

Since there is little study distinguishing the needs of different Chinese groups, the study of the UK Chinese community has become the study of UK Hong Kong

Chinese people. The social and psychological behaviour of Hong Kong Chinese people has been generalised and applied to other UK Chinese groups (Chan et al., 2004: 4).

Therefore, when choosing to base a research project on any part of the British Chinese population, it is important that we state which portion of this group we are looking at. If for example it is determined that homogeneity is the result of similarity and shared backgrounds, then the introduction, this review, and ultimately the views of participants, demonstrates that the British Chinese are not homogenous.

The question of homogeneity is like the quotes above suggest one of the depth of existing research, and interpretation of findings. In this first section of the review I look at British Chinese research, showing that research so far has focused on racism and social justice concerns, also expanding to look at the impact of catering and education on families and young people. Following this review it should become clearer the need to question the continued relevance of existing findings, in particular, as little research has been conducted nationally, whether these findings also apply to British Chinese in the North East. Central to the arguments found within this study will be that there is much more to young British Chinese transitions than the currently covered research topics; which often focus strongly on reactions to racism in various forms.

2.2 - 1 Racism and social justice

During the 1990s ethnicity and its meaning were increasingly debated the UK. The Stephen Lawrence case for example, in which a young black man was killed by white men and police mishandling of the case was said to have contributed to the difficulties in catching the criminals involved, exemplified growing national worry over the ability of both government and society to treat all individuals equally and fairly (Chan et al., 2004). For Chinese people in Britain the 1990s would mark a watershed period, in which not only were they recognised more openly in statistics, as seen in the introduction, but also in more detailed research. Arguably the fact that Chinese people have represented a minority, with the associated myths of being 'collectivist, conformist, entrepreneurial, deferent, and conforming to Confucian values' (Archer et al., 2009: 90), has meant that most research on the Chinese in Britain has, and still is, concerned with the effects of racism and social justice. From the 1990s onwards two

areas of discussion, firstly reports commissioned by academics and Chinese community groups and secondly academic papers, provided both rebuttals and increasing nuance about important issues facing the Chinese population. These discussions illustrated racism and social justice issues. Racism was often related to the Chinese populations' visible difference to the communities in which they lived, for example the takeaway running family which was located in outlying urban areas. Racism might also be found at an institutional level, for example within the police, education sector or within decision making. Social justice issues mostly related to those members of the Chinese population which were, for a variety of reasons, not making use of the possible range of services available to them (Adamson et al., 2009, Chan et al., 2004).

Whilst mention of racism is common in the media, its actual effects can be quite varied and specific to those groups targeted. A recent report looking at racism against those of Chinese ethnicity by Adamson et al found that:

The UK Chinese people are subject to substantial levels of racist abuse, assault and hostility. The types of racist abuse suffered by UK Chinese people range from racist name-calling to damage to property and businesses, arson, physical attacks sometimes involving hospitalisation and murder (Adamson et al., 2009: 10).

Commissioned by Min Quan (Adamson et al., 2009), a rights group which represents Chinese people in the UK, with a focus on Manchester and London, the report wanted to demonstrate the difficulties racism posed for Chinese people in the UK. Experiences of racism are complex. For example Adamson et al put that:

[R]ecent figures from the British Crime Survey 2005-06 show that people from mixed and Asian ethnic backgrounds (31 per cent and 26 per cent respectively) had a higher risk of becoming a victim of crime (any British Crime Survey crime) than people from white (23 per cent), Black (22 per cent) or Chinese and Other (21 per cent) ethnic backgrounds and that there were no statistically significant changes in the risk of victimisation for any of the ethnic groups since 2004-05 (Adamson et al., 2009: 24).

These figures suggest, of the ethnic groups studied, the Chinese are not the most likely to be victimised. However ambiguity arises because racism is somewhat subjective in its definition within police reporting. It also happens that crime statistics do not always represent Chinese people separately from other groups, especially at the national level (Adamson et al., 2009: 25). As Adamson et al (Adamson et al., 2009) found though the

experience of racism amongst Chinese people in the UK is significant, and may not be accurately represented by figures which compare them with other ethnic groups nor national averages. As the table below illustrates a quite specific set of reasons for racism emerged from both surveys and qualitative research in this study:

- Minority ethnic people as soft targets
- Intolerance of difference and change
- Decreased fear of authority - young people in particular
- Jealousy
- Visibility
- Documented examples of Chinese illegal migrant workers - scapegoating
- Media bias and lack of positive coverage of the impact of migration in UK
- Racism - in which one race is believed superior to another

Figure 8 - Reasons for racism against Chinese people in the UK (Adamson et al., 2009: 31-32)

The effect of racism on the Chinese population has been compounded by various social justice issues, many of which are a direct result of what researchers have described as 'unmet needs' (Chan et al., 2004). Reproduction below of Chan et al's (2004: 9) findings table demonstrates the needs of members of the survey they conducted. It should be noted though, and is done so by the researchers, that the survey was mostly filled in by those in larger urban areas, the return rate was also only 14.6% (316/2500). Problems of incorrect address and a low response rate may have skewed the responses somewhat, though the researchers did make a useful attempt at accounting for the distribution of Chinese people under the population categorisations 'big' (149/1300), 'medium' (76/600), 'small' (91/600). Additionally respondents in both the postal survey and semi structured interviews conducted were said to be 'married, economically active, and well-educated' (Chan et al., 2004: 10). As we know from the statistical evidence as well as other studies (Parker, 1995, Francis and Archer, 2005a: 91) the majority of the settled adult population are Hong Kong immigrants with low qualifications, which may indicate that the findings under-represent this group.

Table 9: Respondents' problems over the past 12 months (PS)

Problems encountered during the past 12 months	N	%
Financial difficulties	127	40
Work pressures	102	32
Illness	100	32
Communication difficulties with health workers	91	29
Relationship problems with spouse/ partner	61	20
Housing problem	59	19
Racial discrimination	58	18
Children's study problems	55	17
Business problems	51	16
Problems on parenting	46	15
Pressures on caring for sick family members	45	14
Relationship problems with colleagues	43	14
Relationship problems with friends	43	14
Unemployment	42	13
Relationship problems with friends	43	14
Relationship problems with children	40	13
Friend/relative passed away	39	12
Racial harassment / attacks	39	12
Relationship problems with parents	35	11
Relationship problems with neighbours	34	11
Pregnancy	18	6

Total N = 316

Figure 9 - Chinese people's problems in Chan et al's report (2004: 16)

Interestingly Chan et al's (2004) participants did not place racism at the top of their problems. However the problem of using quantitative methods with a sample group, which is both hard to reach and may face variable language abilities, is that results might hide the complex interconnections which underlie the data. These findings are balanced out by qualitative research, which vitally makes a link between abstract problems such as 'financial difficulties' and what members of the Chinese population might do in the face of these issues. For Chan et al (2004) respondents tended to rely on a variety of sources, for example children, often with better English skills, could be asked for help in the first instance. Immediate family if nearby might also be asked (Chan et al., 2004). Coupled with the belief that the Chinese population is self sufficient, Chan et al (2004) point out that those community organisations which do

exist beyond the family (such as Min Quan and the Wai Yin Chinese Women's Association) are nevertheless hampered by:

[L]ack of resources, especially finance, has meant that many Chinese organizations could mainly provide leisure and social activities with limited capacities in addressing racism, family problems and the psychological health of Chinese people. In short, UK Chinese organizations are relatively weak rather than silent organizations (Chan et al., 2004: 528-9).

Key across both Adamson et al's (2009) and Chan et al's (2004) reports was the finding that communication difficulties were paramount for adult and older members of the population. These communication difficulties may result from lower English attainment in those migrants from the 1960/60s migration era, before Hong Kong education reforms. With problems in telling services what they want, some Chinese people might choose to take matters into their own hands or not notify anyone (Adamson et al., 2009: 81, Chan et al., 2004: 19). The police, if they were felt not to deal effectively with a problem, might be seen as a soft touch, or perhaps racist or discriminatory in their approach. Indeed the opening subject of Adamson et al's (2009) report is that of a man killed by attackers and the subsequent battle to get police to take the matter more seriously.

The basis for the reports discussed was in uncovering the effects and extent of racism and the connected way in which social justice might be explored. But a problem of finding accurate data exists for those studying the Chinese population. As The Chinese Community Centre (London) found, the same survey used in Adamson et al's report (Adamson et al., 2009), the British Crime Survey, is difficult to apply to Chinese people:

[T]he number of Chinese people included in the BCS sample is too small to enable any separate analysis to take place. In the 2000 BCS, the number of Chinese respondents was 54 from a total sample of 23,285, or just over 0.2% (The Chinese Community Centre, 2005: 8).

The importance of conducting new surveys and interviews with British Chinese is therefore highlighted. It is possible to agree broadly with The Chinese Community Centre report (The Chinese Community Centre, 2005: 8-10), which notes the following issues and challenges for Chinese people in Britain: crime, public representation, public services, family pressures, older people and health as the main issues facing the

Chinese in the UK. The way in which these issues translate in ordinary Chinese peoples' lives can be quite varied, lending support to the need for continued research with and amongst the Chinese population. For example Chau and Yu (2009) found that older members of the Chinese population may hold quite different interpretations of how to manage their health, relating to differences in philosophies (Chau and Yu, 2009: 780). Additionally older members of the Chinese population may not have the English language skills to communicate their needs to GPs (Chau and Yu, 2009: 778). Younger members of the Chinese population may have the required language skills to communicate with GPs, yet struggle to get the time off work (Chau and Yu, 2009: 119). In general a lack of understanding from authorities may stem from lack of representation politically, although there is an ethnically Chinese Lord in England, The Chinese Community Centre noted:

Of the 2,033 local authority councillors in London, 2 are Chinese. None of Britain's 659 MPs are Chinese (The Chinese Community Centre, 2005: 9).

The impact of this is perhaps evident in decisions made by authorities, which might affect Chinese people, yet do not always take into account their views. For example Chan (2006, 2007) has written about the way in which planning decisions might favour certain notions of cultural authenticity in the built environment, mainly to promote the local economy:

[T]he Chinese Quarter was deemed to signify a multicultural character because it contained the reference of a multicultural presence (Chan, 2007: 74).

Designs for Chinatowns or Chinese 'space' in this instance related more to visions of authenticity, such as Chinese arches or green tiles, than the needs of the population; such as language services for older people.

Despite the existence of racism and social justice issues in the Chinese population in the UK, statistics also indicate they are one of the most economically and educationally successful (Pang and Lau, 1998). Explanation for the success of Chinese people in the economic and educational spheres has been put down to community cohesion, culture, tradition and work ethic and the strength of family. Whilst Chan et al (2007a, 2007b) do argue that traditional beliefs, such as the philosophies of Confucius and his famous

five relationships which stressed, albeit patriarchal, strong social bonds as well as a reverence for learning, many researchers reject that there is a simple explanation, or a 'magic' reason, why some of the Chinese population might be considered successful. For example Chau and Yu (2001) found that social cohesion was often more apparent than real, due to the dispersion patterns required for takeaways to be profitable, and the competition between business rivals in Chinatowns. Pang and Lau (1998) do however trace the success of Chinese people globally to Hong Kong and a desire to find work:

Why do the Chinese have a propensity to turn to business activities? Such a tendency is certainly not a cultural orientation, but one borne of necessity. Usually Chinese migrants are a numerical as well as an ethnic minority in the host society, and consequently are in more disadvantaged positions. Normally they have little or no political power and therefore less access to resources, added to which they are frequently neither competent in the local linguistic skills nor in possession of qualifications recognized locally (Pang and Lau, 1998: 868).

As the authors point out above, though 'success' can be read in a variety of ways, the difficulties in entering British society beyond the catering industry have meant segregation for many first generation Chinese (Pang and Lau, 1998: 870). Though we might argue that the experiences of Chinese migrants have shown them to be adaptive and open to working hard to remain in Britain, this often comes at a cost for them and their families, which has been demonstrated in discussions of variable racism and social justice issues.

2.2 - 2 Catering and education, British Chinese families and young people

Investigation by academics has revealed the complex relationship between racism and social justice issues, and the everyday lives of British Chinese people. In particular, the way in which the family functions has received attention, as a focus for understanding the issues of isolation and threat featured in reports such as those already discussed. An emergent strand of inquiry has featured young British Chinese, looking at how their identities and role in British society is shaped.

It is difficult to dissociate the experience of family for many British Chinese from the catering and takeaway sector. As early as 1995 researchers such as David Parker began to delve more deeply into the role of catering or takeaways, these businesses being

intertwined so closely for many between home, family and work. Other research such as that by Verma et al (1999) and Song (1995) equally stressed the way in which the home, family and work environment were combined for many British Chinese - 'in the case of Chinese families running take-aways, not only wives, but also children, tend to be integral as family labour' (Song, 1995: 287). Parker's conception of the takeaway (1995, 1998, 2000) draws on Bourdieuan concepts of the 'habitus', a term for the way in which socio-cultural factors come together to produce a unique environment, within which British Chinese people, and young people live. Miri Song (1995) pointed to the difficulties young British Chinese faced when located in between their family roles and those they observed in other young people:

As natural as "helping out" was for Chinese children, they were also acutely aware of diverging from the Western ideal of "family." "Helping out" highlighted the fact that their parents were not the sole economic providers engaged in waged work, as in the Western norm. "Helping out" while growing up in an environment in which family and work lives were so enmeshed often resulted in children longing for a "normal" life, in which "the family" and leisure occupied a distinct sphere (Song, 1995: 294).

Verma et al were moved emotionally by the family situations of their participants stating:

These five case histories leave us with one word to describe the children in these families: heroic. They work loyally and with industry in their family catering businesses for long hours, still managing to do normal school work as well as learning spoken and sometimes written Chinese. They accept their parents with tolerant concern...They suffer the external slights of racism... (Verma et al., 1999: 166).

Reliance on the takeaway and catering sector for work exposes the Chinese population to a risk of racism due to their visibility. Parker dissected the encounters across the takeaway counter, which in the case of young women could become tinged with sexual abuse, as well as racism (Parker, 1995, Parker, 1998). The problems young people and their families faced from sometimes violent, often abusive customers, were the result of visibility, isolation, police tardiness and lack of power, as well as the need to keep shops open until late; increasing the likelihood of drunken men entering or gangs of young people causing trouble (Chan et al., 2004, Parker, 1995). Negative encounters in

the takeaway might mean that experiences of racism usually faced by Chinese adults also come to affect their children (Adamson et al., 2009, Chan et al., 2004).

Potentially therefore takeaways exemplify both family and work for Chinese people. While there are negative experiences of racism, takeaways offer regular work and stability in employment. The act of running a takeaway also necessitates contact between the public and owner, which challenges in part the notion of Chinese people in Britain as totally isolated or silent, though does perhaps raise other issues as to what degree they are part of society:

Most Chinese catering services rely on British customers...Hence it is wrong to say there is any absence of contact...It is equally incorrect to say that the Chinese are an invisible community [...]

The real question is why the Chinese people still fail to secure full membership of the community despite their active participation in the economy (Chau and Yu, 2001: 116).

Aware of the social problems Chau and Yu (Chau and Yu, 2001) highlight many young British Chinese have been encouraged to educate themselves 'out' of catering work, perhaps with a focus on university or professional employment instead.

Education marks a significant difference between young British Chinese and their parents' experience of life in Britain. A significant reason for concentration in catering was that many Chinese migrants lacked qualifications for entry into the employment sector. As we have seen so far although the catering trade may not affect all families of British Chinese ethnicity, experiences in the takeaway and catering industry were often challenging, involving a mix of long working hours, reduced social life and possible racism. It would be accurate to say that for those with catering in the family there is often an emphasis on escape, using education to achieve this (Song, 1995: 295). It is also possible that growing up with the takeaway may play a part in British Chinese pupils consistently topping recent exam league tables (Office for National Statistics, 2006a).

Beyond the takeaway Archer and Francis (2005a) have found that Chinese parents from the professions also promote education, and promote education as a matter of

course for the future (see Bourdieu, 2010 for a discussion of education as 'capital'). In Archer and Francis' (2005a) study parents suggested that education was part of their culture and that it was natural to pursue it. Verma et al (1999) also found that cultural arguments were informative on the emphasis on education:

[E]ducation in the Chinese family is associated with high emphasis on collectivism, which defines the academic success of the child as an important source of pride for the entire family (Verma et al., 1999: 127).

However although young British Chinese might be told education is the route to future success, similar problems of understanding within the systems they encounter may continue beyond the takeaway. For example Verma et al (1999) suggest that teachers do not always understand the needs of Chinese pupils and the variety of backgrounds they come from:

"I don't know much about them, they're cute little people. You wouldn't know they were in the room" (Quote from participant in Simpson, 1987 referenced in Verma et al., 1999: 125).

Although the above comment from a teacher may seem throwaway, other research corroborates the notion that the image of British Chinese pupils as quiet, deferent and hard working may mean differences are not addressed. Archer and Francis (2007) have conducted quite extensive work on the topic of British Chinese pupils finding that racism exists amongst teachers and peers, as do expectations regarding their identities (Francis and Archer, 2005a, Francis and Archer, 2005b). Despite the issue of racism and a lack of understanding, young British Chinese pupils were shown to do well in school for a variety of reasons, one of which was a construction of education as essential:

[This] discourse was constructed in specifically racialized cultural terms, and was positioned as a defining feature of 'Chineseness' – or more specifically, the British Chinese diasporic experience. Educational achievement, and highly valuing education, was constructed as 'something that we do' (Archer and Francis, 2006: 40).

Drawing on Bourdieu (Archer and Francis, 2006) suggest that a cultural habitus (Parker, 2000), where the 'right mix' of attitudes and support across class and gender boundaries exist, has contributed to young British Chinese success. Nevertheless the impact on pupils is not universally positive:

British–Chinese children themselves pay a high price for their success in terms of the hard work undertaken and their resulting positioning by other pupils (Francis and Archer, 2005a: 106).

With the increasing interest in the second generations of British Chinese there has been a questioning of the role this portion of the population might play. Certainly the position of second generation and those beyond will be quite different to their parents; who arrived in Britain as migrants regardless of differences in education and language ability. For young British Chinese the question for researchers has been to understand their identities now. Conducting his research on the topic of young British Chinese identities David Parker suggested that:

Young Chinese people in Britain have a far greater range of identifications and ambivalent positions than a simple binary opposition of closed against open identities can encompass (Parker, 1995: 232).

Referring here to a need to take into account six spaces in particular which might shape young British Chinese identity:

- 1 school and street life and the responses to racism or acceptance.
 - 2 moments of encounter across the counter in catering employment.
 - 3 experiences in the education system and labour market.
 - 4 personal and familial investments in Hong Kong culture.
 - 5 engagement with regional identities.
 - 6 political action via an embryonic British Chinese sensibility, often attained through anti-racist and feminist perspectives
- (Parker, 1995: 243).

Though these spaces have been investigated to some extent, although not by a wide number of researchers directly working with the British Chinese (Archer and Francis, 2006, 2007, Francis and Archer, 2005a, 2005b, Parker, 1995, 1998, Verma et al., 1999, Yeh, 2000) a solid British Born Chinese identity has still yet to emerge. The identities which have been uncovered in research tend to be based on those from Hong Kong backgrounds (Parker, 1998), something backed up in Verma et al's (1999) work in between Britain and Hong Kong.

Yeh (2000) argues that while a singular identity may be felt to be elusive, it may also be undesired. Interviewing and assessing the motivations of British Chinese artists, in this instance Anthony Key, Yeh suggests:

In comparison to Asian Americans, black Britons or British Asians, the Chinese in Britain are a relatively young community and have yet to consolidate a distinct 'British-Chinese' identity. The notion of hybridity is either immediately rejected or, in the case of Anthony Key, consumed and egested, and the notion of a 'British-Chinese' syncretic culture remains inapplicable (Yeh, 2000: 83).

The emergence of the internet has allowed websites such as DimSum.co.uk (now defunct) and britishchineseonline.com (Parker and Song, 2006a, 2006b, 2007); these sites do give some focus for those with shared British Chinese experiences and backgrounds. My own searches also indicate an increasing role for social networking using facebook, and other social media promoting for example 'Asian nights' out clubbing or Asian speed dating. It remains as yet though for the leap to be made from young British Chinese people, who from their understandings of Chineseness also engage with the public sphere, perhaps through art (Yeh, 2000), websites (Parker and Song, 2007) or theatre (see www.yellowearth.org or www.trueheart.org.uk), to a large and specific British Chinese alignment. Because of the dynamic nature of the British Chinese population, with its internal linguistic, age and migratory backgrounds, it may be that the notion of a singular British Chinese grouping does not appeal because it is irrelevant.

2.2 - 3 Evaluating British Chinese research, the place of young British Chinese

This project focuses on the young British Chinese, so why take what might seem like a detour through racism and social justice issues, takeaways and education?

Firstly it has been important to demonstrate that though a growing amount of work has been done, there is a lot of potential for more. Although highlighting racism and social justice is of importance, these experiences have been shown to disproportionately affect those from Hong Kong backgrounds and working within the catering trade. Statistics introduced at the outset of the project show how catering represents about 34.51% of occupations for men and 16.99% for women (see introduction for clarification), it is clear that a lot of other British Chinese experiences

are going underreported and may be under discussed (Office for National Statistics et al., 2005: 508).

Secondly I have wanted to show the background from which many young British Chinese come. Though there is a tendency to focus on descendents of Hong Kong Chinese migrants, this is of significant influence and there have been difficulties in accessing those from other backgrounds. Witnessing first-hand the hard work of their parents, as well as sharing in the racism and economic limitations their parents faced, many want something different for their futures; the work of Parker (1995, 1998, 2000), Song (1995), Archer and Francis (2006) has thereby demonstrated that many young British Chinese are driven by aspirations of better education.

Third we get a glimpse of the possible future of young British Chinese. A principal question in the past has been whether a specifically British Chinese youth culture would emerge (Parker, 1995, 1998, 2000, Yeh, 2000). It seems to me that this question, whilst interesting in itself, misses the key experiences and transitions young British Chinese are making now and have been making for some time. Though young British Chinese have increasingly found ways to communicate as a group, for example through the websites Parker and Song have explored (Parker and Song, 2006b, 2006a, 2007), this does not yet translate into a wider movement based solely on the British Chinese settled population.

In the next sections of the literature review I go on to look at how flexible a concept Chineseness is, suggesting that we should remain open to the possibilities young British Chinese see for themselves in future.

2.3 Exploring China, Chineseness and transnational implications

As suggested in the chapter introduction, understanding the British Chinese requires, to some extent, appreciating experiences across different geographical spaces. The assessment of the British Chinese population so far has shown them to be of varied background, Hong Kong, Malaysia, China and elsewhere. Yet, as the previous section has shown, much of the research on the British Chinese population concerns the descendents of migrants from one geographical place, Hong Kong. Currently there is a

lack of broader understanding of how Chinese people in Britain may draw on a broader set of migratory histories and backgrounds.

Within the population there are divisions and differences in experience, many older members have expressed isolation from mainstream British society, also working adults might be segregated socially due to their long hours in catering. We have started to understand the perspectives of the now significant British born and young British Chinese, who now strive to educate themselves and escape the economic niche many of their parents worked within. As this thesis is focused on the experiences of young British Chinese in particular, it seems prudent that we take into account the possibility of new formations of Chineseness, which when growing up in Britain, but not being a migrant, may draw on the global image of China itself in understanding and creating a Chinese identity. A discussion of the changing image of China is therefore the first concern in this section. After, I look at some examples of how transnational Chinese families have been influenced during short term-migrations. This serves to demonstrate the significance of particularly British Chinese experiences of migration, which have tended to be more settled, having a stabilising effect on subsequent generations. Finally I look at America as a site for comparison with the British Chinese, where a settled community has also lived and had to come to terms with responses to Chinese people as an ethnic minority. At the same time the American experience has been quite different to that of British Chinese, not least due to a longer period of settlement, as well as the more open discussions and battles over citizenship, these often public debates have largely been absent in the UK and as a result influenced and constricted understanding.

2.3 - 1 Changing face of China

Scholars of the Chinese diaspora have attempted a geopolitical reassessment of what it means to be Chinese and how this has been affected through migration and political change. Tu Wei-Ming's (1994) notion of a 'greater' China, with a core and periphery model, based on China at the centre and then various outlying territories arranged outward, is one way of conceptualising the relationship between peoples of Chinese origin or descent, and the political unit called China (Tu, 1994). Critics have argued though that placing China at the centre of this relationship excludes other expressions

of Chineseness, even marks them as less authentic or real; Chinese outside China only being abroad either trapped by political inconvenience or through economic necessity. Wang Gungwu (1993, 2000, 2003) has attempted to show that though there are Chinese outside of China, the debate is a complex and shifting one. At some points in time migrants see themselves as mainly huaqiao or overseas Chinese, with the expectation to return, and in the modern era huaren - as 'of' Chinese descent, with no link to China the country (Wang, 2003). Different definitions of what Chineseness or Chinese 'is' have been created by settled communities in the regions outside of China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Australia, Vietnam, Indonesia, America, the list goes on, but the experiences in each of these territorial units has shaped those there in a variety of ways (Wang, 1993, 2000, 2003).

We are not then necessarily in the position Tu (1994) suggests of a core and a periphery, even if the debate about cultural authenticity might sometimes lead us to support this argument. In fact, as Shih (2007) persuasively argues, the nature of China itself is changing so much that we are quickly called to question not only Chineseness, but also China itself and its global face. Shih (1995, 1996, 2007, 2008) argues that it is transnational experiences of Chineseness where we will find nuance and blurred definitions, this sits within the modern historical period in which China's and Chinese experiences are 'becoming' rather than being fixed. In looking at the film 'Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon' Shih (2007: 3) deconstructs the multiple Chinese accents, identifications and presentation found on screen. An unaware audience might miss the fact that the major actors all speak differently, originate from different countries/regions such as Malaysia, Hong Kong, China and yet we are expected to believe that this is all a historical piece set in the same region of China. Shih's (2007) observations show how accented the experience of being 'Chinese' is. However as Chu (2008) notes, these differences may be set aside in the name of producing a single image of China for sale. The actress Zhang Ziyi, who also stars in Crouching Tiger, has become one symbol of a saleable China, as Chu observes:

Zhang Ziyi marks a paradigm shift in Chinese culture in the sense that she embodies what one can call a Chinese dream: a message to the world that China is more than just the world's largest factory; it is also a source of cultural software capable of seducing the West (Chu, 2008: 204).

The popularity of 'Crouching Tiger' demonstrated a change in fortune for China itself, being wrapped up in a more outgoing and globally engaged attitude. China's modern image is not only related to the possibility of its changing cultural capital, but also of a rejection of past experiences of colonisation and racism:

Racism against the Chinese was endorsed by a series of unequal treaties and arbitrary laws since the Treaty of Nanjing was signed in 1842...considered it a "sin" to be friendly with a Chinese and "utterly ridiculous" to marry one (Shih, 1996: 940).

Though Shih maintains that this new face of China nevertheless remains problematic:

"China" now becomes just another exotic country whose signs and symbols can be manipulated at will in order to sell the show and the products of the sponsors. China needs to be made popular so that it can be sold (Shih, 1995: 170).

In Shih's (1995) example a synthetic Chineseness is produced for global consumption, images of a cultural China are played upon and audiences may knowingly or unknowingly accept these interpretations. However a deconstruction of a 'saleable' Chineseness reveals the carried transnational experiences, detected for example in the varieties of accent which speak back to different economic, political and social realities for the Chinese cast, traces of perhaps empire, modernity and capitalism, as well as communism and historical and cultural China.

In Parker (1995, 1998, 2000) and Verma's (1999) research Hong Kong was seen as a source of cultural Chineseness. This makes sense, considering both Hong Kong's previous geopolitical status as separate from China, as well as its different route towards modernity. For many separation was also to do with the isolation of China in terms of information, reinforced through limited access to material from the region; mostly only Cantonese language video tapes and CDs were available. Little academic comment has been made about the contemporary crossovers between China, Hong Kong, and notions and understandings of Chinese identity in Britain. Importantly the relationship between British Chinese and China is an increasingly complex one, something research should be taking account of. As example while Hong Kong has stars such as Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan, which have already become world famous (Louie, 2002), some of these same stars, such as Jackie Chan, once synonymous with

Hong Kong film, now crossover into the Mandarin Chinese language film market; particularly as Hong Kong has returned to Chinese sovereignty. A shift in geopolitical status might have more effects over time than simply changing which film stars feature in which films. Arguably it will be this change in the face of China and Hong Kong which may shape young British Chinese understandings of Chineseness in future, as the mainland seeks to modernise its image to appeal to a wider audience.

2.3 - 2 Transnational Chinese families

Image aside, an effect of the changes in China has been change in Chinese parents looking to educate their young people abroad. Here we can draw parallels with those same Hong Kong migrants which are the parents of today's British born Chinese and British Chinese. Education is viewed as a priority for these families, perhaps one reason why Bourdieuan (Francis and Archer, 2005a, Waters, 2005: 362) arguments (social, economic, cultural capital) have become quite influential in their application to explain this tendency.

Several family forms have been identified as a result of these migrations, the sacrificial mother, the parachute kid, and astronaut family. Sacrificial mothers (Huang and Yeoh, 2005: 391) are so called because they travel with their children to other countries in order to support them through education abroad. In many cases these mothers give up their own career possibilities which may be quite good, literally they 'sacrifice' their career life for their children. The practice of accompanying children to study is noted by Huang and Yeoh (2005) to have become particularly popular in Singapore, where China Chinese families imagine that the combination of Chinese, and English will make adjustment easier. Nevertheless through interviews Huang and Yeoh found:

[T]he women struggled with confronting an education system they did not understand, having to take on manually-demanding jobs, downgrading their standards of living, being cheated by recruitment agents of their hard-earned money and enduring social discrimination by Singaporeans (Huang and Yeoh, 2005: 392).

The potential for difficulty in making the transition abroad was therefore high for both parent and child. In other examples the lack of a Chinese or cultural Chinese similarity meant that children were sent alone, often to the United States. So called 'parachute

kids' they may live with relatives, guardians or family contacts whilst they are still considered minors. The situation of being a parachute kid left some in an interesting position, without feeling the need to assimilate to U.S. culture, they could feel less insecure than their American born co-ethnics. In the face of similar rejection of their culture and identity as Chinese:

They explained that it is difficult to be friends with Americans because they are only interested in befriending those who have something to offer them, such as help with homework...Rather than internalizing rejection or inferiority, immigrant Chinese youth reverse the situation and actively reject American culture and their U.S. - born peers (Chiang-Hom, 2004: 155).

Interestingly the parachute kids were clearer in some sense in their relationship between identity as migrants and the reason for being abroad - education - when compared to American born Chinese. Their rejection of the need to assimilate to the U.S., indeed their strong identification with another country, could mark them as confident in themselves. Parachuted experiences are in contrast to the experience of settled ethnic Chinese, such as the British Born Chinese, which Parker (1995, 1998) found were reserved about their identities keeping them within the home and family. This contrast highlights the negotiated nature of Chineseness and migrant experiences. In the case of the parachute kids many come from wealthy middle class families, they have the finances and the knowledge of the education system to be confident about their place as educational migrants. For the British Chinese their position may be challenged in the education system, as Archer and Francis (2005a, 2005b, 2006) have shown, young British Chinese pupils must often navigate complex stereotypes and expectations of their peers and teachers.

Finally astronaut families are those that relocate in part abroad or fully in order to support their child's education, they do though have the intention of return to their home country once the child is old enough, or education is completed (Waters, 2005: 365). In a similar way to the sacrificial mothers, families may face the challenge of fitting into a new environment, possibly, but not always, taking different lines of work or lower pay.

These typologies refer to family relationships which admittedly are merely a guide for the experience of many young Chinese. Through efforts to educate their young people families can be put under stress and this often involves a re-imagining or reconfiguration of what it means to be a family. Scandals for example involving married businessmen and lovers abroad (see Shih, 1998) and the temptations for some study mothers to turn to prostitution whilst trying to find work when abroad (Huang and Yeoh, 2005), mean that distance, social, and economic challenges may threaten to tare families apart. Although the existence of these transnational family forms may seem to be for the privileged only, as many would be unable to afford either the drop in salary of one parent, or the education fees, the situation is helped by a higher prevalence of one child families in China. Additionally, as Huang and Yeoh (2005) found, it is possible handlers will offer cheaper rents for a fee, though there are dangers of fraud involved. Most importantly the social upheaval of moving abroad is not always what parents imagined, including loss of status, restrictions on work possibilities, loss of family and social support.

2.3 - 3 American Chinese

American Chinese share some similarities with British Chinese, which are useful for comparing experiences. Firstly the American (USA) Chinese have a settled history, also beginning around the World War period, in which China was modernising and provided cheap (but also indentured) labour for railway expansion. Similar to the UK, Chinese schools have been set up over time in the USA, though notably in larger numbers, with a view to promoting Chinese language and cultural elements (Zhou and Li, 2003).

Parrenas and Siu's edited collection *Asian Diasporas* (Parrenas and Siu, 2007) illustrates the complexities of the Chinese experience in the Americas. Many early Chinese migrants were associated with labour and indenture:

The British were the first to experiment with the exporting of Chinese, then East Indian, labourers under contract to their overseas colonies. As early as 1806, at precisely the time when the British ended the slave trade, 200 Chinese were sent to Trinidad. Although this experiment was a failure... (Hu-Dehart in Parrenas and Siu, 2007: 32).

A complex system of contracts was employed to keep Chinese labourers in the areas they were transported to, which was not just limited to the United States, but across North and South American nations :

From 1847 to 1874, as many as 250,000 Chinese coolies under eight-year contracts were sent to Peru and Cuba, with 80 percent or more destined for the plantations. In Peru, several thousand coolies also helped build the Andean railroad and worked in the offshore guano mines south of Lima. In the 1870s escaped coolies and free Chinese were among the pioneers who penetrated the Peruvian Amazon building settlements, introducing trade activities, cultivating rice, beans, sugar, and other crops, manufacturing on a small scale, and brokering communication between the native Amazonian peoples... (Hu-Dehart in Parrenas and Siu, 2007: 31).

Whilst by the end of the 19th century many of these initial Chinese migrants had either become nationals of the countries they were working in, or over time left and not been replaced by more Chinese as other sources of cheap labour were found, this gives a different background to Chinese experience in the Americas. In particular the experience of having to combat and adjust to systems of unequal treatment, the fine line between bondage and necessity to work, and possibilities for remaining abroad. This is the migration history of many in the United States.

Whereas those within Britain have kept a degree of autonomy, either as professionals or working in the catering sector, Heyung-Chun (in Lee and Zhou, 2004) notes that for much of the recent past Chinese Americans were forced to reside in or around Chinatowns (Heyung-Chun in Lee and Zhou, 2004: 114). Whereas the British Chinese have been regarded as a silent minority, the battle politically between communist China and the United states made them only too visible and Chinese people were constructed as a problem for authorities and public (Heyung-Chun in Lee and Zhou, 2004: 120). Indeed this lead to perceptions of 'any links to ancestral China as treacherous, and anything Chinese, as un-American' (Heyung-Chun in Lee and Zhou, 2004: 125). Young American Chinese have therefore been in a quite different position to their young British counterparts. Proving themselves American became important

as a trust exercise, whereas in Britain there has often been little public discussion of the topic at all. Eventually the situation for American Chinese would change somewhat as:

[B]y the 1970s, the U.S. model of the melting pot had changed shape. The civil rights battle was largely won, and the slogans of equal opportunity and antidiscrimination had gained acceptance (Wang, 2003: 95).

Chinese in Britain largely remained ignored during this time and it was only during the 1990s that researchers began to get to grips with what it meant to be Chinese in Britain.

Contributing to a difference in interest in the Chinese population, between the U.S. and the UK, was that most Chinese migrated to the UK later, during the 1960s and 1970s. Greater Chinese settlement in Britain has a different history to that in the U.S. with the emergence of a second and third generation at a different time. Such an understanding of the specific experience of people Palumbo-Liu frames as 'Asian/Americans' therefore may allow a deeper exploration of British Chinese specificities as well:

The discourse of "being Chinese" is one produced at a particular historical juncture, which reads "Chinese" within a condition of late capitalism and constructs a specific transnational subjectivity in dialectic relation to an ethnic subjectivity produced as the diasporic subject "takes root" in the particular regimes of its new geographical location. This process has deep implications for Asian/American (Palumbo-Liu, 1999: 356).

Zhou et al (Zhou 1997, Zhou and Xiong 2005, Zhou et al 2008) have suggested that a form of transitional theory named 'segmented assimilation' might best describe the way in which migrants fit into the USA. Zhou's work focuses on the differences between first, second and third generation migrants, additionally it looks broadly across different ethnic groups, suggesting that the process of assimilation varies due to a range of factors.

The segmented assimilation theory recognizes the fact that immigrants are today being absorbed by different segments of American society, ranging from affluent middle-class suburbs to impoverished innercity ghettos, but that becoming American may not always be an advantage for themselves nor for their children. When immigrants enter middle-class communities directly, or after a short transition, it may be advantageous for them to acculturate and assimilate. When they enter the bottom of the ethnic hierarchy of drastic social inequality, the forces of assimilation come mainly from the underprivileged segments of this structure, and this is likely to result in distinct disadvantages, viewed as maladjustment by both mainstream society and the ethnic community (Zhou, 1997: 999).

Developing the concept of segmented assimilation, Zhou and Xiong (2005), further add that even within an ethnic group there is not necessarily a singular route to success or failure. Zhou and Xiong (Zhou and Xiong, 2005) present a complex picture of how differences exist between Asian Americans, which can be shown to come from several different groups, each with their own economic and social capitals as well as migration backgrounds; Asian Americans here include Japanese, Chinese, Vietnamese, Laotian, Hmong, Filipino, Cambodian.

Insights from segmented assimilation may chime usefully with the transitions approach taken by UK scholars. Seeing as young Chinese have not featured in the transitions literature, segmented assimilation might be more attuned to the experiences of these second generations. Care would need to be taken however seeing as what Asian American and British Asian mean are different; with Chinese only recently recognised in the 2011 census as 'Asian' and culturally felt to be separate from the Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi's which have usually been termed 'Asian' in the UK.

2.3 - 4 Evaluating, China, Chineseness and transnational experiences

In this section I have looked at how an understanding of changes in China, transnational Chinese families, and American Chinese, might add to our conceptions of Chinese in Britain, and young people in Britain. Research on the Chinese in Britain has tended to stress the connection with Hong Kong, it has not explored those from other

Chinese backgrounds, nor has it explored the way in which China itself may influence understandings of Chineseness in Britain. The changing face of China may be important because, whilst Hong Kong has been an important source of Chineseness for many young British Chinese, the media environment is now increasingly mixed. In particular China is now much more willing to engage with global media productions, Shih (2007) for example deconstructs the film and celebrity culture which is growing. Research on the influence of Hong Kong culture on young people has demonstrated that music and pop culture are the main areas of interest, and it would be interesting to see if this emerges for young British Chinese today (Parker, 1998).

The examples of transnational Chinese families highlight the unique features of the British Chinese situation and allow us to contextualise their experiences. The high priority on education, as a feature of both British Chinese families and transnational Chinese families, demonstrates how education continues to be viewed as valuable and a method of social mobility. Rather than demonstrating the dominance of rich middle class Chinese over the places they choose for education, types of transnational Chinese family also demonstrate how definitions of Chineseness might be incommensurable, even in neighbouring states such as China and Singapore. Transnational family situations also highlight the nature of British Chinese young people as settled, having to negotiate their place in Britain as a result of their parents' experiences and the attitudes of those around them towards others.

Finally a brief look at the experience of American Chinese further demonstrates the particularities of British Chineseness. In the United States Chinese people have undergone two major periods of identity questioning, both in the public sphere, first during the cold war and secondly through the civil rights movement. American Chinese have been forced, in some circumstances, to question their position as Americans by both the state and society. In Britain this open public debate has been absent, though the prejudices of some members of society have nevertheless been recorded and noted by Chinese people, as shown in the research referenced in the last section. Assimilation can also be shown to be segmented, in that members of the same migrant population 'Asian' have different patterns of adaptation to life in the USA. This may have interesting connections to transitions study of migrants in the UK.

2.4 Roots and routes, theoretical considerations of Chineseness

Up to this point discussion of the literature has mostly been informed by empirical work, the conclusions come from quantitative and qualitative accounts of Chinese people themselves. Importantly a number of scholars have also discussed Chineseness, and more broadly the notion of people in diaspora, from a theoretical perspective. It is worth exploring these debates as they have opened up discussion of the terms 'Chinese' and 'Chineseness' and have made some vital contributions to continued study in this field. Discussion of the debates is broken down into three sections, constructed Chineseness, diasporic Chineseness and hybrid Chineseness. Although many of these discussions overlap, and it is somewhat artificial to separate the topics in this manner, I think it serves usefully as a way of explaining what has been said, clarifying what these main ideas contribute to further investigations on/with the British Chinese because they open up the possibility of what can be included in a study in which ethnicity is a highlighted factor.

2.4 - 1 *Constructed Chineseness*

Cultural identity...is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power. Far from being grounded in a mere 'recovery' of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which, when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past (Hall, 1990: 225).

In the passage above the influential cultural studies theorist Stuart Hall argues that cultural identity is a process and not a given fact. The notion of identity as process, with a focus on being and becoming, how the everyday and lived experience slowly but surely changes cultural identity, has been vitally important to the continued study of ethnicity and identity. Focusing on 'being' in terms of cultural identity prioritises what it means to have a certain cultural and ethnic identity. Looking at being leads to understanding the relationship with 'becoming', the more we look closely at the everyday and ordinary practices of living, we find examples which refute the idea of homogenous cultural identities. Looking at Britishness for example Hall suggests:

The co-called homogeneity of 'Britishness' as a national culture has been considerably exaggerated. It was always contested by the Scots, Welsh and Irish; challenged by rival local and regional allegiances; and cross-cut by class, gender and generation (Hall, 2000: 217).

The perception of Britain as not having fixed cultural boundaries fits neatly within the realities of the time; in which Britain was increasingly becoming a 'multi-cultural' society.

Ien Ang (2001) has taken much of Hall's perspective on cultural identity and applied it to Chinese people and Chineseness. Ang takes a somewhat autobiographical approach, in a number of papers in which she has questioned what 'being' Chinese might mean:

Throughout my life, I have been implicitly or explicitly categorised, willy-nilly, as an "overseas Chinese" (*huaqiao*). I look Chinese. Why don't I speak Chinese? I have had to explain this embarrassment countless times, so I might just as well do it here too, even though I might run the risk, in being "autobiographical", of coming over as self-indulgent or narcissistic, of resorting to personal experience as a privileged source of authority, uncontrollable and therefore unamendable to others (Ang, 1993: 3).

Ang (2001, 2003) criticises the way in which the body can be seen as a site of historical inscription, where a notion of a fixed identity (Chineseness) is assumed by others, and questioned as impertinent when the owner of the body tries to resist. Ang (1998) takes on Hall's (1992) notions of being and becoming because it flips the encounter at the bodily level; we should be looking at how the individual negotiates their identity without prejudice.

Is Chineseness relevant then as a term? It seems that if we take Hall (1992) and Ang's (1998) suggestion that identity is fluid and changing, we nevertheless remain faced with the challenge from those whom try to fix it. In the British Chinese context these processes of fixing Chineseness have been shown to take place *economically* - limits for migrants in the takeaway, with a focus on their ethnicity through food, *socially* - in isolation of older members of the Chinese population through racism and social justice issues and *educationally* - for young people in the classroom based around assumptions of their intelligence, yet a lack of understanding home situations which might cause this. The category of Chineseness is not something which inherently exists

within an individual, it is constructed within social relations and it is also applied to others depending on how processes of construction function. Who or what is the source of this category 'Chinese' though, how does it come to be placed upon individuals? Ang (2001, 2003) does not go to lengths to deconstruct the idea of 'China' as a place, preferring to point to the experience of those outside of this country and express support for these hybrid experiences:

[T]he point is not to dispute the fact that Chineseness exists (which, in any case, would be a futile assertion in a world where more than a billion people would, to all intents and purposes, identify themselves as Chinese in one way or another, either voluntarily or by force), but to investigate how this category operates in practice, in different historical, geographical, political, and cultural contexts (Ang, 1998: 227).

Distinctly, the misinterpretation of all ethnic Chinese people as related to China nationals is a problem of place association, geography determining who you are seen to be. This deterministic link results in ethnicity being graded as a category, judged according to its authenticity, which creates a problem for those of Chinese ethnicity living outside of China. As Chow says 'Those who are ethnically Chinese but for who, for historical reasons, have become linguistically distant or dispossessed are, without exception, deemed inauthentic and lacking' (Chow, 1998: 12). It has been argued then that China, Zhongguo (中国), or the middle country, literally sits at the centre of Chineseness, emanating its influence out to those at the geographical periphery (see Dirlik, 2008, Tu, 1994). Chow (1998: 24) suggests that we need to begin 'erasure' of Chineseness. In erasing Chineseness we would break down the category as it is understood, often linked to the idea of a central country which passes on an authentic way of 'being' Chinese. Erasing Chineseness might require re-thinking our priorities; do we look to China and notions of authenticity, trying to complicate these, or to individuals and their understandings and lived experiences. For Ang (1998, 2003) there is no authenticity, we are all partial in our associations and we politically choose when to invoke these. Chow (1997, 1998) focuses on 'Chinese' as a category being operated; locating geographically 'Chinese' within China and arguing for an attack on this position. The debate about Chineseness was perhaps best captured by Allen Chun in his paper 'Fuck Chineseness', in which he argues:

[T]he very nature of identity as a selective process in the mind of individual subject-actors grounded in local contexts of power and meaning makes the possibility of “Chinese” *identifying* with a common discourse a hopelessly impossible task (Chun, 1996: 130).

So far the arguments support research which is about a variety of Chinese experiences, full of flows and mixing, impurity and above all ambivalence and partiality - hybridity (Ang, 2003), we are asked to erase the authentic and remake our understanding (Chow, 1997). Discussions about Chineseness have tended to take place amongst pacific academics, despite the influence of Hall (1990), a British academic, little has been said theoretically regarding Chineseness in the UK. Ang (2001) does reference Parker’s work stating that:

In Parker’s terminology, ‘Chinese’ are decidedly separated out from the two key categories for racialized and ethnicized people in the British context, ‘blacks’ and ‘Asians’...In the Australian context, such a political intervention would be misdirected (Ang, 2001: 171).

However such a joining up between the research in the UK and global discussion is relatively rare. This is a shame because the difference in how Chineseness might be experienced between the UK and Australia is an instrumental example of how what Ang (1998, 2001), calls hybrid experiences of Chineseness might operate; geographically different places have geographically different melting pots, which result in variations of Chineseness. In Australia the category of Chineseness is differently operated, it is more closely linked to ‘Asian’ and is tied up with a specific racial politics based around white racism there. In the UK the category ‘Asian’ has tended to be associated with migrants of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin; those of a Chinese ethnicity have tended to be separated, as in the census added to groups of ‘other’ ethnic minorities which are less numerous.

Chun (1996) points out that one difficulty for combating the notion of a single Chinese cultural identity is that the country of China itself has often been at pains to cover up its own internal diversity. Communist ideology for example has previously attempted to unite all citizens under one grouping; more recently the recognition of fifty-six ethnic groups in China might be said to be more to do with the burgeoning tourist industry, than acceptance of ethnic and autonomous differences. That most of the

population of China is said to be from the Han ethnic group also does not give us much detail about underlying linguistic and cultural differences, which until recently were often limited, not only provincially, but at a village level. Internally tradition has it that China has an unbroken history, thought to be 5,000 years long, this is the essence of Chinese identity as timeless and unchanging (Pan, 1994).

Some of this dialogue on authentic Chinese identity has perhaps informed messages about the homogeneity of the British Chinese. However Chinese migrants arriving in the UK have empirically been shown to make choices about which Chineseness to subscribe to, most commonly in terms of language choice for children (Francis et al., 2008, Francis et al., 2009). As we have seen Parker (1995, 1998) argued that Hong Kong Chineseness was highly influential on the British Chinese experience; this background is also evident in the takeaway restaurant food itself being cooked, much in the same way it is in small food shops in Hong Kong, though the taste and colours are, as visitors will agree, often rather different. What is understood to be Chinese food involves interaction between customer, who might base their ideas on what is deemed authentic, and producers, whom may have quite different knowledge and attachments. Thereby even the chefs themselves may eat different dishes when with their families, to those they serve customers.

As a result of the theoretical deconstruction of Chineseness, both China and Chineseness are viewed as part of a globalised world in which there are many experiences of 'being' Chinese. What Chinese is 'becoming', in the Stuart Hall (1990) sense, involves the combination of historical notions as well as localised interpretations and experiences. 'Being' Chinese is therefore a process related to the historical conditions of migration as well as reception by host nations. What Chinese populations outside of China come to define as Chinese, and how they are themselves defined, is a result of erasures performed in the everyday; choices related to language for children, what job is taken, whether to settle down or not.

2.4 - 2 Diasporic Chineseness

Diaspora refers to groups living outside or away from their native homelands. In the traditional sense Diaspora often refers to the Jews, whom were expelled during Roman

occupation, but it is also applied to dispersed groups. In this section I will look at how diaspora has been applied to Chinese people, and question the utility of the term for this research.

The notion of diaspora inherently suggests the hope of return to a homeland, a belief which may be carried for several generations, despite integration into host societies. Sometimes diaspora might be relatively recent, such as those caused by conflict or war, at other times the experience of being in diaspora might become a part of ethnic and cultural identity, if acceptance or integration into newly settled places does not occur. Perhaps obviously many of the experiences of being in diaspora are negative, involving despair, hopelessness, and a tension for individuals who have become migrants and perhaps feel out of place (Brah, 1999). In the case of Chinese diaspora the term has tended not to be accompanied by a negative connotation, rather it expresses the way in which those communities of ethnic Chinese often retain the idea of 'being' Chinese within host nations. One way in which the notion of being in diaspora has been continued for Chinese populations is through family:

Family is an important space for the (re)production of memories. Childbirth often serves as a special impulse for families in the diaspora to revitalize the past, restructure memories and often (re)invent traditions (Leung in Kuah-Pearce and Davidson, 2008: 175).

Now we might expect family to mark the 'end' of diaspora, in that it involves the setting down of roots, it is a settled activity often involving ties to the country or local area, work must be found. Of course starting a family might also involve mixing between those considered in diaspora and native others; the paradox here then is how can family, in which new people are created without the experiences of diaspora, end up recreating diaspora and upholding this as part of identity? The idea of re-invention (Leung in Kuah-Pearce and Davidson, 2008) is a strong theme in those Chinese groups which are cited as being in diaspora. As example Ngan describes how food practices might play a part in the maintenance of a diasporic identity:

Eating rice daily with chopsticks, using Chinese cooking ingredients such as soy sauce, ginger and rice wine, or giving red pocket money on Chinese New Year, were regarded as influential ways of engendering a sense of 'being Chinese', as they are seen as signifiers of Chinese culture (Ngan, 2008b: 131).

Ngan's (2008b) findings are drawn from Australian fieldwork and similarities might be drawn with British Chinese experiences, where food has been instrumental in not only a sense of identity but the economic stability of the Chinese population. Parker's (1995) account of 'takeaway lives', encounters of racism aside, also means that future generations have been exposed to separate food cultures and practices which might serve to build a sense of separateness or being in diaspora.

As I mentioned earlier though, what Chineseness means is bound to change and be varied when we look at diasporic Chinese groups. We have already seen how the work of Wang, Pan and Tu (Pan, 1999, Tu, 1994, Wang, 1985, 1993) for example charts the settlement of ethnic Chinese outside of China, though their comments on the significance of these settlements vary. Useful in understanding the complexities of diasporic experience are the comments made by Paul Gilroy (1991: 126, 2000: 129), whom draws our attention to Leroi Jones' notion of the changing same. Gilroy (1991: 133) uses black music as both example and analogy to illustrate how hybrid forms come to exist, in the hip hop genre for example remixing and rehashing existing work into a new piece assures that new music retains a trace of something we may have heard before. Eventually, through experiences of being in diaspora, people are taken '[f]ar beyond the stark dualism of genealogy and geography' (Gilroy, 2000: 126). Here the idea of a trace of meaning existing through time, but also being altered, is a useful device for describing how those with a diasporic background come to be different and distinct through successive generations (see also Parrenas and Siu, 2007, for relevant discussions in the Americas).

Though diaspora is a fact for many groups, the theorisation of diaspora as an overall concept has been criticised:

Lack of attention to issues of gender, class and generation, and to other inter-group and intra-group divisions, is one important shortcoming. Secondly, a critique of ethnic bonds is absent within diaspora discourse, and there does not exist any account of the ways in which diaspora may indeed have a tendency to reinforce absolutist notions of 'origin' and 'true belonging' (Anthias, 1998: 577).

Anthias (2001) notes how words used to describe migrants such as 'ethnic', 'diasporic', 'culture' are related to bounded categories which exist in society itself. Though Anthias' (2001, 2002) writings at times can become bogged down in technical discussion of how diaspora and culture function, her focus on the social bonds which create a diasporic experience is applicable to groups such as the British Chinese. These relations have been shown to be important in the response to racism for example, or social justice issues (see earlier), as well as being important in surviving in the employment market in the UK. In the British Chinese case the need to pay more attention to internal social categories such as 'mother', 'young person' or 'class' demonstrates that there is still much work to do beyond closed categories of definition, exploration of these issues may allow a more complete notion of ethnicity in Britain.

Diaspora is an imperfect term because it tries to capture too much. In the British context for example a discussion of 'black', 'Asian' and 'Muslim' positions arguably means we need to recognise a multiplicity of experiences, all complex (Brah, 1993: 26). Brah continues by suggesting that we cannot theorise diaspora as a single monolithic term because:

[S]everal diasporas intersect - African, Jewish, Irish, South Asian, and so on - it becomes necessary to examine how these groups are similarly or differently constructed *vis-à-vis* one another (Brah, 1996: 189).

The question about diaspora boils down to when diaspora ceases. If we make use of the term as Anthias (1998) discusses we need to be clear that its use can obscure our view of experiences beyond simple membership of a diasporic group. Hall and Brah (Brah, 1996, Hall, 1990) have both noted that identity and diaspora are difficult to pin down and are in process, yet we also have the notion of a trace or changing same (Gilroy, 1991), which remains within a group and can be used by others to identify them as in or out of diaspora. In the Chinese sense this changing same might be related to language usage, or practices which have been brought over with migrants but are slowly eroded or reinterpreted over time by/through successive generations. As Palumbo-Liu notes, it is the act of diaspora which often can bring the notion of identity into focus for the migrant, these 'new' and unfamiliar spaces when crossed

into are also filled with existing identities which must be navigated alongside those brought over:

Diaspora always takes place after a border crossing...reconstitution of the subject is labelled "foreign" in its new location. As the point of origin slips into the distance, the regimes of the new location impose their own political identities (Palumbo-Liu, 1999: 346).

Observers can note therefore that Chinese in Britain are 'in' diaspora because they continue to bear the signs of coming from another place, their 'routes' are visible. Below the surface though we might question the extent to which a second generation ethnic Chinese person considers themselves to be 'in' diaspora, or merely recognises this as a part of their family background, not having the necessary experiences related to the act of migration itself.

2.4 - 3 Hybrid Chineseness

So far I have introduced the concepts of construction and diaspora, relating these to Chinese experiences of ethnicity. A central question has been what Chineseness is, how it comes to be noticed and then continues to be a feature of ethnic and cultural identity. Hall and Ang (Ang, 2001, Hall, 1990) argue that identity is in process, ever changing, due to this, identity is never static. There is a constant to and fro between those living an identity and those who are not, identity is therefore about negotiation and what constitutes Chineseness is thereby a construction of society.

The notion of diaspora, by which a group is said to become displaced and separated from where it 'should' be, has been applied to the Chinese because despite their settlement outside of China being ongoing, they are often felt to have separate identities to others within their settled homelands. Diaspora is tied up with migration and movement; it is about different place associations being in close proximity.

As solution to the difficulties of definition, Chineseness has been discussed by Ang, Chow and Chun (Ang, 1993, 2003, Chow, 1997, 1998, Chun, 1996) as being heterogeneous, mixed and multiple. In particular Ang (1993, 1998, 2001) has argued

the term 'hybrid' is most appropriate for future investigations of Chineseness. The argument for hybridity to replace a fixed identity, such as Chinese, is that it better represents the experiences of those it is applied to. When we speak of the Chinese in Britain, Ang's (1993, 1998, 2001) arguments for hybrid Chinese identities seem to make more sense than the overly broad topic Chineseness; there is a need to ask what Chineseness?, which Chineseness?, 'where is Chineseness' and 'when is Chineseness' in a critical fashion. Through identification of these hybrid experiences we might challenge definitions of those with a Chinese ethnicity. Ang hopes that we can avoid the prison of being asked 'where are you from?' and recognise the separation which is possible between race and territory.

The call for us to appreciate hybrid identities is a question of power. It is within very ordinary and everyday experience such as the classroom (Francis and Archer, 2005b) and the takeaway (Parker, 1995, 1998) in which understandings of identity come to be fixed, and attempts to keep them fixed continue. These everyday interactions feed upwards as well as trickle down through the attitude of local and national government, public bodies and the media (Adamson et al., 2009, Chan et al., 2004). Although Ang, Chow and Chun's (Ang, 1993, 2003, Chow, 1997, 1998, Chun, 1996) reflections on Chineseness may suggest that through uncovering such negotiations of ethnicity we can hope to break the idea of one Chineseness apart, Bhabha's (Huddart, 2006: 15) view of hybridity as necessarily tied up with ambivalence and resistance puts researchers in a difficult position, are we always too late to the event?

Bhabha argues for an appreciation of a space in between what we claim to know and what occurs on the ground. In exploring mimicry (1984) and hybridity (1985) Bhabha tries to show that the authority of colonial powers in India was only partial. A space for resistance was created through mimicking colonial powers practices, for example accepting the bible in colonial India, but only valuing the contents for the paper used to make them (Bhabha, 1984: 133). Later Bhabha concludes that 'The process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognisable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation' (Bhabha, 1994: 211). Whilst the idea of liminal, that is in between, ethnic identities opens up the potential for a dispersed notion of the power to create identities, the difficulty is that everything we

look at becomes simply a mess, intangible, just blobs of experience only existing for short periods of time, yet with impacts which extend throughout society. This leaves us in the position of choosing between solid state identities, linked to geographically defined spaces with a set of known characteristics, and more fluid and shifting understandings ranging from the place specific and arguably 'new' (Hall, 1990, Hall, 1992), all the way to rejection of categories completely in favour of perhaps individual accounts or perhaps, in some ways forms, the rejection of ethnic identity completely, as impossible for those caught in the modern world of diasporic flows. An excellent and little discussed aspect of diasporic hybrid identity is the commentary on Korean adoption made by Hubinette (in Parrenas and Siu, 2007). Hubinette brings to light the difficulty in self identity faced by Korean adoptees removed from South Korea during the post Korean war era and still ongoing, though numbers have reduced due to recognition of the difficulties:

This ethnic instability leads to severe psychic violence and physical alienation and makes the inhabitation of this hybrid in-between space painful and not easy to live in. I argue that this finding may help to explain the high preponderance of suicide rates, mental illnesses, and social problems among international adoptees... (Hubinette in Parrenas and Siu, 2007: 179).

After conducting qualitative research with adoptees Hubinette is not optimistic about hybrid identity in this case:

Unfortunately, I do not think so even if I still firmly adhere to a social constructivist and performative understanding of ethnic identities...to have a white self-identification as a nonwhite person coming from a non-Western country cannot be seen as unproblematic. (Hubinette in Parrenas and Siu, 2007: 185).

So it can be said that whilst finding acceptance and adapting in a new country is a challenge which can often have positive repercussions, for example leaving behind poverty and future generations advancing their social position, there are potential issues with being completely celebratory about identities with a migrant past.

Amanda Wise (2006, 2010, 2011) has also contributed usefully to the debate on Chineseness, diaspora and community. In her work on multiculturalism and community Wise has explored the way in which recent Chinese in-migration in a small town in Australia has had a large impact for residents. Specifically local shops, the signage being Chinese and the function often seeming to serve the local Chinese population, has sometimes alienated long time 'Anglo-Celtic' residents. However deeper ethnographic exploration has also highlighted various instances related to a hopefulness (Wise, 2006) for positive relations and understanding as well as the felt marginalisation of previously confident White residents (Wise, 2010, 2011). Key to the tension between local White residents and Chinese residents was the local orientation of elderly Anglo-Celtic participants, who relied on the local shops and could feel excluded from various events (women's day) and restaurants when the dominant language was felt to be Chinese, and cultural understandings of the use of space (washing smelly fish-water down drains at the front of shops rather than the back) occurred.

2.4 - 4 Evaluating theoretical contributions to 'Chineseness'

In this section I have looked at the debates around Chineseness and how they have been informed by notions of construction and identity formation, diaspora and hybridity. While the perspectives discussed challenge the idea of Chineseness as a single and unchanging identity, which is an attempt to reject essentialism, they in turn raise some new issues.

Concerning the idea of 'being' and 'becoming' a sense of constant change and even revolution is built into ethnic and cultural identities. These changes need not always be grand, for example a wholesale rejection of the past in the way that communist China attempted, but might encompass the everyday, for example Ngan (2008b) gave the example of 'Chinese' cooking ingredients and the tradition of giving red envelopes of money at New Year time. Arguably individuals (and therefore societies) know that identity is a construction, it is no revelation in itself that this occurs. Identity construction occurs as practices and customs are passed down - through sharing these experiences it is hoped that certain attitudes and beliefs are transmitted. So whilst

being is a result of becoming, becoming can also mean trying to stay the same (Gilroy, 1991).

Paradoxically therefore both those which share a cultural identity, which attempts to regulate and place boundaries on whom is in and whom is outside this, and those who are decidedly outside of any given identity, are in a process of negotiating what their own and each others identities are (Brah, 1996). Diaspora is a good example of how an experience, being a migrant, might come to be part of identity definition (Anthias, 1998). Diaspora can be a short term example of displacement, with a definite possibility of return for some members of a group. On the other hand diaspora, and this is true in the Chinese diaspora case, has sometimes become something for both ethnic Chinese, and the societies they live within, to use to justify various exclusions and inclusions. As we have seen in the previous section Chinese migrants to the U.S. have been accepted as labourers then challenged because they did not leave and were accused of having communist sympathies. More recently through the civil rights movement Chinese people fought to stay in the U.S. and through a change in their practices and understandings of what Chinese identity, would find some acceptance as Americans.

In Britain the majority of research suggests Chinese migrants have traditionally arrived with the intention of staying, but overall we continue to be limited in our understandings of British Chinese identities; due to the focus on migrants which arrived in the 1960s and 1970s. We might draw effectively on notions of hybridity and ambivalence (Bhabha, 1984, Bhabha, 1985), which open up discussion of how ethnic and cultural identity are often porous to both internal and external constructions of identity - perhaps hybrid perspectives even challenge us to discard such distinctions altogether. For example how should we account for the way in which many Chinese families in Britain rely on a complex fusion of ideas of Chinese authenticity - a fixed notion of identity - while at the same time requiring the support of their children, who are often more attuned to living in Britain? The answer to this question lies both in reacting to Ang's call (1993, 1998) for a greater exploration of varied experiences of Chinese identity, but also maintaining sensitivity to the identities that have been created.

2.5 Conclusions

This review has covered three main areas related to the study, research on British Chinese, transnational Chinese experiences, and the theoretical discussions around Chineseness. The thesis itself will demonstrate that youth transitions study can be expanded through the addition of these three areas of study, which form the backdrop to the unpacking of young British Chinese accounts in the coming empirical chapters.

I have demonstrated that whilst research on British Chinese rightly calls us to challenge racism, and the potential for this to affect young people in takeaways and schools, there is space for much more to be done beyond these arguments. Whilst isolation and problems of fitting into wider British society have and remain concerns for older members of the Chinese population, young British Chinese may not be affected by such concerns. In particular I would note that as a fact of geographical re-location families have set themselves the challenge to adapt and change, prioritising education as a means to escape not only racism but also employment niches. By looking at Chinese experiences from a transnational perspective, both in the changing face of China, new mobile family formations as well as settled variations in America, it should also be clearer that the British Chinese situation is unique in many respects. We can therefore reject a notion of ethnicity which is only related to what Chinese experiences *have* been seen to be, and move to embrace more fluid and flexible notions. Subsequently I reviewed the work of theorists who have discussed the potential for ethnicity as a more hybrid and mobile sensibility, ethnicity whilst remaining important, is not inherent to individuals. For a study on young British Chinese such a starting point is vital, as it hopefully allows a more open space for understanding and accepting the views of participants, and in addition cautions us against forming static views of British Chinese people.

The nature of transition is therefore reformed, taking into account migrant experiences, as well as moving beyond the focus of much previous transitions research; the transition from education to work, enriching both youth transitions study and that of the British Chinese.

Chapter 3 Methodology

This chapter begins by exploring Newcastle upon Tyne and its Chinese population. Following I justify my approach in using qualitative (interviews) methods as a way of collecting the accounts of young British Chinese people. My ethical concerns are then relayed. A breakdown of the process of interviews being used in the field, as well as the analysis process should give readers an understanding of how the participant sample was gathered and their interviews translated into text. My own reflections on the methodological approach, as well as my positionality, are found at the end of the chapter and serve to illustrate the specificities of this piece of qualitative research from others; as well as link it to prominent reflections by Parker and Song who conducted research with young British Chinese and act as a rare and important reference here.

3.1 The study site: Newcastle itself as a site of Chinese population

This project is based in Newcastle upon Tyne. Newcastle upon Tyne is located within a wider region of the North East of England called Tyne & Wear. Newcastle is also a part of Tyneside, a name given to those areas which border the Tyne river; North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Newcastle and Gateshead. Although famous for its shipbuilding history, Newcastle's economy these days is more focused on the service sector, particularly in terms of its nightlife, the Metro shopping centre, the SAGE concert hall, BALTIC modern art gallery and tourism industry. Higher education provision is also a feature of the city, there being two universities; Newcastle and Northumbria. The 2001-Based census topic report indicates that Tyne & Wear is a predominantly 'white' ethnic county. Newcastle's ethnic mix has a disproportionate impact on the proportion of minority ethnic peoples living in Tyne & Wear; as Newcastle itself with 6.9% is markedly higher than the average for the county as a whole (3.2%) (Office for National Statistics, 2004: 46). To give further perspective there were 3,231/259,536 'Chinese and other' residents in Newcastle in 2001, this made up 1.2% of the population (TWRI, 2004a), compared to 6,256/1,075,938 'Chinese and other' residents in Tyne & Wear, which made up just 0.6% of the population in 2001 (TWRI, 2004b).

The 2011 census data for the Tyne and Wear region (Office for National Statistics, 2012) indicates the following population totals (as noted previously the 'Chinese' category is now a part of 'Asian':

	Asian/Asian British: Chinese	
	Total	Percentage
Tyne and Wear (Met County)	9,731	0.9
Gateshead	1,054	0.5
Newcastle upon Tyne	6,037	2.2
North Tyneside	869	0.4
South Tyneside	235	0.2
Sunderland	1,536	0.6

Figure 10 - Chinese Ethnicity in Tyne and Wear from the 2011 census (taken from 'Ethnicity by Local Authority' tables Office for National Statistics, 2012, Office for National Statistics Website, 2013).

According to the census release analysis for the North East, Chinese ethnicity is the fifth most populous in the region, making up 0.6% of the population. This is similar to the 2001 findings (taken from 'Ethnicity by Local Authority' tables Office for National Statistics, 2012, Office for National Statistics Website, 2013).

There is also experimental population data from 2009 (Office for National Statistics Website, 2013) which can be used to give an estimate of the local age structure of the Chinese population:

Chinese or Other Ethnic Group: Chinese	thousands	all	male	female
Tyne and Wear (Met County)		5.6	2.9	2.7
	Gateshead	0.8	0.4	0.4
	Newcastle upon Tyne	2.5	1.3	1.2
	North Tyneside	1.1	0.6	0.5
	South Tyneside	0.3	0.2	0.2
	Sunderland	0.8	0.4	0.4

Figure 11 - Age and Sex estimates for Chinese ethnicity in Tyne and Wear (from 'Estimated Ethnic Population by Age and Sex 2011' tables at Office for National Statistics Website, 2013).

Chinese or Other Ethnic Group: Chinese	thousands	all			male			female		
		0-15	16-64/59*	65/60+**	0-15	16-64	65+	0-15	16-64	65+
Tyne and Wear (Met County)		0.6	4.6	0.4	0.4	2.4	0.2	0.3	2.2	0.2
Gateshead		0.1	0.7	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0
Newcastle upon Tyne		0.3	2.1	0.2	0.1	1.1	0.1	0.1	1.0	0.1
North Tyneside		0.2	0.9	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.0
South Tyneside		0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Sunderland		0.1	0.6	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.0

Figure 12 - Age and Sex estimates for Chinese ethnicity in Tyne and Wear (from 'Estimated Ethnic Population by Age and Sex 2011' tables at Office for National Statistics Website, 2013).

This data suggests a concentration around the 16-64/59 age group, which indicates the population is fairly youthful, and a result of the recent migration and settlement history.

Newcastle has a Chinatown which mainly includes restaurants and food supermarkets, but also the North East Chinese association. Yet when compared to Liverpool and London, Chinese settlement in Tyneside (and Newcastle in general) is relatively recent. I refer to the same British Museum timeline presented earlier to illustrate the changes.

1949 - First Chinese restaurant opens in Newcastle upon Tyne
1960s - the Chinese community in Tyne and Wear begins to grow
1970s - During the 1970s about 300 take-away outlets were established across the Tyneside region. Two community organizations - The North-East Chinese Association and the Wah Sun Chinese Association - were established
1988 - Chinese businesses in Stowell Street - Newcastle's Chinatown - were allowed to display signs in Chinese as well as English. BBC Radio Newcastle introduced a 15 minute Sunday afternoon Chinese language slot aimed at the Chinese community.
1989 - 12 Chinese restaurants, 300 take-aways, 4 Chinese supermarkets and one Chinese food-processing factory were operating in the Tyneside region. Alongside the settled Chinese community there were 1000 Chinese students attending the region's institutions of higher education.

Figure 13 - Chinese settlement in the UK (Tyne & Wear, Tyneside, Newcastle) timeline based on 'Chinese diaspora in Britain' timeline (British Museum, 2008)

Although the timeline only gives a very general idea of Chinese settlement, it perhaps disproportionately focuses on the growth of the catering trade, the changes are indicative of upward growth.

Why then base a study in Newcastle upon Tyne? Li Wei's (1994: 62) study of the languages used by Chinese residents in Tyne & Wear argues his work may offer a better picture of dispersed Chinese populations; contrasting with those in higher areas of residency such as London and Manchester. Li notes that a significant Chinese population did not emerge in Tyne & Wear until the 1960s, as 'The 1960s was a period of change for the Tyneside Chinese. Laundries were gradually replaced by eating establishments - first small fast-food shops, then large restaurants' (Li, 1994: 63). Li also points out that the Tyneside Chinese have a similar migration history from Hong Kong and the South provinces of China, making them typical of the major migrations arriving in the 1960s.



Figure 14 - Newcastle Chinatown today - Stowell Street during Chinese New Year, image by the author

Being published in 1994, despite standing as an important and rare example of research focused on the Chinese in this part of the country, means that Li's (1994) study is somewhat out of date now. The Chinatown area of Newcastle has grown and expanded as time has passed and an influx of international students, increasingly from China, gives the impression that Chinese people are quite prominent in the city (see figure 8 and 9). Li's (1994) work remains relevant in terms of its comment on the British Chinese, whom are descended from previous migrations, though in terms of the more recent growth in Chinese migrants this is more attributable to both Newcastle and Northumbria University.



Figure 15 - Newcastle Chinatown today - Stowell Street during Chinese New Year, image by the author

Besides Li's (1994) book there is little work which directly, and in depth, focuses on the Tyneside Chinese. Of note though are other studies of ethnic groups in the area such as Nayak (2006) and Alexander (2008). This study will contribute towards the understanding of British Chinese, though it is important to be clear the differences in experience between those whom have lived and grown up in the Tyneside region, which as Li (1994) suggested may be more representative of dispersed experiences, and those from other areas of the UK which might be in Newcastle to study. Therefore this study might take into account a breadth of experiences, despite the size relative to other Chinese populations.

3.2 Taking a qualitative approach – interviewing as method

Though Ang and Hall's (Ang, 1993, 1998, 2001, Hall, 1992, 1993) theoretical arguments on hybrid and flexible ethnic identity are influential in this project, I also agree with Ceglowski's point that through face-to-face engagement with individuals we might extend our understanding in important ways:

The power of lived experience lies in our inner being. Yet, the world of theory is abstract. Theories are about ideas, not personal stories. They homogenize the experiences of many into concepts. The stories are gone (Ceglowski, 2002: 16).

This quote therefore sets the tone for discussion in this section about the approach taken to data collection in this thesis.

Qualitative approaches, and the resultant methods of data collection, are a staple of the social sciences. Davies and Dwyer (2007a, 2007b) demonstrate that qualitative approaches may vary, not only between disciplines, but also within them, as well as being subject to changes at a more nuanced level. Discussion and application of methodological approaches is therefore not simply a case of reading a generalised text book on the subject and applying this to your study. Davies and Dwyer (2007a, 2007b) cover a whole range of current qualitative approaches in Human Geography, highlighting for example an increase in pictographic and visual forms of data collection, so-called visual methods. Examples, which I have also made use of in previous research include photographic interpretation/elicitation and thought-diagramming techniques (Crang, 2002, 2003, 2005).

In this study therefore the potential to make use of a wide range of qualitative methods existed. So why was the, perhaps seemingly standard, method of interviewing chosen, indeed why take a qualitative approach at all? Firstly the aims of the project require an engagement with young people in an in-depth manner. To return to the Ceglowski quote above, individuals' experiences have power, and one of the reasons for seeking out these accounts is that they often contradict or enrich understanding, particularly when little research has been done, or seems likely to be done. The rationale for social research often being to continue to explore and comprehend the nuances of the social world, not only are there a range of qualitative methods, but also interviews themselves. Flick (2009) for example presents several, such as the focused interview, semi-standardised, problem-centred, expert, and ethnographic. Whilst the range of interview types can reflect a desire to tailor ways of investigating, on the other hand Silverman reminds us that only 'Naïve interviewers believe that the supposed limits of quantitative research are overcome by an open-ended interview schedule and a desire to catch 'authentic' experience' (2001: 287). Indeed the search for an authentic experience would be explicitly against the intentions of this study. Authentic or 'perfect' experience is not likely to be found through interviewing. Principally interviewing seeks to contribute information, ultimately following analysis, which cannot be gathered by other more structured means, such as those 'problematic' quantitative methods Silverman (2001) refers to. Quite rightly it is important to note the often quite in-authentic nature of a structured

encounter between researcher and participant, the topic of conversation which may already be predetermined through pages of interview questions (Flick, 2009).

Berg (2007) argues that whilst interview encounters might be structured to varied degrees, this does not mean that they are inherently an easy route. Berg (2007) suggests that keeping in mind the almost 'dramaturgical' nature of interviews, and remaining aware of both the reasons for each encounter, as well as the potential advantages and disadvantages. Berg's (2007: 103) suggestion is that interviewing requires an understanding of relating to other humans, part of this might mean remaining sensitive to how the format of an interview is designed, and its actual application *at* interview. For example Berg (2007) notes the possible necessity of 'throw away' questions, which might be simple to answer and help put a participant at ease, and the wording of questions which may be either too complex or contain provocative or emotive language. Whilst over-thinking an interview can produce stunted and bland responses, care during an interview is important because rapport is not a pre-given, and interviewee and interviewer may not have met before, or meet again. Trust and acceptance can therefore be key, and require some form of management to build (Berg, 2007: 125).

In this study I took a mixed approach, both creating a structured interview schedule, but also taking on board past experience of the need to remain flexible. For example there was a need to ask each participant about a similar set of issues, this to gauge not only the research questions, but also test responses between the sample and check for validity and consistency in themes. This study was also designed with the knowledge that previous studies have managed to engage with members of both the young and adult British Chinese population across the UK. However the largest numbers are usually found closest to London or the North West. In terms of previous research methods, other researchers investigating the British Chinese and young British Chinese population have made use of a mix of both qualitative methods (Chau and Yu, 2009, Li, 1994, Lie, 2010, Parker, 1995, Pang and Lau, 1998, Song, 1995, Verma et al., 1999) as well as quantitative (Adamson et al., 2009, Chan et al., 2004). Access issues have been a prominent challenge for researchers looking at British Chinese people. Attempts to research the Chinese community have been made notoriously difficult because there

isn't always a community to access, especially outside of urban areas. Such is the pressure of work for older and adult members, the possible lack of connection for younger members and the dispersion and internal differences, along linguistic as well as class lines. According to the 2001 census Chinese in Newcastle upon Tyne, whilst significant for the Chinese population in the North East, still only number 1,846/259,429 (Newcastle City Council, 2011) (This total 6,037 in the 2011 census). As these population figures also include students, older members of the population, and those too young to fit the age bracket of this study (16-25), it was expected that finding participants would be challenging. The study site's size does not however preclude the possibility of meeting a range of individuals with different backgrounds, for example there is a prominent university as well as an established Chinatown, with a supporting settled population.

The information we have as a result tends to focus either on those working in the catering trade or more recently children. I use the word children here because, aside perhaps from Parker and Song's (Parker, 1995, 1998, 2000, Song, 1995) work, most of the young British Chinese featured in research (Francis and Archer, 2005a, Li, 1994, Lie, 2010, Verma et al., 1999) are children under sixteen. This leaves several gaps in experience - where for one are the professional Chinese? The Malaysian Chinese, which made up a significant number in the 1970s and more recently professionals from China (PRC) do not get a detailed look. Additionally while elderly Chinese people are mentioned in the reports by Adamson et al (Adamson et al., 2009) and Chan et al (Chan et al., 2004), there is little documentation of their experiences beyond this. In terms of young British Chinese people, we are not focused on their whole experience of growing up in the UK, there is some understanding of home and family life (Francis and Archer, 2005a, Li, 1994, Parker, 1995, Pang and Lau, 1998, Song, 1995, Yu, 2007, Verma et al., 1999), but there are possibilities for looking at experiences beyond school, while at university and certainly from those which have entered the world of work. Perhaps as a result of their illegal status migrant workers, such as those who perished in the Morecambe Bay tragedy or Dover 58, are another group which often goes unmentioned and under researched (Cohen, 2004, Song, 2004).

In terms of quantitative data on the British Chinese there is quite often a suspicion that it under reports the total population, such as in the 1991 census when 'Chinese' was subsumed within the category 'other', or is now out of date, such as the 2001 census. Within both censuses there may be linguistic difficulties for members of the Chinese population when filling in the form. When researchers have attempted their own quantitative studies, they have faced the combined problems of low response rate (Chan et al., 2007b), or a distribution of returns which mostly represents the most educated Chinese population (Chan et al., 2007b).

The use of a qualitative approach in this research is justified on the basis that it can provide access to participants' thoughts and experiences, these fit with the aims of the study which seek to contribute to understanding of young British Chinese lived experiences. Using interviews has also been shown to have the potential to be both a flexible as well as considered method, though it is also important to acknowledge the structured nature of the relationship created. Due to the experiences of previous researchers working with the British Chinese, and the size of the potential population in Newcastle upon Tyne, it may also be that a methodology which is flexible towards individuals' free time, as well as the modes of questioning will be more fruitful in this research.

3.3 Ethics in research

In this research my intention is that through a reflexively informed approach, and making use of interview methods, the study will contribute to the ongoing debates and understanding of both British and young British Chinese people. I have framed my approach by drawing on the discussions around reflexivity in research. For example Goffman's (Goffman, 1968) observations about human social interaction encourage researchers to think of themselves as a part of the research field, not simply as impartial observers or information gatherers:

Every person lives in a world of social encounters, involving him either in face-to-face or mediated contact with other participants. In each of these contacts, he tends to act out what is sometimes called a *line* - that is, a pattern of verbal and nonverbal acts by which he expresses his view of the situation and through this his evaluation of the participants, especially himself (Goffman, 1968: 309).

A reflexive approach and one in which the researcher is seen as a part of the research itself is often seen to be:

[I]n contrast to the god-trick of claiming to see the whole world while remaining distanced from it, subjugated and critical knowledges work from their situatedness to produce partial perspectives on the world (Rose, 1997: 308).

A distanced position is commonly associated with positivist approaches, which may strive to produce objective and impartial sets of data. Conversely some qualitative researchers have argued against a neutral stance in research:

...[which] rejects scientific neutrality, universal truths, and dispassionate inquiry and works toward social justice, relational truths, and passionate enquiry (Tillmann-Healy, 2003: 733).

Reflexivity in research enables researchers to respond to the experiences of participants, as well as try to balance the way in which the research environment, researchers and participants shape findings.

Though it has been argued that reflexivity is anathema to positivist ideas of objectivity and replication, by implication it is perhaps not scientific, rigorous and thereby comparable, such research studies nonetheless *do* strive to follow a set of guidelines, which are meant to ensure some form of, if not reproducibility, then structure and order for an investigation. This study therefore attempts to balance both a considered approach, but also remain flexible. As readers can note from the appendices a set of assumptions about research were made, care was taken to address concerns:

a) To consider the participants understanding of the research, b) To assess the participants expectations and experiences of power relations which may affect the interview, c) Consider the young person's age and position, d) Consider how taking part in the interview may affect the interviewee afterwards, will their taking part be known to others, will they be contacted again, are you to ask them for further help?

In some ways these issues were addressed through the use of information sheets and face to face meetings before interviews would take place. These exchanges let participants have a chance to meet the researcher as well as ask questions and decide

if they felt comfortable to continue in the research. On the other hand issues of age, positionality and the impact of being a participant were less straightforward to deal with; these issues are addressed within the next section.

In conducting field research there is the potential to both uncover the inadequacy of 'research protocols about obtaining access, developing trust, and conducting studies' (Ceglowski, 2002: 12), as well as to open up researchers, and the project itself, to unanticipated ideas and events. As Hopkins (2007, 2008) notes, for example, the issues around working with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and those requiring an interpreter, presented a number of issues around participant voice, vulnerability and access. Encounters in the field might not be predictable or referenced in the literature. In the past it has been tempting to try to reduce the possibility of the unanticipated, by acting in a certain manner within the field:

[T]he researcher should attempt to disrupt the lives of her subjects as little as possible...the researcher maintain a neutral position with respect to subjects so as not to 'taint' the data obtained in the course of research (Kobayashi, 2001: 55).

However as Kobayashi goes on to suggest, while we might succeed in satisfying our own beliefs about what the purpose of our research is, the meaning of research is within the hands of participants as well:

While we may feel an ethical and a scholarly commitment to discover 'truth', that truth is highly variable, looks different depending upon individual perspectives and is always subject to ideological manipulation (Kobayashi, 2001: 66).

I have therefore sought to balance both the arguments for continued qualitative, conversational, methods and the need for consideration before we enter the field.

3.4 Conducting the research – access and interviewing in practice

3.4 - 1 Access

In this section I will discuss how the fieldwork was conducted, both access and interview issues. A table is presented after the access and interview sections for reference, this information is drawn from a set of personal information questionnaires given out at the start of interviews. The table of personal information provides a useful overview of participants' backgrounds.

Field research was conducted between September 2009 and July 2010. The table below gives a full breakdown of the dates, locations of interviews and the way in which participants were recruited (figure 10). Although the table might indicate research progressed in a very smooth way, interactions which allowed me to find participants were going on constantly. This section details the pertinent issues, looking at access and the processes involved in interviewing participants, in particular.

Interview	Date	Location	Recruited
1	22.09.09	University	Known
2	27.09.09	University	Known
3	08.10.09	University	Society/snowball
4	19.10.09	University	Snowball
5	05.11.09	University	Society/snowball
6	26.11.09	University	Society/snowball
7	08.12.09	Town	Snowball
8	15.01.10	School	Asked at school
9	15.01.10	School	Asked at school
10	20.01.10	School	Asked at school
11	26.01.10	School	Asked at school
12	27.01.10	School	Asked at school
13	27.01.10	School	Asked at school
14	04.01.10	School	Asked at school
15	01.02.10	School	Asked at school
16	08.03.10	School	Asked at school
17	22.03.10	School	Asked at school
18	26.03.10	Town	Chinese School
19	26.03.10	Town	Snowball
20	27.04.10	University	Snowball
21	27.04.10	University	Snowball
22	02.06.10	University	Known
23	03.06.10	University	Snowball
24	14.06.10	Town	Known

Figure 16 - Research interview timeline

While the literature review provides a background and rationale for studying young British Chinese experiences, upon justifying the project the issue of defining a target potential participant population arose. The selection criteria for participants relied on participants being 16-25, British and of Chinese ethnicity. The 16-25 age range is not completely arbitrary, but an established category for 'youth' and many papers and studies take their sample of participants from somewhere in this age range. Yet, a review of the youth research literature suggests that, though there is agreement on the need to study youth as a distinct period in the life-course, and that experiences from childhood to the 16-25 period may contribute to our understanding of youth,

definition of youth, young person, and child may become conflated (Aitken, 2001, Matthews and Limb, 1999, Matthews et al., 1999, Matthews, 2005). An example of the ongoing definitional debate within youth studies is for example the discussion of the usefulness of 'adolescence' as a specific category in itself (Arnett, 2001, 2006, 2007, Bynner, 2001, 2005).

The selection of participants also needed to be informed by the debate on Chineseness in Britain. While this could have been a project on BBC - British Born Chinese, I knew this would severely limit the potential to find participants; considering Newcastle itself may not have a large number of potential interviewees and that I had no experience here of working with the Chinese population. Therefore the term 'British Chinese' was used in interview adverts and also by myself (see appendix). When looking for participants I made use of the guideline ten years in Britain to start with, though over time I realised that this was too strict a criteria. As the project went on I opted for a flexible approach, in which I asked if participants had grown up here or spent most of their time growing up here. It was therefore evident fairly early that rigid notions of Chineseness, British Chineseness and nationality were being questioned through the search for participants. Comments by Ang and Hall (Ang, 2001, Hall, 1990, 1992) therefore came to be relevant quite early.

The research interview timeline indicates that most participants were drawn from university or local schools (figure 10). A smaller number of participants came from snowballing participants through contacts in these sites. This distribution of participants, with both its potential and limits, should be borne in mind; and will be commented on in the evaluation and empirical discussion chapters which follow the methodology.

Through initial contacts and snowballing I was able to make use of societies on campus to meet a group of participants in the first months of fieldwork. I started the project with two British Chinese young people that I had known for a while. These first contacts had been met through membership of a society at university during my time

as a masters student⁵. These first participants gave me some information about what avenues to explore in looking for more participants. The ongoing experiences in the field reinforced the notion that methods such as quantitative surveys or even focus groups might be out of the question in this project; this was due to the low numbers of participants and a reliance on close friendship ties. Although participant numbers were not large, I was able to tap into existing friendship networks participants had. The project was also facilitated by the timing of fieldwork with a new academic year - new societies such as an Asian students society, and two which focused on Asian media such as dramas from Taiwan, Korea and Japan and separately Japanese Anime were starting up at this time. Through spending some time at these societies and asking participants to discuss the project with those they knew, I was able not only to interview participants, but also experience a little of their leisure time whilst at university.

After about two months fieldwork, it became clear that I was unlikely to meet many more participants through snowballing at the university. Using the Newcastle Council website I obtained a list of local schools and began to call, email and visit them. I made approaches in the late and early months of 2009/10. During this time heavy snowfall made some schools inaccessible and others reluctant to promise anything. I therefore had to maintain contact with the schools over some weeks and remain persistent. Aside from the issue of convincing schools to take part, which eliminated a small number, there were also issues of getting schools to respond to my phone calls or emails. Overall, the major concern emerging from my approaches to local schools was difficulty finding schools which had any young British Chinese at all. I was only able to access sixth forms, due to the selection of 16-25 year olds for my participant group. Perhaps therefore, when I did find students, most schools had a very small number of eligible participants from one to maybe four (see the experience of Archer and Francis, 2006).

⁵ My masters dissertation looked at notions of home and I came into contact with international Chinese students as part of the project, as well as British Chinese. The issues around negotiating ethnicity and identity in the UK, which I explored in the masters dissertation, formed some of the basis for inquiry in this PhD.

A low potential pool of participants meant that being able to talk to those I could had to be managed in both a careful and considered way. Although I noted the concerns in the ethics discussion earlier, it was convincing the young people to take part which became the most major issue at this stage of the project. I made a point to visit every school and meet potential participants face to face as well as their teachers. By telephoning heads of sixth form or their representatives directly I was able to explain the project, this demonstrated that I was serious about conducting the research and was open to any questions or comments. I felt that the small number of potential participants required me to show myself before any research was conducted, at this point I was able to give participants an information sheet and asked them to contact me if they were interested. Although I often did not receive long to talk to students, either when meeting them initially or at interview, this being due to their timetable commitments, face to face contact before interview was an important part of the whole process, as I was able to address any questions and concerns.

Out of *eleven* schools contacted *four* allowed me on site to talk to participants and interview them. I would note that, whilst when able to visit I was able to interview some participants, there were often one or two students whom did not agree. I did return to one school for a further interview after a participant asked a classmate, but I was otherwise not able to convince all the students I met at sixth forms to take part (though this number was not large in itself due to already low numbers).

There were also a number of other attempts to find participants which were not successful. For example meeting a local Chinese youth organisation did not yield participants directly, but I was able to gain another contact that put me in touch with a Chinese school. Through the school I was able to interview two pupils, and I once again approached the pupils in person before their lesson. I also made flyers to send to a list of Chinese takeaways in the local area and hand out at Chinese New Year in town. Neither of these 'blind' approaches resulted in a response. Attendance at a meeting group for Chinese Christians, as well as visiting a Chinese church, did not yield any participants, despite a meeting with young people at the church. I was however able to interview two of the church community indirectly, through snowballing at the

university. I did also meet with a council worker whom had experience in the Newcastle area; however they were unable to put me in touch with young people.

3.4 - 2 Interviews

In this section I draw mainly on my own experiences in the field. From a purely practical point of view, the issues of obtaining participants, having to snowball at university and spend time contacting schools and following this up, enabled interviews as a workable solution to the problem of accessing information from a hard to reach group. In this section I begin discussion about the use of interviews with a look at the encounter between researcher and participants, following after I discuss how I addressed these issues through field conduct.

From experience of reading methods texts, classroom discussion and reading numerous research studies, it might appear that researchers are imbued with the ability to find participants and then easily conduct interviews which address all of their research questions. Certainly through fieldwork I met with a range of individuals, with diverse backgrounds, personalities and ages - this speaks to the possibilities of the interview as method - but the collection of interview data in this project also involved negotiating access and time with young people whom were participants; this was done by meeting and spending time with them. Negotiating access to the young people's interviews was a time intensive process (Archer and Francis, 2006) which, whilst we are often told of the concerns about inequality between researcher and participants, was not easy and did not always seem enabled by my role as a researcher, nor both a practical and theoretical understanding of research practice and interviewing methods.

In terms of interviewing and interacting with young people, much discussion has already been had around the ethics and potential inequities in the researcher/participant relationship. Authors such as Matthews, Philo, Valentine and Pain (Matthews and Limb, 1999, Matthews et al., 1999, Pain, 2008, Philo, 2003, Valentine, 2000) for example have all argued that children and young people have a set of different competencies and awareness, when compared to adults. Indeed researchers often encounter young people from a very different position, for example in terms of social capability, having access to power in terms of finding them and

contacting them, they can also appeal to their status as grown-ups who may or may not be seen as figures of authority or respect, or to be obeyed depending on the young persons' background (Hopkins, 2007, 2008). A major issue is the zone of contention around treating children and young people as 'less-than' adults, or perhaps as 'becoming adults'; youth researchers have argued that such views may fail to value young peoples' opinions and experiences. Because this project has been informed by the ideas of Hall (1992), whom applied the notion of being and becoming to identity, concerns about the status and value of young people in research were very important.

While typically the explanation of the project and the signing of a consent form are seen to indicate comprehension of the research, I feel these measures are not always enough precaution on their own, if we want to address concerns about how researchers might inadvertently influence the outcome of their interviews or other qualitative data. For example when Nairn et al (2005) reflected on their 'failed' interviews with Maori youth they realised that the format of their interviews replicated the classroom and power structures which often disabled these young people from voicing their opinions. The interview might therefore not always be seen as a perfect encounter in which participants want to talk openly (Nairn et al., 2005). Equally, Sin (2003) found the interview might be used deliberately by a participant to display something to the interviewer, it might not be marked as a neutral and sealed off period, others might even be present and enter or leave the space (Sin, 2003). Interviews might also require participants to be convinced of the value of taking part, even once they have been agreed to in principle, as Hopkins (2008) found when interviewing child asylum seekers; where linguistic as well as legal competency were issues for the research.

I wanted to engage young people as individuals, whom had a valuable contribution to the study, as well as the potential to shape how some of the arguments might be framed in future. I noted though that understanding and the conditions in which I might meet the young people could be variable. One of the first concerns in fieldwork, and in the implications of fieldwork, is that participants are not harmed or distressed. I have already noted Kobayashi's (1999, 2001) concerns about positivist research, which might address the issue of harm through discouraging contact between researchers

and researched, an example of distancing as an ethical tool. In this research, sensitivity was employed as a method for giving participants a chance to voice their concerns before, during and after interviews. As an example of sensitivity, whilst an information sheet explaining the project was provided to participants (see appendix) and a consent form was also signed, indicating that participants might leave at any time, may withdraw their interview data or contact me with concerns after (see appendix), a flexible approach was required during different periods of fieldwork.

For university students I made use of the library as a quiet space in which to conduct the interview. The library acted as an accessible space which I hoped would allow interviews to be conducted in private. As example of sensitivity and flexibility, there was a particular issue around the sixth form participants' free time and how long they were willing to give for the interviews. Because I had approached them at school I felt it was best to keep the research at this location, I felt that it may have been perceived as unethical to come to the school and then try to engage students off site. For the smaller number of interviews carried out with those outside school and university I made use of coffee shops in town. Coffee shops, although not as quiet as a school or university, were nevertheless accessible for participants.

Whilst flexibility and sensitivity was employed, this needed to be balanced with practicality as well. By knowingly entering into a conversation, which might ask young people to recall events they would rather not share with a stranger, or rather not have explored in research at all, there was a responsibility to judge by situation when to stop an interview, when not to ask questions, or when someone might start to answer a question, but there was a feeling that they did not want to divulge certain information (Song and Parker, 1995). Another part of the responsibility in interviews was knowing that I might interact with participants again; particularly at university where I frequently saw participants or remained in contact with some of them post research. As much of the success in finding participants came from snowballing, I felt that sensitivity in interviewing might be reported to other potential participants and therefore constancy in attitude was important. In doing my best to balance arguments about power and ethical conduct I conducted most of the interviews in a quiet room. While a quiet room is ideal for removing distractions, it was not always possible to

achieve this. In one school I was not permitted to be alone with the participant and so I had to conduct the interview for a period whilst a staff member was nearby, later I was able to move to another room because a class wanted to occupy that room which did enable some more privacy. In another interview the school did not inform me completely about the participants English ability, despite them having been in the UK for some time; this made for a shorter interview than usual, as I was not able to get detailed and longer answers to my questions. I also had one interview in which I decided to stop after the individual became upset. In this instance it was recalling a certain feeling and memory which caused distress, though the participant said it would be ok to go on, I made the decision to stop as this seemed the most appropriate.

Because this project involved a hard to access group, it was also important to remain aware of participants' feelings and thoughts about the project after interview. Whilst some interviews might not be perfect by textbook standards, I wanted to avoid merely treating participants as reserves of data, and not addressing them as people whom exist outside the interview and whom we may come into contact with again, regardless if they are involved or not involved in research.

Participant no.	Age	Gender	Birthplace	Nationality	Occupation	Education	Pass times	Parents born	Parents ethnicity	Parents Nationality	Siblings	Relatives in the UK	Parent's occupation	Parents education	Pseudonym
1	20	F	England	British	Student	University	n/a	South East Asia	Chinese	British	Sister and brother	Uncle and aunty, 4 cousins	Dad: mechanic Mum: factory	Technical college Mum: Secondary School	Kat
2	19	M	London	British	Student	University	Drumming, learning languages, gym, swim, cooking Chinese food	South East Asia	Chinese	British	Sister and brother	Cousins, aunts and uncles, grandma	Self employed, Chinese takeaway	Primary school	Mike
3	21	F	Hong Kong	British	Student and sales associate	University	Societies, sewing	Hong Kong	Chinese	British	Brother	Cousins, aunts and uncles	Chefs, self employed	n/a	Annie
4	19	M	Hong Kong	British	Student	GCSE, A-levels, University	n/a	Hong Kong	Chinese	British	Brother and sister	n/a	Chefs, self employed	Father - Mechanic	David
5	20	F	Europe	German	Student	University	n/a	Hong Kong	Chinese	German	Brother	Cousins	Care home for the elderly	High school	Mandy
6	18	F	England	British	Student	School, college, university	Piano, Music, Films, internet	Hong Kong	Chinese	Chinese - British Passport	2 Brothers	2 Uncles and families	Chef, sales assistant	Mother - Secondary school, computer classes in UK	Harriet
7	24	M	England	British	Takeaway	University	n/a	Hong Kong	Chinese	Chinese	2 Younger brothers	Uncles and an Aunt	Chef, Takeaway owner	High school	John
8	16	F	England	Chinese	6th form, café, takeaway	6th form	Badminton	China	Chinese	Chinese	Sisters	Take aways, business owners	Take aways, business owners	High school	Flo
9	17	F	Newcastle	British	6th form student	6th form	Sport, dance, singing, drama	Hong Kong	Chinese	British	No	Aunty, uncle, cousin	Father student, mother housewife	High school	Edith
10	17	F	London	British	Student (6th form)	School (6th form)	Playing piano	Hong Kong	Chinese	Dual, British and Hong Kong	2 brothers	2 aunts, 2 uncles, 5 cousins, great aunts and uncles	Father - pastor Mother - social worker	University in UK	Joan
11	25	M	Gateshead	British	Takeaway	University	n/a	Hong Kong	Chinese	British	2 brothers	6 aunts, 6 uncles, 3 grandparents	Chefs	n/a	Eric
12	17	F	Hong Kong	Chinese	Student school	School	n/a	China	Chinese	Chinese	1 brother	aunts, uncles, cousins	Takeaway, waitress	n/a	Louise
13	17	F	Hong Kong	British	Student, takeaway	School	n/a	Hong Kong	Chinese	British	8	n/a	Takeaway owner	None/Year 9	Heighley
14	17	F	China	British	Student	Undergraduate (1st year)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Irene
15	20	F	Gateshead	British	Student	Student	n/a	Hong Kong	Chinese	British	1 younger brother	aunties, uncles and cousins	Father - chef Mother - kitchen assistant	Father - Secondary school England mother secondary school HK	Peggy
16	17	F	Newcastle	British	Student school	School	n/a	Hong Kong	Chinese	Chinese	2 brothers and 2 sisters	Auntie	n/a	n/a	Julia
17	16	F	UK	British	College student	College	n/a	Hong Kong	Chinese	British	Sisters, Brothers	n/a	n/a	n/a	Amy
18	18	F	Hong Kong	Chinese	College student	College	n/a	Hong Kong	Chinese	Chinese	Yes	Yes	n/a	Secondary School	Rachel
19	16	F	UK	British	Student school	School 6th form	n/a	Hong Kong	Chinese	British	Yes	Aunties	Takeaway	Secondary School	Emma
20	18	M	UK	Dual British/HK	Student	GCSE/A Level	Badminton, Tennis, Chess	Mum Hong Kong, Dad China	Chinese	British/HK	2 Brothers, 1 sister	Aunties, Uncles, Grandad, Cousin	Accountant, Restaurant owner	Dad - GCSE, A Level University Mum - GCSE	Kurt
21	20	M	China	British	Student	Student	n/a	China	Chinese	British	No	n/a	n/a	n/a	Adam
22	20	F	China	British	Student	Student	Kickboxing, horse riding, travelling	China	Chinese	British	No	No	n/a	University	Charlotte
23	32	M	England	British	Postgraduate	University	Photography	Malaysia and UK	Chinese, English-cucasian	British	No	No	n/a	School	Peter
24	30	M	England	British	Consultant	University	Skateboarding	Hong Kong	Chinese	Chinese	Yes	n/a	n/a	n/a	Tony

Figure 17 - Participants personal information

3.5 Evaluating the fieldwork

I stated that one aim of the project was to expand understanding of a greater range of British Chinese identities and identifications, drawing on youth transitions approaches. A look at the participant's general information (figure 17) suggests that background wise the participants mostly came from families with catering jobs, though a smaller number of parents were professionals. Hong Kong featured in the majority of participants parental origins. By virtue of the way participants were recruited most participants were students at school and university, though there was diversity between those whom had grown up locally, or were now growing up locally, and students, who might have travelled from the rest of the UK. There were eight male participants and sixteen female participants in the study. In terms of age there were three noticeable groupings, sixteen and seventeen year olds who tended to be in school (three were sixteen, six were seventeen), eighteen to twenty one year olds who tended to be in post school or university education (three were eighteen, two were nineteen, five were twenty, one was twenty one) and then a post education group who were twenty four to twenty five (one was twenty four and one twenty five). Outside the original study age bracket, but still interviewed, was a thirty year old mixed race (Anglo-Chinese) and a thirty two year old. These two participants were interviewed in my attempt to expand towards the older end of the age bracket, I hoped they might be able to snowball those whom were outside the university system, or perhaps might contribute some sense of what transitions and experiences went on after university.

The make-up of the participants as a whole might suggest continuity with previous studies, particularly due to the inclusion of so many from catering backgrounds and with family links to Hong Kong. Such findings reinforce and may continue to point to the influence of these Hong Kong migrants in the North of England, though this may be increasingly different in the larger cities. Following interviews and interactions with the young people, it is clearer to me that despite on-paper the sample remaining close to previous studies in terms of make-up, there were many nuances worthy of discussion. This group of young British Chinese had many different experiences of transition, one example being in the family, which required varied responsibilities, some participants

having worked for some years with their parents in catering, even taking on caring and translation responsibilities. Others had been sheltered from the work their parents did, or perhaps had no experience of catering in the immediate family. Additionally young people's parents might trace their origins in different directions, which a question about original migration point does not interrogate. As emerges in the chapter on family for example, parents might have attempted migration to other places before settling in the UK, or perhaps, and this was of particular interest, note that places have changed so much since they left as to be very different points of reference for young people today.

The greater number of females in the sample points in some ways to the individuals I was able to access in schools and at university, therefore a different gender mix might emerge were the research conducted the following or previous year for example. Little discernible difference came through in the influence of gender on family experiences, language and education, and perhaps this speaks to the priorities of families in which young people were in general encouraged to focus on education, and on subjects which appeared not to be influenced by gender bias as a whole. There were of course some examples of differences in attitude, but perhaps due to the line of questioning mostly being about transitions, this did not overly focus on the place of gender in say personal relationships or attitudes to gender within the family – drawing on the work of Yu (2007, 2009), regarding sexual attitudes of parents, it may be indicated that gender stereotypes are present around these issues and play a bigger role in them. Leisure as a topic was more shaped by gender, with several notable influences here, the importance of Asian dramas being one, also various types of Anime aimed at female audiences.

In terms then of representative-ness the sample arguably reflects more the experiences of mostly second generation young British Chinese. Most had for example attended Chinese school and their parents were first generation migrants to the UK. In essence then the upcoming empirical discussions will be most relevant to members of the Chinese population which share this background. Though there was a mixture of British Born and British Chinese, as well as quite representative proportions of those from different migration backgrounds as well as economic backgrounds, I have also

made the observation that Hong Kong and the catering trade remain influential within this sample.

3.6 Transcribing, interpreting, and analysis

Scheillerup makes the useful point that analysis 'goes on throughout the research process' (Schiellerup, 2008: 164-5) which was true for this project, notes being taken in a field diary and the meaning of interviews and experiences in the field being taken into account when planning further interviews. Analysis of information collected also runs alongside analysis of the project as a whole:

[T]o determine whether or not a study is worthy of attention. Evaluation takes place in at least three ways: by addressing the research methodology, methods and analysis (plausibility of research design); via the corroboration or refutation of research findings (plausibility of accounts); and through the fit with an existing body of literature or theory (appeal to interpretive community) (Baxter and Eyles, 1997: 506).

Analysis then is vital, through this we aim to make the research valid and rigorous. In order to establish that any findings claims are valid the interview transcripts were 'coded', that is a sense making process was applied to the conversations recorded.

Transcription was a time intensive and drawn out process. I was conscious of the possibility that I would forget small details about interviews, or forget what participants said at certain points, so I tried to transcribe interviews soon after they had taken place. I stored the interviews on an mp3 dictaphone and was therefore able to easily transfer files to a computer for listening and transcription. I tended to play short sections of a few seconds and then type these directly. In some instances it was difficult to work out what an individual had said perhaps due to the noise in the area or the speed of conversation. Listening therefore required patience and thorough knowledge of the conversations had. After a conversation had been transcribed I was then able to check it by listening back at a faster rate. This allowed me to check for any inconsistencies and place punctuation better.

Richards comments that coding before computers was:

[D]one by storing face sheets of data about the respondent or the institution being studied. (Or worse, it was done by punching holes in cards and sorting descriptive categories with knitting needles!) (Richards, 2010: 97).

Use of computers now enables the process to be much smoother and involve fewer physical and manual outputs. Nevertheless each conversation may produce many pages of typed script, from which some sense has to be made. Sorting through the conversations turns them into data, involving the creation of lines of interest called codes. Boeije argues that 'Coding forces the researcher to generate categories and to be clear about that distinguishes them' (Boeije, 2010: 119) and suggests three types of code 'open coding', 'axial coding' and 'selective coding' (Boeije, 2010). This approach was quite similar to the one I took. I used the open coding stage, where each transcript is read and notes made at the side describing topic, to freely break up each interview into a set of descriptive words or short statements.

The analytical framework Boeije employs falls within a 'grounded theory' and constant comparative method, which is worthy of explanation. Glaser and Strauss (Glaser and Strauss, 1968) have suggested a grounded theory approach to societal sociological investigation. Their approach involves the generation of explanations about society through close analysis of data gathered in the field. Glaser and Strauss (Glaser and Strauss, 1968) suggest that Sociology has too long only verified the existence of theories generated by past researchers, examples here include Durkheim and Marx, yet that these matching studies do not always fit accurately the subjects applied to. This is because the theories are being applied and tested without a founding link. In grounded theory a process of constant comparison is undertaken, by which data collected is analysed and turned into codes. These codes come from notations about an individual piece of data. Each individual piece of data is therefore broken down into its own explanatory categories and examples. Two or more pieces of data can then be compared, through the generation of a second round of codes, which are then grown with the addition of more data over time. Eventually then 'saturated' categories, that is explaining examples which match across several data sources, emerge and this is the foundation for a theory of explanation for the overall subject.

In essence the resulting explanatory theory, whilst less developed and strong than say those previous over-arching theories such as Marxism or Durkheimian approaches, nevertheless relate more closely to a particular set of data and issues. The power of this emergent theory is that it is constantly more testable and subject to development in time, flexible, and indeed hungry for new data, and rejects the imposition of outside models - though it is possible to sample and test questions through grounded theory, these become answerable as the study progresses.

Post Glaser-Strauss theorists have sought to elaborate more on the meaning of the book and indeed received the notion of a way of analysis on-the-go with different levels of understanding. A criticism is that no set method is given merely a framework and challenge to 'do' research in this way. However this is surely the point of the book; yet does not help especially novice researchers. Boeije (Boeije, 2002) has made a strong attempt to explain one way forward, with a focus on the Constant Comparative method. She gives a step by step list of the application of CCM to her own research, and the way in which single interviews and then group interviews can be analysed and compared to build an overall response to the research questions (Glaser, 1965).

More recently Glaser has also commented on the future of Grounded Theory, concluding that it is a method best kept loose, but to be shared, the distance in the quote below expresses the rootedness of any theories to emerge from working in such a way:

Because grounded theory still is an adopt-and-adapt method, in the near future it will be routinely offered as an option, to some degree, within departments that support other methodologies to a greater extent. Where no teachers of grounded theory exist, the minus mentorees must find each other through the telephone, via the Internet, and at meetings. Then, they must maintain long-distance contact (Glaser, 1999: 845)

Boeije (Boeije, 2002) has attempted to shed light on the method for doing grounded theory offering the following about the method of Constant Comparison and Theoretical Sampling:

Constant comparison goes hand in hand with *theoretical sampling*. This principle implies that the researcher decides what data will be gathered next and where to find them on the basis of provisional theoretical ideas. In this way it is possible to answer questions that have arisen from the analysis of and reflection on previous data. Such questions concern interpretations of phenomena as well as boundaries of categories, assigning segments or finding relations between categories. The data in hand are then analysed again and compared with the new data. The units should be chosen with great care and in a way that enables questions, new or otherwise, to be answered efficiently and effectively, thereby allowing the process of analysis and in particular the comparative process to progress (Boeije2002: 393).

The eventual result is an internally and externally (Beoije, 2002) valid study which allows for speculation about wider phenomena. Scott has characterised the generation of grounded theories as like an ecology from which a tapestry can be woven so close are the relationships, in the quote Scott is talking about a study of people who were effecting a change in later life through life pursuits:

Our tapestry is living, dynamic within its ecology. The participants of our example study carried threads and trends from childhood or other rich areas of their unique backgrounds through the years to weave them into the challenging life pursuits that emerged after age 50. Strauss and Corbin refer to that dynamic element as Process. Studying Process allows us to understand the involvement of the participants with their pursuits (Scott, 2004: 115).

This does not mean however that the use of constant comparison is easy or indeed completely chaotic:

Selection to fit preconceived or prematurely developed ideas is to be avoided, however creative these may appear. The researcher must be able to tolerate confusion, hard work and the tedium of the constant comparative method and wait for concepts to emerge (Heath and Cowley, 144: 2003).

In this study a similar approach was taken with the data. As is demonstrated data was collected (interviews) transcribed and then coded internally as Boeije (Boeije, 2002, 2010) suggests. A second process of coding was then employed between interviewees. Theories and findings from other studies - theoretical sampling - could then be undertaken to suggest the significance of the study. The result was the creation of four empirical findings chapters and indeed a threaded narrative structure which emerged from the young peoples' accounts. It is worthy to note too that some emergent ideas and examples did not make it to the coding stage because they did not reach saturation, there are also various constraints as is discussed in the reflection positionality section which indicate that further research is required.

For example here is the open coding set of themes for the first interview transcript:

Music/Anime/Cousin/Anime/Staying with cousins/restaurant/Uncles and aunts/not working in the restaurant/working in a shop/uni/plans/priority uni work/Chinese school/school before uni/studying Chinese/parents and Chinese culture/parent's hard work/future/Chinese and others/mainland/Chinese New Year/Geography, place and celebration/difficulty mixing?

Figure 18 - Open code themes for example interview transcript

After open coding I began theme building (as Boeije, 2010 calls it axial coding, during which links are made between free codes), this process resulted in ten overall themes being created. The ten themes were chosen as they seemed to best fit the themes within each of the interviews. For example parents were a fairly general category, which could include all the mentions of parents by participants:

- 1 - free time
- 2 - parents
- 3 - work
- 4 - education
- 5 - future plans
- 6 - family and memory
- 7 - language and culture
- 8 - significant places
- 9 - food
- 10 - beliefs, religion and festivals

Figure 19 - Eventual coding themes for interviews

Through the process of coding it was necessary to look again at all the transcripts, read them thoroughly and make notes, this process contributes to a rigorous approach (Baxter and Eyles, 1997). Secondly by creating themes and moving sections of conversation, the relevance of responses can be shown by placing all the participants' answers regarding these topics together for comparison and analysis. As Baxter and Eyles point out qualitative research needs to balance:

[C]ontingent methods to capture the richness of context-dependent sites and situations - and evaluation - which implies standardized procedures and modes of reporting (Baxter and Eyles, 1997: 505).

Using semi-structured interviews meant that similar themes were explored in all the interviews, which naturally lead to frames for coding. After the ten themes had been created I then went back to the transcripts again and used the highlighting feature in Microsoft Word to mark out which sections of each interview might fit each of the ten themes. I then created folders for each of the ten themes and transferred these coloured sections from the original transcripts into a larger document. There was therefore a clear back and forth process of analysis at this stage which was as follows:

1. Transcription
2. Creation of open code themes for each individual interview
3. Creation of ten main themes
4. Highlighting within the original transcripts to identify ten themes
5. Creation of ten folders and transfer of coloured sections into these

Figure 20 - Process of analysis

Through this process I was able to sort through, and make contact with, the interview data at several points. The process naturally required interviews to be listened through and for the themes to be drawn out and weighted against one another. In the final empirical chapters findings have been based on the content of these ten main themes. Some of the themes were much longer than others and also there was overlapping between themes, meaning that framing discussions from relevant academic work was needed to interpret the findings further. Eventually the ten themes were woven into the four empirical chapters around a set of major issues.

3.7 Reflecting – positionality and Chineseness

Somewhat lost in this debate over diaspora and Chinese identities are the viewpoints of those of Chinese ethnicity who were born or raised outside mainland China...To many ethnic Chinese, China is a foreign country, the Chinese language is a foreign language, and the issue of Chinese identity is not something they consider relevant to their everyday lives (Khu, 2001: 228).

The quote above is drawn from a collection of reflections about Chinese identity and its meaning to ethnic Chinese people living outside of China. Whilst Khu (Khu, 2001) highlights the diversity amongst ethnic Chinese outside of China, and argues that the issue of identity may not readily be questioned by many, this project has necessitated participants do engage with this question on some level. In some respects the act of researching with British Chinese young people has caused them to think about, relate and discuss their experiences. One of the authors in Khu's book is British Chinese and comments vividly on his own experiences, which he felt involved balancing his different understanding of Chineseness with those around him, whilst growing up in the UK, working abroad in Hong Kong and again on return to the UK:

Every Chinese person we met also seemed to come from Hong Kong. Even now it is unusual to hear Chinese people in Britain speaking anything other than Cantonese, the version of Chinese spoken in Hong Kong. We children therefore tended to equate being Chinese in Britain with coming from Hong Kong (Chan in Khu, 2001: 24).

We have never been the typical Chinese family: we have never lived above the shop, and it was only on rare occasions, when Dad was absolutely desperate, that we children were summoned to help out in the chip shop or the restaurant. I am not sure if Dad spared us because he knew we did not want to do it or whether, like many other immigrants, he warned us to concentrate on getting a good education so we could enter the professions and do better than he had (Chan in Khu, 2001: 26).

One challenge for qualitative researchers is to give individuals a voice, to value their individual experiences and definitions, whilst at the same time to provide a narrative and explanation. Chan's (Khu, 2001) account speaks directly to the difficulties of interpreting 'Chineseness' (Ang, 1998, 2001, Chow, 1997, Chun, 1996) and his splitting between an individualised experience, and definition of Chinese in Britain as being the Hong Kong Chinese, whilst at the same time noting he was a-typical, illustrates the complexities and need for careful reflection post-fieldwork. For this reason I will now spend some time reflecting on how I noted my approach influenced the information gathered in this project, to contextualise this study I will also draw parallels from Parker and Song's paper (1995) in which they discuss the effects of ethnicity within their interviews with young British Chinese people.

Having read up to this point it should be evident that the project, though planned, faced several challenges during fieldwork. My approach therefore had to be adapted as research went on. Because I was a PhD researcher at a university during the time of research I was able to access societies, talk to those I met several times before they agreed to take part and have a chance to introduce myself and my reasons for doing the project. Whilst I made a point to demonstrate the professional nature of the project, for example I provided information sheets, took consent forms at interview and arranged for a quiet place to interview, I felt that fieldwork at the university could blur the line between socialising and research. I was for example able to spend time at societies, watching Anime or Asian dramas with the groups which attended. This interaction should not be considered wasteful however, as it allowed me to generate

questions and lines of enquiry prior to an interview and also contributed to participants ease, as well as them continuing to search for other potential contacts for me.

Conversely when spending time at the local schools my conduct was much more formal, I felt this was required as I first had to convince teachers of the genuine need for the research. As a result of me having approached the schools I was limited in some ways by the school timetable, availability of staff to facilitate me and the willingness of the school as well as participants. Each school was likely to have its own idiosyncrasies. It is possible therefore that underlying structures in the schools either helped or hindered access to pupils, though it is difficult to know the extent of these. I would say the main issue was the low numbers of school pupils which fit my criteria for interview, this was coupled with the possibility that pupils may refuse to take part. Due to these challenges the success of interviews was reliant on the helpfulness of staff, which was appreciated greatly, as well as the pupils who needed to give up lunch or free-period time to meet and speak to me. Unlike the university interviewees I was much less likely to have been able to talk to the students and was not able to spend much time with them before the interviews, though I did meet them to discuss the project when I first attended the school.

For the smaller number of participants, which were met outside of the university and school system, I was enabled either by previous participants asking them, or through them agreeing after being asked directly. Notably, following my visit, there were young British Chinese at both a local Church and the Chinese school who did not take part. There could be any number of reasons why young people did not agree to take part, perhaps their free time was restricted, as in the sixth form students, or perhaps they did not see the value of taking part.

A question which might legitimately be raised concerns whether my own Chinese ethnicity has been a factor in this research; in young people either agreeing, or not agreeing to take part, and inside the interviews themselves. The research showed that the idea of 'typical Chinese' (Khu, 2001) is something very difficult to define at all. Although this research cannot be called ethnographic, I did find myself spending more

and more time with young British Chinese and entering the places and spaces they use. I was made aware of both my own position, of being mixed race, even partially Chinese, and also the flexibility with which this might be picked up on during this research. Examples here include little personal experience of Chinese family life, and the resultant discussions, passing on of experiences, and sharing of stories. A lack of knowledge of the 'little things', might indicate a difference in what I understood Chinese experiences in Britain to be at the project outset. This may have influenced my lines of questioning and the project design itself. Previously my association with Chineseness was perhaps similar to Ngan's (2008b) observation, mentioned in this project's literature review, by which use of chopsticks and specific food ingredients made me comfortable and familiar with a sense of Chinese identity, participants mostly drew on a different set of understandings, if it was even apparent they had thought about 'being' Chinese. Primarily much of my understanding prior to research came from books and articles, so interviewing and interaction with participants would challenge some of my understandings of British Chinese young people. However whilst I could not at the early stages of research claim to have a personal experience of Chineseness in Britain, from the perspective of those growing up in families with both ethnically Chinese parents, it became clear too that others shared a range of ambivalent attachments and interpretations of what the concept of 'Chineseness' actually meant. Realisation of the importance of my own ambivalence around Chineseness, at the start of this research, therefore became an unexpectedly more common finding than anticipated. Also being open to the understandings present in individuals, which often were not represented in literature, therefore could be taken as an advantage for enquiry. On the other hand continuing to explore Chineseness outside and alongside the project has also revealed that, had I for example attended Chinese school when younger, or perhaps had family members I could talk to who were Chinese, access might have been different. I choose my words carefully here, and am not keen to say that the project would have been easier had I already had links to other Chinese people in the UK, or locally to Newcastle, principally this is because there is no essential 'one' Chinese experience which might give a key to research, nor such a thing as a perfect research study. Completion of a successful project has lain with my own attitude and belief in the research, as well as the ways in which participants in this study reacted to my approach. That understandings were

challenged is positive, because it demonstrated clearly the need for further investigation in relation to the available literature.

In Parker and Song's (1995) interviews with young British Chinese, the sense of different Chinese identities played out in more than just the theoretical or textual realms, it was present in interviews and sometimes caused reflections on their side:

Those with strongly held Chinese identities were also keen to establish 'how Chinese are you?', or 'was it your father or your mother who's Chinese?'. I was never asked, 'was your father or your mother English?'. It was usually made clear that I had been taken as very English and that I was being talked to as if I was an English person (Song and Parker, 1995: 245).

In this example Parker was made to feel 'othered' by participants, they were keen to stress their own identities as Chinese and separate themselves from Parker through testing his identifications. In my own research I did experience some similar incidents, for example in one interview it was made clear that my knowledge of the famous Canto-pop singer Andy Lau marked me as knowing more than expected about Chinese music. However Andy Lau was also marked as an adult's choice (which may not have given me much credibility with those participants). During interviews at university it perhaps helped that I had spent some time with participants, particularly in the societies, having watched Asian dramas or anime may have let participants know I was open minded to discuss such things with them. At university then I may find myself understood as another young person, despite an age gap of three to four years with most participants. My role as another student may therefore have helped to reduce the distance Parker felt, which was for him located partially in race. The sixth formers I interviewed were perhaps more likely to identify me as distanced by age and experience, teachers often introduced me as 'Mr Tan' and there was also little chance for them to find out that I was quite interested and took part in many of the activities they did themselves. Within interviews I was questioned sometimes, or felt the need to offer, that my father is Chinese and my mother English by way of a partial explanation for doing this research. In some ways this does coincide with Parker and Song's (1995) observation that the research we have done is inflected with discourses about race, particularly about the authenticity of a Chinese identity, or the strength of it and how it is displayed. It may have been clear from my appearance that I was or

was not mixed race, this already went some way to marking me as more or less Chinese. In addition the interpretation of my Chineseness might be related back and compared to individual understandings of Chineseness; with common experiences amongst participants being speaking Cantonese, Hakka or Mandarin Chinese or having catering in their family, neither of which I could relate to directly.

On the other hand it may have been quite clear that I did not share similar experiences of racism which other young Chinese people did share with Parker (1995). I have perhaps been protected from the worst of what Parker uncovered through his research (Parker, 1995, 1998, Song and Parker, 1995). Although participants and I did discuss my own heritage perhaps lack of similar experiences lead to me not questioning racism as directly Parker did. In this way my own interviews were perhaps on reflection marked ambivalently by what was not, as well as what was, said. For Parker and Song's interviews this marked interaction as imperfect and not always one sided in favour of the researcher, they often felt:

...imbued with ambivalent feelings. This was particularly the case when we, as researchers, found ourselves positioned by interviewees, either implicitly or explicitly, in ways we found objectionable (Song and Parker, 1995: 252).

Although I did not receive the type of statements about racial mixing or cultural confusion Parker found in his interviews (Song and Parker, 1995: 245), my position was important. When noted as non-English, even if not 'full' Chinese, my positioning perhaps facilitated statements in which participants were placing themselves outside the category of 'English', often using this as a marker for Anglo-White members of the population. As example comparisons made between the UK and Hong Kong, the birthplace of many participants' parents, were particularly interesting because they marked this as a positive site when compared to the UK. I believe that my position as being recognised as partially Chinese may have helped bring out these opinions and self categorisations, but at the same time, with best intentions, it may only be with hindsight that I can now state with detail the issues I will explore in the coming empirical discussions.

3.8 Conclusions

This chapter has described and discussed the way in which I moved from theory and planning to field research. The overall aim of this research has been to influence the discussion on young British Chinese people, taking the information and lessons from previous, relevant research, and addressing the question of whether young British Chinese can be understood more completely. In search of a more complete understanding of young British Chinese people, I have argued we should perhaps soften the focus on issues such as racism and social justice, reflecting more on the connections between youth transitions and identity.

When conducting fieldwork I faced the challenge of finding participants from a 'hard to reach' group. While there are studies which have had success in finding large numbers of British Chinese participants, such as Archer and Francis's work in schools, these also tend to be based in London or be national studies. This research has focused primarily on Newcastle upon Tyne, which does not have a large ethnic British Chinese population in comparison to London or Manchester for example. The research plan was to interview young people between the ages 16-25, though the difficulty in finding places to look for participants mostly shaped the final ages around 16-21. The challenge of finding participants was met through searches within the Newcastle area, university and school sixth forms were the main research sites, though other avenues were attempted with little success.

Through searching for participants I was able to interact with many groups of Chinese people in Newcastle, therefore while we may not have participants from all sections of age and social grouping, the project was fruitful in expanding understandings of the spaces and places which young British Chinese people in Newcastle may or may not be found. The use of qualitative interviewing gave access to areas such as the family, school life, university and leisure. The fieldwork also meant exploring the interactions between both researcher and participant understandings of identity, and the possible relevance of Chineseness to these young people.

It has been difficult in previous research to gather the views of British Chinese who do not share a link to Hong Kong through their parentage. Whilst the participants in this research had diverse experiences, Hong Kong remained an influential part of the young people's family backgrounds. In the coming discussion I explore some of the meanings that the participants drew from their backgrounds, and by taking an in-depth look at their experiences related to family, language, education and leisure demonstrate the nuanced and complex ways in which these elements are seen to be influential for young people in this study.

Chapter 4 Family

The forthcoming empirical chapters make use of young peoples' own words, to unpack some of the key areas in which they are undergoing change. This first chapter looks at family. Following chapters will focus on language (chapter five), education (chapter six) and leisure (chapter seven).

Whilst there has been discussion of Chinese family from the realms of psychology (Bond, 1991), as well as anthropology (Wolf, 1978a, 1978b), the research of British academics looking at Chinese people seems often to have by-passed these observations. A reason for the by-passing of the elements of a 'Chinese family' might perhaps be that in recent times the ground has become contested with regard to understanding 'the other'; a topic made perhaps most famous by Said (2003) in his book *Orientalism*. Said's (2003) argument that the West had engaged in myth making about the East, crafting it as existing in opposition to Western civilisation, brought together and cohered a number of arguments at that time; specifically around the legacy of colonial thought. Anthropologists in particular have been held up as partially to blame for the resulting separation between those in the West and those termed 'other':

The discipline of anthropology played a significant role in the extraordinarily complex historical process by which the world came to be seen as divided into the world "Here" (the West) and the world "Out There" (the non-West...Anthropology's unique function as an official discipline was to differentiate self and other (Lavie and Swedenburg, 2001: 1).

Another challenge for academics looking at Chinese families is the shifting nature of what family means. Bourdieu (1989) for example argued that the family was a part of society in which inhabitants became instructed and inducted into society. As we shall see Bourdieu's (1989) work has been highly influential in the study of family, as well as the realms of education and leisure. Drawing from an interest in the family and the spaces it inhabits, geographers such as Blunt (2002, 2003) and Tolia-Kelly (2004a, 2006), have worked extensively to look at practices and regimes of living, within the Anglo-Indian and Indian population of the UK. The value of understanding the family also goes beyond appreciating practices located in certain spaces, social relations

between family members (Reay, 1998) can shape significantly the futures of those residing in the family, a line of argument which shall lead me to discuss the influence of aspiration on young British Chinese futures; by implication in this section, and in detail in the chapter on education.

Notions and experiences of family are therefore influenced by those which comprise them. In the work of Gilroy (1991) the notion of 'the changing same' has been referenced as a useful metaphor, for describing how a process of change in identity occurs across several generations as well as within an individual's lifetime. Because this study takes British Chinese experiences as its focus I have also drawn on the arguments around the construction of Chineseness (Ang, 1993, 2001, Chow, 1997, Chun, 1996). In particular Wang Gungwu's (1985, 1993, 2000) work is of use in illustrating the varieties of Chinese experience which have come about, and arguably these challenge a notion of a fixed and essentialised Chinese family or identity. Wang's (1985, 2003) socio-historical works demonstrate how the changes in China, and the countries outside of China, have come to shape new understandings of what a Chinese family is, what philosophies and practices guide parents, and in effect how future generations might understand Chineseness.

Within a discussion of family and Chinese family, I have also had to contend with notions of transnationalism. Perhaps inherently we would expect Chinese families in Britain to be transnational due to their potential for a mix of different identifications, identifications which emerge due to various family formations which might hold ties over two or more countries. The use of concepts such as youth transitions, hybridity and notions of 'being and becoming', has allowed me to frame the complex interconnections, in which young people might be marked by processes of change at many levels, and in many areas of their lives.

4.1 Parental background

At the beginning of my fieldwork, I asked some interviewees: 'What is the Italian community?' Each paused, looked at me, perplexed, and uttered something about the impossibility of defining it, about it being an 'amorphous mass' (sic), before complying with my request and attempting to describe its configuration. Emerging from these interviews, was an image of a community characterized by

diversity: differences of class, regional origins (in Italy), place of residence, generations (no one mentioned gender differences, however). As the interviewees spoke, the community's boundaries remained blurred. The 'community' described to me did not consist of a geographically confined area, or of a life of daily contacts between individuals. It was not a neighbourhood, nor a 'street corner society'...(Fortier, 2000: 37).

The experience of Fortier (Fortier, 2000) in the quote above, matches in many ways my own in having conducted this research. Now, in trying to present what is the result of not only conversations, but numerous observations, and thoughts over several years, I too am trying to juggle words and their meanings to as accurately and sympathetically as possible give an account of young peoples' experiences. As a point of departure from Fortier (2000) I did not frame the work in this thesis around the notion of community; in part because I anticipated the problem of justifying this term in the British Chinese case. Blunt (2005, 2007) has used the word 'entanglements' to describe the connections by which individuals considered a group understand their own identities. Entanglements is a highly appropriate word, much less off-putting than Fortier's 'amorphous' in any case, and I want to draw this out as a thread of argument in the coming section.

Entanglements in Blunt's (2005) article refer the various factors which comprise the notion of home; home here being a site in which individuals conducted certain social relationships. I shall come to the notion of home in the second part of this chapter, and relate it specifically to the family. In this section though I will first address what occurs before home and family for Chinese migrants. I have chosen to make something of participants' migration backgrounds in order to explore in greater depth the relevancy of Chineseness, diaspora and hybridity to young British Chinese peoples' experiences. Congruent with entanglements I do not pause on Chineseness, diaspora and hybridity as singular concepts, but try to make use of them where it seems appropriate. I am not interested in holding up a single theory or existing account as true or mouldable for an entire group of people, instead I attempt to respond to the challenge of Lavie and Swedenburg (2001), who have suggested we should take into account lived experience, or as they put it:

We are not expecting that those trained in literary and archival methods will immediately undertake fieldwork in the Kalahari Desert or south-central L.A. We

do propose, though, that analysis of the quotidian be integrated into this interdisciplinary venture as a crucial method of enunciating the multivalent critique of culture (Lavie and Swedenburg, 2001: 19-20).

As a result of my research being based on interview data, it is evident that the choice of Newcastle upon Tyne contributed to the accounts encountered. Therefore whilst those interviewed as part of this project in some ways confirmed the migration statistics I pointed to in the thesis introduction (Office for National Statistics, 2004, Office for National Statistics, 2006b), which contributes a sense of congruency with previous studies, the accounts of young people also bring other significant details to discussion. My concern has been to trace and establish in greater depth the effects of various transitions young people are making. Rather than being a linear process, migration to the UK might involve several stages and ruptures. Whilst there was a common thread of parents making their journey to the UK, the places they began from, experiences had and decisions made to settle could be quite varied, and this arguably threatens the stability of a completely homogenous notion of Chinese people. Even the young people themselves did not have uniform experiences related to family and migration; some arrived as children and others were born in the UK. This diversity is similar to that expounded by Zhou et al in the USA (Zhou, 1997, Zhou and Xiong, 2005, Zhou et al, 2008). Assimilation into American society resulted in a 'segmented' pattern in which some Asian migrants entered higher professions in order to compensate for their parents difficulty in getting mainstream jobs, however this was linked to various forms of social capital migrants were able to make use of on arrival such as language skills, and attitudes towards hard work and aspirations which may fit with the communities they settled in.

On the other hand despite the differences and variations in experience of migration, both for parents and young people, the shared background of migration does give ethnic Chinese in Britain a common handle on which to build association. Many parents came to the UK with work already arranged. That work was arranged for Chinese migrants built in some form of network and communication to their journeys here. Invariably much of this work was in catering establishments, either as waiters or staff, perhaps working for relatives or family friends and connections. As will be shown in the thesis as a whole, the process of becoming settled has lead to British Chinese

experiences which mark life here differently to that of other ethnic Chinese communities; particularly around the ways in which Chineseness as an identity has been come to terms with for young people.

I begin discussion with a statement from Eric, who at the time I met him was working for his parents in their takeaway, at the same time he was looking for work elsewhere. I asked him about his parents' background, particularly why they chose to come to the UK:

Eric: I think maybe 'cos of the like background of my grandparents, 'cos they were quite poor, my grandparents, and grandparents, granddad was a fisherman and on my mum's side, my mum's mum was a factory worker just like my mum, so it was quite hard work for them (25, working in parent's takeaway).

At this point I highlight Eric's experience to illustrate how the migration of British Chinese parents could be founded on a mixture of hope, aspiration and experiences of hardship. We shall see later in the thesis how these themes of wanting to escape to a better life have played a quite central part in the upbringing, and especially educational transitions, of young British Chinese. Eric himself embodied the hopes his parents had in migrating to the UK, his early life was focused on education and he had grown up in the Newcastle area. Having completed a degree just outside of Newcastle Eric remained in the local area, being quite involved with his local Church community - whom were predominantly Chinese and related to his own family. Eric's family originally migrated from Hong Kong. It is perhaps difficult to visualise now what life might have been like for the young peoples' parents and the specific experiences which caused them to migrate. Whilst the skyline of Hong Kong often hangs in Chinese takeaways, existing as a possible reminder of home as well as linking catering establishments to China and Chineseness, it also is a beacon of modernity and development, different to the place which Eric's parents chose to leave. Migration to the UK was not though an easy choice and escape from poverty or the realisation of a different life was often the result of support from existing networks of migrants.

As discussed briefly in the introduction, Britain increasingly restricted migration from Hong Kong in the 1960s, which had acted as an important gateway for Chinese migrants due to the closure of Communist China. Migrants were therefore not free to

simply travel to the UK, work needed to be approved before arrival and to fulfil this many Chinese migrants came alone, most of them men, relying on relatives and friends. Annie for example, who like Eric grew up in the local area, had this to say about her father's migration to the UK:

Annie: ...his second of his brothers had already gone over to Ireland. His oldest brother was going as well...my dad's choice of coming to Newcastle was basically the person who sponsored him or like, basically the person he was working for, it's a relative and he's like in Newcastle. We have relatives here but not really by blood... (21, university student).

Whether aware or not at the time, it appears that some Chinese migrants made use of their support networks creatively, using the term relative in a flexible and relative manner. Annie's parents also came from Hong Kong, and her account supports the comments made by Foner (1997) that: 'The very meaning of the term family and other basic, taken-for-granted cultural aspects of kinship, like who is considered a relative, vary among different immigrant populations' (Foner, 1997: 962). New formations might then emerge on entry into the UK, with parents perhaps setting up new businesses, working in existing ones, or fitting in somewhere between. A British Chinese version of segmented assimilation may then emerge (Zhou, 1997, Zhou and Xiong, 2005, Zhou et al, 2008). For example Mike's parents came from South East Asia, his father travelled alone to the UK and found work with friends:

Mike: I don't know really. I think, erm, my dad had some friends in Hull that wanted to open a restaurant, so then they asked him if he wants to help. And I think, when, we moved to Hull and then my dad got a job there, and then he, yeah it just started from there...(19, university student).

Interestingly these family experiences of migration, interlinked with support networks, were similar to those found in Vietnamese migrants to the USA: '[p]artly because Vietnamese immigrants believe that kinship ties are an effective way to cope with uncertainty and economic scarcity, they engaged in...a process of kin-group reconstruction in the absence of close kin in Philadelphia' (Foner, 1997: 964). The young people were often unsure of the exact circumstances of their parents' migratory routes and motivations. Sometimes it seemed only fragments came out in the interviews. In general though I felt that the young people were being genuine about what they knew. I suppose that for the young people their parents' experiences of

migration may seem quite far removed, considering many first arrived in their twenties, a similar observation was made by Leung: 'I have observed that knowledge about the development of the community among contemporary Chinese migrants is not widespread...rather imperfect knowledge about their past' (Leung in Kuah-Pearce and Davidson, 2008: 166). Leung also notes though that different aspects of their past might be drawn upon, this points to notions of change in what Chinese people's identity means. As Gilroy (1991, 2000) has noted the impact of knowledge(s) about one's past often remain for some time, and by looking at these traces of migration stories, and the way in which they are considered by young British Chinese, we can add depth to existing understanding of British Chinese experiences. In particular the existence of traces of different migration stories shows how erasures have taken place and the need to open up our discussion of British Chineseness in particular beyond the takeaway and educational spaces (Archer and Francis, 2007, Parker, 1995, 2000). One description of this process of identity change over time is the 'changing same', a feature of Gilroy's (1991) work 'The changing same, then, seizes the ways in which the tension between having been, being, and becoming is negotiated, conjugated, or resolved' (Fortier, 2000: 159).

Indeed the migratory routes the young people's parents took often came to have impacts on later family life in the UK. Archer and Francis (2006) for example suggested that a variety of classed, or at least economic backgrounds, might be found amongst British Chinese families. A good example of the possible variations in migration experience was that of Adam's parents. Adam, unlike the majority of participants, traced his background to mainland China:

Adam: ...my dad was, was a lecturer in...China...he wanted, he wanted more experience basically and so he learnt English by himself for ten years...as he learnt the English he contacted a UK professor and to see if he's willing to take him on and fortunately he did accept...me and my mum was in China then, but we decided to join my dad half a year later so that's how my family got into the UK (20, university student).

Whilst the position Adam's father was able to take in the UK might afford the family a strong financial base, there was evidently a considerable amount of planning; notably the learning of English for ten years. In addition unlike his British born Chinese

counterparts, Adam's first language was Mandarin Chinese. Speaking Mandarin may mark Adam as different both from his classmates, and the majority of settled ethnic Chinese; who tended to speak Cantonese. Much like other Chinese migrants, Adam's father arrived in the UK before being able to establish family here, which highlights the risk he took, whereas many Hong Kong migrants were able to at least draw on established networks to support them should anything go wrong on arrival.

All four of the accounts of migration so far show individual varieties in migration to the UK, for Eric and Annie the Hong Kong migration route was facilitated by friends and family. Upon arrival Mike's father set up a business with friends, despite not coming from Hong Kong, his father did share the Cantonese language with other Chinese in the UK. Adam's account demonstrates that whilst there have been, and continue to be, routes into the UK which do not involve either catering or networks based in Chinese ethnicity, this did not necessarily mean the migration was simple. Collectively the accounts illustrate how ability and desire to work in the UK were not enough to secure migration and success; perhaps one reason Bourdieu's (1996, 2010) concept of forms of cultural capital, such as having the right social contacts, has been used to expand on the experiences in the UK Chinese population. As transitions researchers in the UK have tended not to look at migrant transitions, these British Chinese accounts suggest a variety of patterns of assimilation into British society alongside established patterns in research. As Zhou et al have shown migrants variable backgrounds and adaptation to life in new societies can lead to fragmented and segmented routes for initial and later generations (Zhou, 1997, Zhou and Xiong, 2005, Zhou et al, 2008).

Earlier I used the word entanglement (Blunt, 2005) to describe the way in which migrations to the UK were complicated, due to the ways intent to migrate and facilitation came together. Two participants, significant for my sample of twenty four, described family backgrounds which made indirect migrations to the UK, through Germany:

Mandy: ...my parents were originally born in Hong Kong. Then my father got a job as a chef at a restaurant in Germany and that's when like him and my mother moved to Germany and my brother and me were born there. Then after he died, that's when we moved to England (20, university student).

Harriet: ...one of my uncles was here before my parents came here, one of them came a bit after I think, so I'm not really too sure, because for some reason they left, I think it was because my dad couldn't really find many jobs in Hong Kong, so he went to Germany and then he was a waiter, but then that didn't work out very well, and then they went to England because his brother, my uncle, was already in England (18, university student).

The specific reasons for going to Germany were not clear, though I would imagine the reason to be to do with spread and diversification (in terms of available work), much as Annie mentioned relatives being in Ireland, and Mike who had family remaining in London and the English midlands. Leung (in Kuah-Pearce and Davidson, 2008), who conducted fieldwork in Germany on the Chinese population and its history suggests some parity of experience with Britain where she found that there was a similar period of migration for Chinese people:

...most of whom went into the catering and restaurant business. In the 1960s and 1970s, a considerable number of ethnic Chinese from South East Asia arrived largely due to the anti-Chinese sentiment in their countries...The development of the ethnic Chinese migrant groups in Germany is not well documented (Leung in Kuah-Pearce and Davidson, 2008: 166).

Ultimately both Mandy and Harriet's families ended up settling in the UK. For Mandy the death of her father meant that her mother could rely on relatives in the UK if she moved there. Similarly Harriet's parents decided to move to England following dissatisfaction working in Germany. What on paper might be seen as 'typical' family migration histories can be shown to be related to quite personal events, events which might shape the family and future generations. The personal nature of migrations highlights the need to draw on a range of accounts, which allows us to assess the context within which migrations were being made. On the other hand we must also continue to look at the way different groups are affected within a broad context. Earlier in the thesis I suggested that in order to understand young British Chinese we might draw on a combination of British research (Francis and Archer, 2005a, Parker, 1998, Song, 1995), transnational examples (Huang and Yeoh, 2005, Waters, 2005, Ngan, 2008b) as well as useful concepts from social theory (Ang, 2001, Bhabha, 1985, Gilroy, 1991). The migratory backgrounds of the participants in this study reinforce the need to draw on these three strands of research; which are able to demonstrate how British Chinese experiences have been shaped by time spent within and outside the UK,

and in more abstract terms, the meaning of any effects this might have had on the way parents and their children live their lives.

How then did Chinese migrants form families in the UK? At what point might we move from diasporic conceptions of Chinese migrants, to more settled and permanent ones? Within the general discussion of diaspora and hybridity, the question of settlement has often been framed as a roots/routes binary, ultimately leading for Blunt (2003) to the establishment of home: 'While the term 'roots' might imply an original homeland from which people have scattered, and to which they might seek to return, the term 'routes' complicates such ideas by focusing on more mobile and transcultural geographies of home' (Blunt, 2003: 282).

Although it might be a cliché to suggest that it is women which make a home and family, in the case of many migrant experiences this is certainly a gendered experience of settlement. For example when I asked about the circumstances of young people's mothers' arrivals in the UK, several confirmed stepped migration patterns:

Kat: Yeah, I think my dad came to England in like 1979, so my mum came like in 1982 or something like that...(20 university student).

Peggy: My mum she, well my mum and dad met through family, it was semi arranged marriage, my dad's uncle married my mum's cousin. So they were married together and my mum's cousin who was married to my dad's uncle said oh I'll introduce you to someone and my dad went back to Hong Kong and they got introduced and they didn't really, they only kind of talked to each other for like however long my dad was in Hong Kong for, like two weeks or something and then my dad went back to England and then he went back to Hong Kong and said "do you want to get married?" And then my mum just said "ok" (20, university student).

Kat's family migrated from South Asia, similarly to Mike her families success in coming to the UK was based in tapping into networks in the UK; as the family did not migrate through Hong Kong. Upon finding work women might then join their husbands as in Kat's family, or search for a partner, like Peggy's.

It might be tempting to assume Chinese women were perhaps subordinate to men; it appears that they had fewer options amongst the Hong Kong migrants to enter the UK

on their own (notable exceptions were educated women and those who arrived as nurses from Malaysia). Perhaps surprisingly, little has been said about the role of Chinese women in UK families. Song's (1995) research is a rare example, which suggested Chinese women were often quite integral to the running of family businesses, caring for children as well or earning money through their work. Statistics also bear out the observations of Song (1995), for example National Statistics (Office for National Statistics et al., 2005) suggest Chinese women have a relatively high employment ratio when compared to other groups of ethnic minority women in Britain. Lie's (2010) paper also sheds some light on this under-researched area of Chinese experience in Britain, arguing that one main difference between Chinese women's migrations and for example those of Bangladeshi families at the same time is that:

...womenfolk needed to be provided for in a non-Islamic society, as the protection and seclusion (purdah) of women is a key religious principle...Chinese women, however, were more accustomed to waged work and often came to the UK with older children to join their husbands and set up family businesses (Lie, 2010: 1429).

That the running of a private catering business tends to be based around the family unit may be one aspect of family in the UK, however what is missing as a counterpoint is descriptions and awareness of elements such as caring and even love:

Once established, fathers sent for their wives and older children...Both Mr Ho and Mrs Chan hold very strong views about the role of parents in bringing up children because of their own personal experiences of separation from their own parents (Lie, 2010: 1432-33).

The need to take into account emotions and processes of home making (Blunt and Dowling, 2006, Fortier, 2000, Tolia-Kelly, 2004b), were supported by the entanglements of migration young people described, in which economic situation, aspiration and family were wound together with tradition and practicality as well as desire for family and settlement. For example Flo described her parent's migration not only in terms of economics:

Flo: My dad came for university when he was like nineteen I think and then my mum followed...and then my mum decided to run away and be with my dad (16, sixth form student).

In a different vein John's parent's decided to move to the UK for work and as part of a community of Christian worshippers:

John: ...people gradually moved to UK and gradually joined the Church and obviously were from like the same place so, you know we're quite united. So if you're talking about relatives you know I think it's they are all like relatives (24, working parent's takeaway).

As highlighted by scholars (Anthias, 1998, Parker, 1998, Song, 1995) there remain many areas of British Chineseness to be explored, particularly bringing out the nuances of men and women's migration stories. By focusing too heavily on economic reasons for migrating to the UK we perhaps obscure other aspects of British Chinese experience and ultimately the impacts of these on future generations (Anthias, 1998, 2001, 2002).

Participants illustrated that a variety of reasons for coming to the UK existed, such as the opportunity to leave as provided by networks of migration through family, relatives and friends, or in some cases due to individual efforts (such as Adam's father). Hong Kong was the most common point of departure to the UK, and yet variations existed in experience. Typically Chinese men might be able to find work through sponsors such as family, and improve their own, and others, fortunes by bringing a spouse to the UK. Other families were able to draw successfully on friends and relations to set up their own businesses, which might be a takeaway or restaurant. The importance of taking into account the participant's parents' transitions, from migration to settlement, will be illustrated though discussing how parents managed the creation of a family, and the experiences young people had.

4.2 Family in the UK

I have used the word entanglements to describe the intertwining of experiences the parents of British Chinese participants families have had. On the one hand entry into the UK required parents to challenge their notions of self, finding work abroad and ultimately settling into a new life. What notions of parenthood and family might parents make use of in raising children when in the UK, and how do young people perceive themselves to have been influenced by these views? Understanding and taking into account the transitions made by parents is key to understanding the

transitions of young British Chinese people in this project; which we might consider a process of being and becoming.

4.2 - 1 Notions of family and home

Reproduction theories such as those offered by Bourdieu (1996) look at the family as a site of value transmission. Bourdieu links this value transmission directly to class, which he defines as a system, which through upbringing and education, creates an 'energy which only exists and only produces its effects in the field in which it is produced and reproduced' (Bourdieu, 1996: 113) – this energy relating to certain beliefs and practices which mark individuals out as part of a certain 'class'. Bourdieu later goes on to comment more explicitly on the family noting 'words make things, the common sense, the *doxa* accepted by all as self-evident' (Bourdieu, 1996: 21 emphasis in original text). For Bourdieu (1996) the family practices of the middle class revolve around identifying common sense (*doxa*) attitudes around education and mixing which were reinforced within families. Interestingly the comments of participants on how their parents regulated their time and/or friendships might be said to fit within this middle class practice - one which values social mobility upwards in particular. As many British Chinese families, as we have seen, link their pasts to long hours in catering work, or having arrived in the UK with very little finances, we have an interesting disconnect here, between what we might expect the values of Chinese migrant parents to be and what they are in practice. This disconnect however was confirmed in the work of Archer and Francis (2005b, 2006) in several ways, both when parents and young people were asked about the value of education (Archer and Francis, 2006), in which those from all economic (class) backgrounds seemed to support education, and in stereotypes about pupils as boffins, prevalent amongst teachers and non-Chinese peers (Francis and Archer, 2005b). Zhou et al have found that it is this immigrant attitude towards work and education which ensures some groups assimilate more easily than others, but crucially that this is not always a ticket to greater success in the long-term, by the third generation the lack of emphasis on assimilating may lead to more standard patterns of transition (see Zhou et al, 2008).

Young people were making transitions in the family, which involved them taking on both responsibilities such as helping parents with varied language ability, as well as

helping out in takeaways or perhaps in caring for siblings. It has been important that 'rather than focusing exclusively on young people's transition to independence it is more appropriate to consider the different configurations of inter-dependencies that form and dissolve over time and space' (Holdsworth, 2007: 61). When very young, for example, the participants may not be able to help their parents and even if called to do so when older, their responsibilities will be shown to shift as a result of other priorities. One priority was educating themselves which most families saw as the ultimate goal for the future. Indeed family life was not always structured according to the parental guidelines participants discussed and there was sometimes a 'felt incompatibility of personal, family and kin related and societal norms' (Merz et al., 2007: 180). Illustrating the role of parents in influencing and shaping young British Chinese people's lives thereby responds to 'questions of parental/adult responsibility and authority [which] are infrequently given theoretical consideration to the same extent as those of children's social agency' (Vanderbeck, 2008: 397).

Understanding how attachment and bond are formed in the families of young participants in this study (Merz et al., 2007:117) contributes to a more rounded picture of young British Chinese people's lives. I will illustrate that young British Chinese sometimes had to navigate their parents' worries about safety and autonomy, perhaps policed through phone calls or changes in school. Some of the participants felt that their parent's attitudes were old fashioned, yet they nevertheless continued to help them, for example working in takeaways if required, or perhaps translating and helping them manage their affairs. Song (1995) has argued that rather than universally seeing helping their parents as a burden, some believed they were 'helping out'; noted as a much softer way of expressing their responsibilities in the family. Arguably some of the accounts from participants in this study demonstrate that young people were perhaps brought closer to their parents, through a shared experience and understanding of their position and transition from migrants to parents.

Intimately linked to the family is the home. Concepts of home have also featured strongly in debates about migration and diaspora, in particular because they are seen as a social space in which the distance between route and root can be bridged. Ann Buttimer argued that: 'It appears that people's sense of both personal and cultural

identity is intimately bound up with place identity. Loss of home or 'losing one's place' may often trigger an identity crisis' (in Buttimer, 1980: 167). The work of Buttimer has in some ways been continued by Blunt (2003, 2007) and Tolia-Kelly (2004a, 2004b), both of whom have looked at the ways in which the British Empire's role in India came to be important for Anglo-Indian and British Asian families, respectively. Seen as a site for the working out of identity, and coming to terms with the entanglements of identity shaped through migration and settlement, Tolia-Kelly (2004b) has argued that one of the principal issues for discussion of home and diaspora should be memory. The following quote exemplifies Tolia-Kelly's (2004b) insightful comments on the function of memory within the home:

Re-memory is memory that is encountered in the everyday, but is not always a recall or reflection of actual experience. It is separate to memories that are stored as site-specific signs linked to experienced events. Re-memory can be the memories of others as told to you by parents, friends, and absorbed through day-to-day living that are about a sense of self beyond a linear narrative of events, encounters and biographical experiences. It is an inscription of time in place, which is touched, accessed or mediated through sensory stimuli. A scent, sound or sight can metonymically transport you to a place where you have never been, but which is recalled through the inscription left in the imagination, lodged there by others' narratives. This form of social geographical coordinate is not always directly experienced but operates as a significant connective force. Re-memory is a resource for the sustenance of a sense of self that temporally connects to social heritage, genealogy, and acts as a resource for identification with place (Tolia-Kelly, 2004b: 316).

There is a clear possibility here to link with Bourdieu's (1996) own notions of family, which he has also argued acts as a site for the working through, and on, identity. As we move through the thesis it should also become clear how memory, and the effect this has on young people, is of importance.

On the other hand the home has also been considered as a site of control and regulation. In the words of Douglas the home is a quite tyrannical place:

The more we reflect on the tyranny of the home, the less surprising it is that the young wish to be free of its scrutiny and control. The evident nostalgia in much writing about the idea of home is more surprising (Douglas, 1991: 287).

Douglas goes on to suggest that it is processes of repetition and control which mark the home as tyranny:

...the home tyrannizes over tastes. In the name of friendly uniformity, the menus tend to be designed not to satisfy food preferences but to avoid food hates. One person's rooted dislike or medical prohibition results in certain foods being totally eliminated even if they are everyone else's favourite... (Douglas, 1991: 303-304).

Indeed there are many worse things which occur within the home and family than the regulation of mealtimes, abuse for example. Such a detached concept of home, whilst it might provide an attempt at objectively explaining the function of the home, does not move to represent and understand it from the perspective of those within it.

4.2 - 2 Chinese family and home

Much of the existing literature on the British Chinese has described them as a silent or hidden minority (Adamson et al., 2005a, Adamson et al., 2009). Although their visibility has been demonstrated, perhaps in Chinatowns (Chan, 2006, 2007) or takeaways (Parker, 2000), parenting forms and philosophies have only recently received increasing attention. For example Amy Chua's recent book 'Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother' (2011) has ignited debate about the strengths and weaknesses, as well as the possibilities, of an oppositional form of 'Asian' or Chinese parenting style. Comments such as those below perhaps strengthen the belief in Chinese parenting, as both diametrically opposed to Western parenting, and arguably by implication its societal values:

...my Western friends who consider themselves strict make their children practice their instruments 30 minutes every day. An hour at most. For a Chinese mother, the first hour is the easy part. It's hours two and three that get tough (Chua, 2011).

In the UK programmes aired by the BBC such as 'British Tiger Mum's' (BBC 2, 2012) somewhat uncritically reflect on similar extreme examples of parenting, linking ethnicity, race and philosophies of parenting together. Traditionally Confucian notions of filial piety have been seen as a key tenet of both Chinese and Eastern parenting. Filial piety, whilst a complex issue, in essence '...refers to the practice of respecting and caring for one's parents in old age, based on a moral obligation that children owe their parents' (Hashimoto and Ikels, 2005: 437) and therefore links the ideas of tradition and history in its explanation for its continuance. Filial piety also stems from:

The Confucian idea that a person should respect their elders...comes from their belief that moral development is in line with chronological development and that older people are important transmitters of cultural knowledge and wisdom (Lin and Brayant, 2009: 414).

Writing on his research with Chinese families in China and Taiwan, Bond (1991) has commented that:

The Chinese child is brought up to regard home as a refuge against the indifference, the rigours, and the arbitrariness of life outside. This feat is achieved by indulging the infant, restraining the toddler, disciplining the schoolchild, encouraging the student to value achievement, and suppressing the divisive impulses of aggression and sexuality throughout development (Bond, 1991: 6).

Whilst Bond's (1991) arguments were backed up by his own observations, similar views have also been taken to apply to Chinese families in Britain - in an inversion of the often held belief that migrant children do not settle well, or are trapped in between cultures. Public discussion has not been very rigorous, with at one time there being a worry about Chinese children in Britain (Pan, 1999), and in more recent times British Chinese families being constructed as having the right formula. The notion of a successful family has been looked at through the prism of statistics such as those referred to earlier in the thesis (Office for National Statistics, 2006a). GCSE results in particular are often used to reinforce ideas that the possible strictness of Confucianism, or whatever is believed to drive these success indicators, is perhaps by implication lacking in other families. Chinese people are not of course the only group to have experienced changing fortunes of favour. Fortier's (2000) work with the Italian community found that discourses altered over time '...Italians not as 'dirty' or 'untrustworthy'...the perfect model of cleanliness and, by extension, virtuous morality...The implication was that Italians were best suited for the white British 'way of life' (Fortier, 2000: 39). Many of these same adjectives were indeed once used to describe Chinese migrants (Parker, 1995).

Such idealised, even stereotypical, examples of Chinese parenting and families are challenged through the observations of young participants in this project. However a set of guiding principles, some of which were believed to be quite different to those of

non-Chinese parentage, were observed by some participants. Arguably somewhere in the entanglements of migration and ongoing processes of settlement in the UK, are the reasons for Chinese children's reported success; though the young people themselves have rarely been asked their views and experiences.

If Chinese families in Britain are marked by differences to those from non-Chinese families, I would argue these come in the form of a different set of experiences and then reactions to these, as well as any guiding principles which could be taken to mark them. Formation of family is however rarely a one-dimensional power relationship. Indeed we might stress forms of negotiation between young people and adults in which traditional concepts such as filial piety might be looked at from a different perspective:

...filial piety today is not merely a historical vestige of the "traditional" family, but an ongoing practice of belonging, security, and surveillance...a complex negotiation of parent-child relations that embraces both a cultural ideal and contested ideology... (Hashimoto and Ikels, 2005: 437).

As example of the negotiation of parenting and family, many of the participants in this project were affected profoundly by experiences of families structured around catering and the takeaway in particular. For many of those with a Hong Kong background, and having catering in the family, their economic situation may have required them to work long hours in catering. These long hours working perhaps contributed to lack of time for parents to learn English, or be able to explore the workings of, for example, the school system. Archer and Francis (2005a, 2009) have discussed how the experiences of many Chinese parents left them feeling out of depth with the British education system and could create worry over their young people's place in society (Francis and Archer, 2005a, Francis et al., 2009). Awareness of their difference and the need to find a place for themselves in the UK, Chinese families may also face the challenge of being seen as atypical. For example in her research Reay noted that '...the image that the 'good parent' conjured up was of a white, middle-class, heterosexual married mother' (Reay, 1998: 13). Even if they did not have catering in their recent background, families had to find a way to accommodate the experiences of parents - most being migrants - and the ways in which these shaped parental views.

4.2 - 3 Practices within and beyond the family

The following discussion will address the lack of awareness and consultation of young British Chinese people about family. There is a need for more work despite the existence of the good research already done; such as that by Archer and Francis's (2005a, 2006), which connected the worries of Chinese parents with young peoples experiences in school.

I begin my discussion of parenting experiences with Amy's description of her father's attitudes:

AT: I wonder if you thought there's a difference between your parent's ideas and yours, 'cos you're growing up and you're growing up in a different country and..?

Amy: My dad's really old fashioned, yeah, he like compares us to other kids that's not even here that doesn't even exist anymore.

AT: Such as?

Amy: I don't know he just like compares us to kids his age (oh) like "when I was like eleven I was already working I was like looking after my sisters" and crap so I don't know (16, sixth form student).

The identification of a parent's views as traditional could be interpreted as a negative definition; the parents are out of date or out of touch with the experiences and values of the young person. Amy's exact description was a rare case, and may have something to do with her specific experiences, for example she complained that her father sometimes allowed the family to do most of the work running the takeaway, she also said that her father did not always see the meaningfulness of education. What was interesting about Amy's use of the term old fashioned was its accuracy in describing how many of the young people felt, especially when positioning themselves against their peers, from non-Chinese families. An important reason for this dissimilar positioning was the role of catering in families. I realise however Parker's finding that for those from non-catering families 'There was also a disquiet at being stereotyped or "lumped in" with takeaways' (Parker, 1995: 103).

I appreciate that many young people, especially teenagers and young adults are finding their independence and may find living under their parents' rules increasingly difficult. However, as the accounts of three participants demonstrate, some of these

expectations by parents are backed up by other research about family practices in the UK.

Heighley: I don't go out with my friend's much, it's just in school that we meet. 'Cos my mam and dad are quite old fashioned like, my dad doesn't really care, he says he doesn't care but he does care, he doesn't say much you just know he's care, ok. And my mam she's just asking me so many questions you just don't want to go out anymore you, god you get phone calls every so often... (17, sixth form student).

Amy: Yeah well like when we do go out she rings like every hour when are you coming home, when are you back are you coming back for dinner, no (16, sixth form student).

Annie: ...in my house got quite over protective parents they're quite erm, they like things certain, just simply if I did go out, I'll probably get a phone call from my mum every half an hour or something like that if I'm out for two hours, so. It would go down to ten minutes sometimes if it's my grandma, so it gets quite restricted so there wasn't that much you could do in school (21, university student).

A feature of participants with these experiences was the use of phone calls to project parents' views on where and when young people should be at home. These experiences were similar to those found in Scottish Chinese families, in which parents believed that their families were distinct from non-Chinese families and:

...highlighted the different perspectives of Chinese and Scottish parents regarding their children's behaviour and expected their children to behave differently from their Scottish peers. The children were not expected to go out often, stay out too late... (Yu, 2007: 73).

It is possible that such constructions of Chinese families as different or separate to non-Chinese families are derived from experiences of racism such as found in Adamson et al's and Chan et al's reports (Adamson et al., 2009, Chan et al., 2004) and equally may be reinforced by experiences in the takeaway or even beyond (Parker, 1995). As we shall see later, two areas where young people felt parents did position themselves as different to non-Chinese families were aspiration and education. However, when it comes to management of the young people's free time, which applied mainly to those still in school or living at home, there tended to be a relationship between the parents need for support, perhaps at work or whilst they were away working, as well as beliefs about the safety of the outside environment, particularly at night.

Taking responsibilities in the family as a first example, those with catering in the family and/or younger siblings may have been required to support their parents by being expected to give up free time outside school to help. Peggy mentions her responsibilities and looking after her brother:

Peggy: ...letters that come through and I'll have to translate to parent's and things but humm yeah and at home my parent's if my mum's at work that day, my dad works full time so he's nearly never there apart from Mondays and if my mum's not working then I have to make sure that I go home like straight after uni and cook dinner for him and things like that (20, university student).

Peggy's experience was similar to that of young people in other studies, in which parents relied on their children for support (Archer and Francis, 2006, Li, 1994, Song, 1995). In Kat's case she helped look after her younger brother when he was an infant:

Kat: I would just look after him kind of thing whilst my mum was working and stuff, yeah, so, actually that's like before, that's quite a couple of years before, when he was like really young we just helped, like changing nappies and all that stuff (20, university student).

In these instances Peggy and Kat helped out with family responsibilities. These responsibilities were left to the young people and entrusted to them as they were seen to be capable; additionally there may be no one else parents could rely on. The interlocking of young people and parents through responsibility echoes the findings of Holdsworth (Holdsworth, 2007), who found that rather than a hostile and controlling environment (Douglas, 1991), young women could position themselves as being quite integral to daily living. Amongst male participants there were no instances of being required to look after siblings in the way Peggy and Kat experienced. This might be a case of virtue of birth, in which Peggy and Kat were older than their siblings, which allowed them to take the caring role. However it did seem that male participants were more likely to frame their responsibilities in the family as related to working with/for parents. For example David states rather modestly:

David: ...I think, I don't really help out that much to be honest with you he does all the hard work and I just like, take orders and just get whatever from the fridge and wrap up the meals I think that's about it really. He does all the hard work like cooking and all the maths stuff at the end of the night, and phoning for ordering,

phoning for, ordering cold meat from the supplier, and, yeah I don't think I really help him that much (19, university student).

David had worked for his parents when at school and during sixth form as well. When attending university away from home he still travelled back to work for his father in the takeaway when he had holiday time. The transition away from responsibility in the takeaway may not therefore necessarily end when young people leave the family to go to university, it was also at odds with his assertion he was not helping much. In the experiences of participants in this study there is a sense of having a part to play in the family, be it working with parents in catering or looking after siblings, though as we see in David's account this was not usually thought to be particularly glorious, simply ordinary. The responsibilities many participants had within the family were in opposition to the notion of transition which prioritises independence and leaving home, which was close to '...the ideal of the uni-directional transition bears little resemblance to their lived experiences, and it is not something that they particularly aspire to' (Holdsworth, 2007: 66).

Exploration of the place of fear within the family suggests '...parents may be holding more complex and contradictory views about gender and safety than previous studies have implied...expectations about sex-typed behaviours are changing both within, and outside, the family' (Valentine, 2004: 32). Tucker for example has explored the way white 'girls voiced opinion that adults viewed them as a problem when they socialised with friends in outdoor spaces' (Tucker, 2003: 116) and that this would perhaps result in 'conflict that often occurred over the social ownership of micro-spaces such as the bus shelter, the steps of the church or village hall and the climbing frame in the park' (Tucker, 2003: 118). Valentine (2000) and Pain (2008) have also presented a complex portrait of the use of space and understanding young people have about how the spaces around them might be deemed to be dangerous. In Newcastle itself the work of Alexander (2008) and Nayak (2003b) points to various parts of the city in which young people may either feel unwelcome or unsafe, or perhaps negotiate in their own way the dangers present or imagined to be there. David and Eric suggested that beyond the needs of their parents for their help at home, running takeaways, it was their moral and developmental worries about mixing with undesirable others which caused them to change their schools and friendship groups:

David: ...so I sort of like, left that crowd of people and moved away to that far away college and so I met a new group of people that were hard working and all that so, which formed, forced me to be more hard working and I actually had an aim in life... (19, university student).

Eric: Maybe err 'cos the state schools, err they didn't want me to hang around with maybe bad people and stuff like that, and maybe private schools got people who are more sensible and stuff (25, working parent's takeaway).

Interestingly both David and Eric felt with hindsight that their parent's decision to place them in certain schools helped them achieve later in life; David was doing a degree in Newcastle and Eric had already completed a degree just outside the city. The effects of parental control on both male and female participants related perhaps to views on maturity. Yu for example noted that:

The parents [of Chinese children] strongly disapproved not only of their daughters, but also their sons, having girlfriends/boyfriends. They thought that their children were not mature enough to deal with a relationship, although they might not discourage them from having friends of different genders (Yu, 2007: 72).

These findings support in some ways Bond's (1991) comments about Chinese children being raised in a somewhat encasing environment, until parents feel they are adult enough. Whilst the work of Yu (2007, 2009, 2010a, 2010b) stands as a rare example of the exploration of the attitudes of both British Chinese parents and young people, there is equally a weight of work which suggests young people and parents engage in reflexive productions and mouldings around what is and is not permissible. Rawlins (2006) argued that although though young people appeared to be socialised towards certain beliefs about gender, '[t]he use of fairly strong words such as 'weird' and 'disturbing' suggest that she [the participant] has been socialised into believing in stereotypical gender roles' (Rawlins, 2006: 365), this was often later disturbed through observations and interactions with young people who were equally willing to play and test such boundaries. In this study I was not able to confirm the prevalence of romantic relationships or otherwise amongst all of my participants; although not many participants mentioned girl/boyfriend relationships in interviews it was not a direct question I focused on. At the schools I visited, the small numbers of ethnic Chinese, at most three to five within a whole sixth form, would suggest that pupils would need to

make a variety of friendships and relationships. Importantly I did observe many mixed gender friendships and indeed mixed ethnic friendships amongst and between participants. It was not therefore the case that participants universally seemed to have cause to avoid others or be unsociable because of their parents' views; but I will explore this more closely in the forthcoming chapter on leisure.

Accounts of family practices may admittedly be partial, and there is a need for further research, around cultural and belief practices, which might intertwine with parenting in British Chinese families. The accounts discussed do demonstrate the ways in which Chinese parents might be thought of as traditional, which for young women might mean restrictions on travel or free time. Parents also demonstrated an awareness of potential threats to their children's imagined futures, being willing at times to move them to different education places away from friends perceived as trouble. In many ways the practices young people talked about seemed to be similar to those identified by middle class parents, whom have been shown to prioritise the accumulation of cultural and social capital (identified in Zhou's research, Zhou and Xiong, 2005, Zhou et al, 2008). It is possible that despite the position of some families as working class by virtue of their occupations, they lack the family background and experiences of white working class families (Reay, 1998, Holdsworth, 2007) which were shown to reduce aspiration and attitudes towards education and work. In particular it was often in spite of low educational attainment, as a result of which parents came to encourage their young people to avoid their experiences. Because it often had a significant effect, and because the experiences were varied and worthy of clarification, I have chosen to explore the phenomenon of catering and takeaways more closely in relation to family and young British Chinese people.

4.3 Young people, family and the effect of takeaway work

It is important not to suggest that catering families represent the only or most valuable experience in young British Chinese people's lives, nor that this is the only family experience worthy of note. Nevertheless catering work does remain a key influence on British Chinese families in this study, with nineteen of twenty-four identified as having or having had catering work in their family at some point (see the participants' information table in the methodology chapter). I have sought through my study to

round out the place of not only the takeaway, but the more general term of catering, in young British Chinese people's lives. As a point of note I did not set out to ask about racism in the takeaway or catering industry, partially because recent reports by Adamson et al (2009) and Chan et al (2004) suggest the findings of Parker (1995, 1998) are still prevalent. Participants' experiences varied. Some of these variations come in the form of economic situation, as perhaps parents did not need the help of their children. Otherwise families might be able to make use of relations, or older children, to look after younger members of the family; removing the need to take them to work just to keep an eye on them. The young people, whilst rarely positive about the smells or work involved in takeaways in particular, often saw themselves as supporting their family, having some sense of responsibility, and as a result they may aspire (even if in a manner of escape) to other, often very different futures to their parents.

In this section I discuss in more depth the work on takeaways and stereotypes related to Chinese food, and then give examples from young people which build the argument in different directions. Whilst there are clear connections to education within this section and the family chapter as a whole, I will go into detail about this in a separate chapter, because this was such an important area for participants. I also want to demonstrate that a simple link between family, hard work, and educational attainment requires greater discussion.

4.3 - 1 Takeaways and catering

Perhaps disproportionately Parker's (1995, 1998, 2000) work, on the impact of catering and food for Chinese people in Britain, stands as the main source of academic comment on this topic. As an example I lift this opening from a paper in 2000:

Many years ago we copied your porcelain and called it China. We adopted your passion for tea. And more recently, the local Chinese restaurant has become a familiar feature of life throughout this land. (HM Queen Elizabeth II, 20 October 1999)

The Queen's welcoming remarks to the Chinese President Jiang Zemin, at a state banquet during his visit to Britain, indicate how just how deeply select signifiers of China and Chinese culture have permeated British life (Parker, 2000: 73, emphasis in above added).

In particular these 'select signifiers' were perhaps most problematically found to affect young British Chinese women, whom had to deal with the effects of the observation that 'The gendered exoticisation of Eastern food attaches a very particular set of meanings to Chinese takeaway food and those serving it across the counter' (Parker, 1998: 69). Indeed that the takeaway might also have the family home above or nearby could cause particular additional distress for some.

Whilst Parker's (1995, 1998, 2000) work stands as a rare example of analysis of stereotypes associated with British Chinese food outlets, there has been some research on stereotypes found in adverts within Leung's (Kuah-Pearce and Davidson, 2008) book chapter on the Chinese experiences in Germany. Leung (Kuah-Pearce and Davidson, 2008) found similar tropes such as the promotion of notions of exoticism and foreignness.

On the other hand recent work by Collins (2008) also points to the use of food, and in particular the spaces attached to food, which are sometimes used by international students to recall home and facilitate attachment and place belonging. Collins was keen to note however that such spaces did not merely re-create (in this case Korean) food environments perfectly:

...at the same time, these restaurants also deviate from their counterparts in South Korea through the erasure of regional or even neighbourhood variations in food, drink and the practices of preparation and serving. Replacing these sometimes pronounced specificities is a newly mobilised transnational food imaginary (Collins, 2008: 160).

The possibility of a move beyond the space of the takeaway is also demonstrated in the work of Kwak Chan (2006, 2007) and Kay Anderson (1987, 1990). Both authors have looked at the construction and meanings behind Chinatown, in Britain (Chan, 2006, Chan, 2007), Canada and Australia (Anderson, 1987, Anderson, 1990) respectively. Chinatown has been realised as a space which, whilst often prone to accusations during the early years as full of dirt and vice (Anderson, 1987) were in the modern era re-envisioned, as 'Other benefits began to be seen in the Chinese presence. Cuisine was certainly one, and its discovery by Europeans in the 1960s reinforced the emerging perception of the 'Chinese' and 'Chinatown' as exotic' (Anderson, 1990: 8).

However, I think it is equally important to note the place of the takeaway, and catering spaces more generally, as quite central to young British Chinese aspiring to do well and even escape. Archer and Francis (2006) point to various positions such as cook, manager, waiter, accountant; there are also other businesses such as Chinese food shops, supermarkets and suppliers whom have as yet not been investigated. Many of these roles preclude young people from being involved in the operation of takeaways, indeed some of my participants also spoke of the way their parents deliberately and knowingly shielded them from working in catering. A number of businesses may also employ non-Chinese people to work as delivery drivers or in shops, which I have personally observed in Newcastle as example; this further complicates the connections between a single ethnic identity or background and certain food.

Parker (1995) makes use of Bourdieu's (1996) concept of the habitus in his work. The habitus is a theoretical way of describing how the social environments in which we live come to affect and influence us; there are commonalities with the theories of constructed identity discussed in the literature review. For Bourdieu:

...construction is one of the constituent elements of our *habitus*, a mental structure which, having been inculcated into all brains socialized in a particular way, is both individual and collective (Bourdieu, 1996: 21).

Those which both allowed Parker (1995) to observe in their takeaways, and discussed their experiences in interviews suggested that, due to their parents' reliance on catering work, they were often relied upon to help them run the business. During the running of takeaways, young people considered themselves on an array between 'helping out', when needed, to being forced to help; sometimes because they felt guilty or dutiful, at other times because they simply grew up helping from a young age and considered this to be normal practice for them (Parker, 1995: Chapter 5).

4.3 - 2 Rhythm, routine, effects

Existing work by Parker (1995) and Song (1995) has illustrated that the impact of the takeaway, either in its effects on home and family life (Song, 1995) or impacts on young people's impression of their place in British society (Parker, 1998, 2000) can be both challenging and even harrowing. By drawing on the comments of youth

transitions researchers we might better frame the experiences young British Chinese people have had. MacDonald's (2005) notion of family transition is of particular use. MacDonald stresses the abilities of young people, as well as the ways their lives are affected by social structures such as class, gender and place (MacDonald and Marsh, 2004, MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007). Also supportive of a transitions approach to youth study are Wyn and Woodman (2006: 498), who despite observing the utility of a transitions approach, warn against only seeing transition as a linear and normative process, within which youth is just a stage (Wyn and Woodman, 2006: 498). Importantly transition can be used in a flexible manner, and I use it in combination with flexible approaches to identity and experience in which "[r]ace' and ethnicity further complicate the apparently straightforward distinctions' between young people as a group (McDowell, 2000: 203).

Other researchers, commenting on the relationships between young people and parents, have noted the importance of a joined up approach to understanding the impacts on young people. Looking at white working class families Pimlott-Wilson (2011) found that there was often a relation, between parents experiences of school and their children's' future aspirations. Young people's transitions were thereby affected generations on, if for example parents had struggled at school, perhaps with inadequate support, 'The choices which families make in relation to employment, within the constraints of local economic conditions, are thus significant for children as they imagine their future' (Pimlott-Wilson, 2011: 114).

I will open discussion of the significance of catering and takeaways for those participants affected with the description Peggy gave:

Peggy: ...well because it's like Asian family so my dad started working in the takeaway when he was twelve and he also learned to drive like straight away as well, I think so that he could help out at the takeaway and buy like stock 'cos it was like a family business back then so, and my uncle, who's the oldest in the family went to Germany, I don't know why he went to Germany I'm not sure, but then it was like my aunt and my dad who were working for my granddad and my granddad and my grandmother...My dad was like the only one that really knew English that well, so he worked on the counter when he was like thirteen or something and he just worked in the takeaway so he didn't really, I don't even think he graduated from many GCSE's so... (20, university student).

In Peggy's account the takeaway has been central to her family's survival; interestingly her description frames the takeaway as normal 'because it's like Asian family'. Whilst I focus more directly on the definition by young people as 'Asian' later in the thesis, around leisure, the purpose of including Peggy's quote is to direct readers to understand the complexities involved in what Parker (1995) termed 'Takeaway lives'. Despite awareness of her parents' reliance on the takeaway, she did not work there. Peggy did however have a different set of responsibilities, helping to care for her brother, who has a disability. Peggy's overall account was based around taking care of her brother as part of her place in the family, and she otherwise focused on her education.

Takeaways and catering often have a structuring effect on the families which rely on them. It should be noted of course that parents work is likely to have a shaping and influencing effect on any family regardless, though in the case of British Chinese people the effects can be said to be related specifically to this group. Harriet's interview captured the rhythms and routines involved, many of which are corroborated in Parker's (1995) participants' descriptions.

Harriet: They run a takeaway so they got up about midday, because it closed quite late, and then they had to start preparing and then the shop opened, and then there was working and then they had to clear it up and...so really most of the time, say on the evening, it would just be me and my brothers in the living room or something or upstairs doing homework. We're kind of close, yeah, 'cos, yeah just 'cos my parents were always busy with work and everything so we kind of just made up games... (18, university student).

A significant number of participants had similar experiences to Harriet, in which they were affected by the takeaway or catering work, yet did not directly take part. As a result of her parent's needing to spend a lot of time at their takeaway, Harriet mentions being at home with her siblings quite often. An effect of her time with siblings was being 'close'. Whilst emotional bonds could be strained through the responsibilities young people were shouldering whilst parents worked, there was also the potential for fun, play and even happiness.

Sometimes it was not just siblings but cousins who would be together whilst parents worked:

Kat: Yeah...it was really good with my cousins, like, erm, we were really close and stuff, but then, well we were still close, but like, they went to uni and stuff and then like, we didn't see them as much (20, university student).

Whilst there is a case to be made that the absence of parents might be harmful to some, participants at times mentioned that not seeing their parents was emotionally difficult, there were also possibilities for strengths of character the young people recognised, particularly with hindsight:

Edith: Well it was, my mum was working full time in the one in [nearby town] so we didn't, me and my sister didn't really get a say in it that much, but we had a baby sitter, but I think it was kind of growing up knowing that your parents are never really going to be not there for you but they're never gonna physically be there for you, so I think we learned our independence at a young age, rather than some people you find that they, like they've been wrapped in cotton wool since they were little, me and [my sister] had to be independent, learn how to look after ourselves, do our homework without being told and things like that when we were little, so... (17, sixth form student).

In Edith's case she was now working in her parent's catering businesses, and the different ages of her siblings seemed to be reflected in the responsibilities and roles played. Eric and Peggy also mentioned being looked after when they were younger, however their parents, unlike Harriet and Edith's, drew on nearby relatives for support:

Eric: Well when I was young I was brought up in [Scotland] by my aunties, 'cos my parents didn't have much time to look after me so...and when I started to grow up when I was old enough to work then I didn't have much time to go out with friends I had to help out at the shop... (25, working parent's takeaway).

Peggy: ...they were working the takeaway and my aunt and uncle had three kids and then there was me and my brother, who went over to my aunt's house (20, university student).

There was also the possibility, however, that the proximity often required when working in catering might lead to tensions and arguments within the family. Amy for example has this to say when asked:

AT: Does your mum work there as well or?

Amy: Yeah my mum works there, there's loads of arguments and it's just confusing.

AT: Why are there, why do you think there are arguments? That's not something I've heard much about.

Amy: Because my mum is always annoyed that my dad sits outside and does, do nothing and then there's us three inside the kitchen doing everything for him and then when there's orders he just comes in and says "where's this, where's that, you should have done this" and when, it's just really annoying when he's just sitting outside and then he always shouts at us, like me...yeah (16, university student).

The difficulty for Amy and other families which work together in catering is that there is often little separation between work and family. Takeaways in particular may have residences above or nearby the shop and young people might feel trapped. As Song (1995) notes the young British Chinese working in takeaways contrasted in their experience with peers who did not have to work, they might compare themselves with other young people and:

...encounter two ideas of "family," a British and Chinese ideal, which tend to be polarized. The children in the sample tended to characterize "Western" families as having clearly demarcated modes of family (home) and work... (Song, 1995: 294).

While participants might consider themselves as visibly in between their own experiences of takeaway/catering and families without these experiences, the boundary is not so clear cut when considering multiple accounts across multiple studies. As noted in Parker's (1995) research the effect of racism and constraints on free time could give the feeling of isolation from peers and society. In Song's (1995) study young people could also feel that the grass was greener so to speak. However participants in this study have, I feel, demonstrated that there were quite varied experiences within and of the takeaway.

Amy's concerns for example take us in the opposite direction to Parker (1995, 2000); we look behind the takeaway counter and not out from it. The accounts so far have also brought to the fore memories of childhood and bonds between siblings or extended family. Variations in experience also suggest potential for a greater exploration of personal and social attributes, which not only parents but young people themselves are able to draw upon as families. Whilst popular, Bourdieu's (2010) notion

of social capital might, for example, prompt us to look at how family relationships and access to relatives have contributed to young British Chinese people either, being able to avoid working in catering/takeaways, or perhaps finding that they have different sets of (and possibly related) responsibilities. In the case of Peggy for example, although not asked to work with her parents, she cared for her brother and needed to cook for him. In Harriet and Kat's examples they might have had free time whilst parents were working, and yet, as we will see in the section to come on education, this time might instead be used to do homework as a prelude to avoiding possible futures in the takeaway.

Having looked at some of the impacts catering and takeaways had on the families of participants I also want to point to the way in which individuals relationships to these effects could change over time. In effect, what were some of the transitions being made within the takeaways?

We have seen in the accounts so far that families with catering and or takeaways have been influenced in a variety of ways. As this project is concerned with the changes in young people's experience, I have chosen to frame their relationship with catering and takeaways from the perspective of transitions. At one level the transitions made by young people in this project echoed those described by Parker (1995). Parker (Parker, 1995) found that young people were inducted through various stages and usually performed supporting roles such as packing and serving customers. Rachel and John's accounts suggest some similarities in experience between this study and Parker's:

Rachel: When I first start I was in the kitchen to learn how to pack the stuff put the wrap the food and put it in the bags...and after I've been training for being on the counter...and recently I was put back in the kitchen (18, college student).

John: I mean my dad owns a takeaway and I mean we sometimes, we sometimes like go out into the takeaway with parents just because like, you know they couldn't leave us in the house and things so, we go with them, and I was only about twelve or thirteen at the time and, I mean they allowed me into the kitchen which is, you know, quite dangerous but they allowed me in and just, you know have a look and they tried, try to work (24, working in parent's takeaway).

John and Rachel describe the need to earn trust and responsibility, through a period of watching from early age for John, and then doing simple tasks such as wrapping food.

Macdonald et al (2005) have suggested the need to look at young people's experiences of growing up from multiple angles, particularly the way in which they make transitions throughout their lives. For John the takeaway required him to make the transition from a child, who observed, to helping, and eventually working there full time. Rachel only took part in helping her parent's catering work, as they did not own their own takeaway; nevertheless a process of learning and training was required, she was supporting the family.

MacDonald et al (2005) have argued that transitions are often more than linear and singular parts of people's lives. From the accounts of Rachel and John we get the sense that young people are engaged in a similar set of transitions to their parents. In illustrating the different experiences within catering families Archer and Francis (2006) suggested a 'provisional and contestable' framework in which catering work might be 'classed' between 'manual workers', 'restaurant chefs' and 'owners/managers' as well as non-catering professions (Archer and Francis, 2006: 34). However for most young people their experiences in the takeaway did not bring them into the suggested economic or work transitions their parents made; as we saw earlier perhaps, from working within catering, to owning or managing their own takeaways or restaurants. Whilst it was the case that some young people cook in takeaways, though this is an anecdotal observation, most saw takeaway work as support, part of a set of 'parallel' transitions being made (MacDonald et al., 2005). This also chimes with Zhou et al's work on segmented assimilation in which, in theory, migrants with a more insular view and sharing more of their desire to aspire to better economic positions fared better in second generations. Those which quickly adopted local American social aspirations fared worse, due to migrants often locating in poorer inner-city areas at first (Zhou, 1997, Zhou and Xiong, 2005, Zhou et al, 2008)

Exemplifying the notion of takeaways being a parallel transition, Edith suggested that her experiences working for her parents prompted her to aspire to escape the situation in future:

Edith: I think because I've had to work in a takeaway, like because I've had to work for my parents, it hasn't really been my choice, that's what's made us want to go to university. I don't want to be stuck in a, like a job like that, I want to like

do something that's gonna make a difference. I know that food makes a difference but like, something like, I want to go to university. Like my parents never went to university... (17, sixth form student).

Interestingly Edith's family were comparatively well off compared to some participants; with a number of businesses. Arguably her feeling that she wanted something different to her parents, something which 'makes a difference', highlights another set of issues, which Parker (1995) discusses, around being stuck. Parker (2000: 91) suggested that being stuck in a Chinese takeaway at nights, and in particular at weekends, brought home the marginal social position occupied by many Chinese people in Britain. Perhaps most stark was Emma's summary of takeaway work:

Emma: There's no opportunities, I don't want to 'cos it's like really dirty and oily and smelly so even if there's a chance I wouldn't do it (16, sixth form student).

If participants were to criticise the takeaway then, they tended like Emma to point to its physical effects such as the smell, the long hours or the reduced free time they had when working there (Song, 1995: 295).

Participants also mentioned a number of ambivalences, around the position of catering and takeaways, and their roles within them. In Kat's case her family had been through a similar transition to many other families, her parents had worked with relatives, they had owned a takeaway and then a restaurant. However recently her father had decided that the work was too much, and prior to this Kat also described how he discouraged his children from working in the restaurant:

Kat: My dad was like, he really didn't want us to have to help in the restaurant that much 'cos it's, it's, it's really really busy when you're working there, 'cos there's a lot of shouting and stuff and like

AT: In the back, in the kitchen?

Kat: In the kitchen area yea, and like it's really hot in the kitchen a lot of the cooking and stuff, so he, my dad didn't, I think they let my sister work for a bit, then afterwards they kind of didn't want her to work anymore, 'cos it's just, not a good environment, he didn't like it (20, university student).

Similarly to Kat, Flo's parents had also owned businesses but had decided to stop owning and working in the catering trade. Flo's memories of the family restaurant they

once owned also point to the way in which young people might be affected by, not only their own transitions in and through catering, but their parents transitions as well:

Flo: I used to just go in when I was in town with my friends, I just used to go in and have a five course meal and then...or just used to sit in and play pool at the bar or something, it was like a bar café sort of thing so in the day I was allowed in [...]

AT: I wondered if you had any responsibilities to do with the restaurant or maybe the takeaway?

Flo: No I was kind of too young to do anything, but I used to just sit behind the till and when people used to think, 'oh she looks cute' and be like, give me like a pound, like tips yay! (16, sixth form student).

Perhaps Flo's last comment here does echo Parkers (1995) findings about over-the-counter interactions, but I have the sense that Flo was also describing a whole set of possibilities, such as the following:

Flo: Erm, well when my dad had a restaurant, like they have the, the sort of street festival thing, we sort of, get involved then, but otherwise we don't really do anything to celebrate it... (16, sixth form student).

In recalling the celebration of Chinese New Year, Flo's account might be drawn upon to challenge what remains a limited view of both catering and takeaway experiences young British Chinese have experienced. Equally though the observation that those operating businesses in a Chinatown might engage in activities seen as culturally authentic also lends support for the investigations of Anderson (1987), that:

Chinatown has been a critical nexus through which a system of racial classification as been continuously constructed. Racial ideology has been materially embedded in space (as we have seen in the earlier sketch) and it is through "place" that it has been given a local referent, become a social fact, and aided its own reproduction (Anderson, 1987: 8).

A look at the influence of catering work within the participants' families has demonstrated that beyond the problems of abuse identified in Parker's (1995) work, as well as recent reports (Adamson et al., 2009, Chan et al., 2004), there is also significant potential for connecting catering work with young people's transitions. Participants also talked about a range of identifications with catering, from takeaways to restaurants, with young people variously being uninvolved or involved. The use of transition to frame the experiences of responsibility which the takeaway in particular

might bring for young people might be usefully employed in future. In this thesis I will use the chapter on education and transitions (chapter five) to demonstrate more clearly the effects of family and catering on young people in this study.

4.4 Conclusions

This chapter acts as a foundation for exploring some of the most personal influences on young people within the family and home. The structure of the chapter works chronologically, this is intentional, as I have wanted to parallel the young people's understandings of the transitions being made in their own lives, with those of their parents. Therefore the first section looks at family migration histories, the second experiences of home and finally the influence of takeaway/catering work.

In the initial findings on migration the background accounts of young people demonstrate the range of individual experiences. Whilst most could trace their parents' migration from Hong Kong, it was on reflection a complex blending of language, kinship ties as well as economic opportunity which led to migration to the UK. Indeed even those who did not trace their immediate origins to Hong Kong, nevertheless could speak of their own complex migration backgrounds.

Looking at the discussions around Chinese family, and practices in the UK, it has been shown that these migration backgrounds often had significant effects on young peoples' experiences when growing up. The difficulty for example of separating catering work from its influence on home life was apparent. However I have cautioned against the notion that having a takeaway in the family is also directly linked to one experience. Participants talked for example of being aware of the amount of time parents had to spend at work, this may have necessitated them to be looked after by relatives or siblings. In other accounts young people supported the family by working with their parents. This environment (Bourdieu 1996, 2010) echoes the findings in particular of Zhou et al (Zhou et al, 2008) in the USA, who have described the ways in which Asian Americans have integrated post migration in a variety of segmented ways. This segmentation might occur due to varying socio-economic backgrounds of migrants, attitudes to assimilation with the local population and aspiration. Perhaps paradoxically those with a more insular attitude were found to promote stronger

assimilation in the second generations due to an aversion to the poverty and challenges often in areas of first settlement. Nonetheless entry into society was not necessarily easy and often resulted in third and later generations fitting to similar patterns as in the majority population (Zhou, 1997, Zhou and Xiong, 2005, Zhou et al, 2008).

Entangled with these migrant backgrounds were attitudes to parenting, many of which were revealing and add to our understanding of young British Chinese youth transitions. Attitudes towards education (chapter five), identity (chapter six), and leisure (chapter seven) will further build on these underlying themes. In this chapter I have focused on and challenged more stereotypical and blanket explanations or ideas of Chinese families, principally the influence of Confucianism and recently 'Tiger Mothers'. Young people did complain about the old fashioned views of parents, and these may have emerged most obviously for them in controls over relationships with others, being called repeatedly by phone or moved school to avoid 'bad' influences on education. On the other hand with hindsight young people also recognised the value of their parents making these decisions, and I would put it that their testimony demonstrates not the application of a traditional set of beliefs per se, but quite practical reactions to their experiences as migrants in Britain. As the researchers cited in the literature review have demonstrated, racism as well as the challenges of fitting into life in the UK, have contributed significantly to the sense that education is an important part of settlement for future generations. There is also a sense that to try to keep young people in diaspora in Britain would not be best for them. This is not to say that a notion of Chinese identity or a sense of heritage was shunned, and in the next chapter I explore clearly the influence of Chinese identity and the strengths and meanings of this.

Chapter 5 – Language and identity

In chapter two I presented various arguments which found Chineseness to be a dynamic and potentially unworkable category (Ang, 1993, 2001, Chow, 1997, 1998, Chun, 1996). In this chapter I look at the ways in which language, and young people's relationship to it, came through in this study in various interactions. The relationship to language emerged as a way of illustrating how British Chinese identity has been shaped and changed over time. By looking at the language learning and usage practices of young British Chinese in this study, I show the ways in which Chineseness in the British context has changed and undergone erasure, but also been re-written.

This chapter is presented in two sections; I will first make a point to look at participants relationships to both Hong Kong, and Chinese language. The second section addresses the significance of Chinese language learning and uses in the UK. One of the most common language spaces in the UK was the Chinese school, which has featured more recently in Archer and Francis' work as well (Francis et al, 2008, 2009). Chinese schools were supplementary to weekday school and tended to focus on Cantonese or Mandarin language lessons on a weekend day. Chinese schools are significant due to the rarity of a predominantly Chinese language space in the UK and the opportunity to meet other British Chinese, it also marks a rare shared experience for young Chinese which is a specifically diasporic experience. Chinese schools therefore had a part to play in identity formation, and it has been argued that they support education and aspiration as part of transitions to work.

I intend to demonstrate that language was important due to its ability to allow understanding and facilitate contact with an ethnic background, as well as play a part in possible futures if the young people wanted. A range of spaces and interactions were significant, underlying these were a set of spaces which framed and shaped encounters often mediated by language and the attached meanings. As a result of various proficiencies and experiences with Chinese language young people might experience tests of their ability and understanding; challenges to their identities by extension which could produce uncomfortable moments and memories.

5.1 Hong Kong, place, identity and language

An analysis of the place of Hong Kong in participants' lives is important for two reasons. First, previous population statistics illustrate that Hong Kong remains the main origin point for British Chinese people. Because of this later generations are likely to have links to Hong Kong as a result of the passing of memories and experiences from parents. As explored these often form the basis of a home environment and notion of family, the sharing of memory and therefore experiences (Blunt, 2003, 2007). Secondly, Hong Kong operates as a potential source for notions of Chinese identity, principally through ways in which individuals come to interact with the place, either through physical trips there, interactions with relatives or acquaintances, or at distance through various media.

While a majority of participants did indicate their parents had links to Hong Kong, there was a wide variety of identifications stemming from this. Inherent in the fabric of Hong Kong is its nature as a site of perpetual transnationalism, where the growth of the city under British rule has left it with a legacy of in and out migration, as families searched for economic benefit - 'At the 1991 census nearly 40 per cent of the population has been born outside Hong Kong' (Waters, 2005: 363). It should come as no surprise then that as a result of Hong Kong being a hub for migration, migrants to the UK often trace relatives to various parts of the Chinese mainland. Therefore our difficulty in determining what a family background in Hong Kong means for young people should already be becoming clear; locating parents in Hong Kong on paper may not accurately reflect previous family migrations in the recent past.

The existence of Hong Kong also offers Chinese migrants an alternative to notions of the West (explored by Bonnet, 2004). Migrants outside of China, pre recent Chinese reform era⁶, were able to look to the city, and its territories, improving fortunes with some admiration. Contrasts might be made between the struggles Chinese migrants have had in the UK and the relative harmony perceived in Hong Kong; where one

⁶ Since the 1980s the government of China has embarked on a programme of changes to national policy, these changes also coincided with the return of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty in the 1990s meaning that the territory now features strongly in government promotion of modernising and economic improvement.

might assume there is less racism. Despite this the continuing changes in both places of origin and arrival, means that there is a certain marked impossibility of return, or existence of authentic, perfect, Chinese identities. This is particularly salient for acknowledgement of the place of Hong Kong for British Chinese and young British Chinese.

Unilaterally positive characterisations of Hong Kong may prove to be just that however. Young people in this study did not always envision Hong Kong as a perfect other to the UK, despite the challenges in their own lives. Perhaps it would be reductionist too, to suggest that some form of imagined alternate reality, a Chinese utopia away from the UK, is endemic to the Chinese population, which I would argue that it is not. Rather experiences linked to Hong Kong were often ambivalent. Previous research with young British Chinese people has suggested that they may be stereotyped at school (Archer and Francis, 2007, Francis and Archer, 2005b) and abused in takeaways (Parker, 2000). Whilst these negative experiences might be absent on trips to Hong Kong, or imaginings of the place, the parents' processes of migration to the UK, combined with the young people's own experiences growing up in the UK, could combine to mark them as different. Language has played an important role in the creation of these markers of difference; it is necessarily wrapped up with a set of experiences which are difficult to recreate in Britain. Language as a marker of identity may become 'erased' (Chow, 1997, 1998) over time; an historical example in the UK has been a tendency towards greater popularity of Cantonese over dialects such as Hakka and Hokkien. We will see in the coming section how Chinese schools in particular may be of importance here in shaping what (Chinese) language is passed to young people. This is the basis for a felt sense of difference between younger and older generations, though it does not necessarily equate to a feeling of disparity or angst.

Hall's (1990, 1992) notion of 'being and becoming' might be seen to culminate in 'new' ethnicities in the UK. This is a useful way to tie together these complex entanglements of identity and migration. Acknowledgement of these entanglements might permit us to allow ethnic Chinese people to 'not speak' Chinese; a reference here to Ang's (2001) argument that physical features too often precede the ethnic subject in certain situations. However the sometimes wilful celebration of hybrid identities and

experiences (perhaps encapsulated in Bhabha's (1984) suggestion that power inequality can be subverted through osmosis between cultures) is not necessarily reflected so enthusiastically by those actually living these experiences. While language can be taken as just one part of identity which participants in this project were confronted with, they were in effect navigating the result of quite complex migrations, and shifts in the meanings and attached experiences Chinese language has. Language in itself has been a very important marker of difference for Chinese people as historically different dialects and versions of spoken Chinese have been unintelligible. Therefore origins in China, channelled through, or to Hong Kong, often mean certain linguistic or cultural backgrounds can be found within the Chinese population, not only in the UK, but outside of China itself (Pan, 1999, Wang, 2000).

Changing relationships to the Chinese language marked young British Chinese as engaging with both the effects of migration and the processes of settlement. For many parents the impossibility of learning English was due to long hours working in catering, this work however enabled their children to grow up using English from a young age. Living and growing up in Britain has meant coming to understand Chineseness and one of its constituting features, language, in a different setting and under different contexts. For example previously accounts such as Parker's (1995, 1998, 2000) noted UK Chinatowns would sell videotapes of Chinese shows and films, also corroborated by Verma et al (1999), providing an often Hong Kong and Cantonese base for young British Chinese. These experiences of Chineseness might now shape young British Chinese identities and mark another avenue for identity transition, both divergent and rooted in parents' identifications. As we will see in this chapter, rejection of Chineseness, or aspects of it, particularly the Chinese language, a feeling that it is unimportant, little worthy of note, are also possible.

The interactions between participants and Hong Kong could be framed in two ways, as a place to visit, and subsequently, a place of mixed emotions and experiences. Because of the participants' ages, access to free time, money and freedom to travel was generally limited. As a result the accounts of links to Hong Kong varied, from the fairly regular, having made trips, having contact with relatives, to the irregular, perhaps not visiting or simply knowing of the existence of family history linking them to Hong Kong.

It is important to keep in mind therefore that in the coming discussion British Chinese young people with Hong Kong backgrounds were having specific relationships to the site, and a certain set of interactions often based around shopping and fun were most common.

5.1 - 1 A place for holiday and relatives

Several participants would mention holidays with family to Hong Kong, these experiences often featured the food there and entertainment possibilities. Hong Kong was often contrasted to the UK – seen as slow and lacking modernity. Whilst on the surface the popularity of Hong Kong might be thought to suggest that participants preferred to identify with it, a presentation of five participants' comments reveals experiences supporting this view could seem rather limited:

Rachel: Even when you go shopping like in here each time you go it's like the same shop but in Hong Kong...it's all different shops because it's like all independent businesses it's not like big huge company business (18, college student).

Emma: Yeah so there's like more choices like there's just more choices not just like the same old shops and stuff (16, sixth form student).

Eric: Yeah I feel I fit in like there's like late night shopping and stuff like that you can shop any time you want really, till about ten o'clock I think, the shops close... it's quite hot but it depends what month your going... (25, working in parent's takeaway).

AT: What do you think about Hong Kong?

Harriet: I think it's a great place, so, its, so alive, everything's quite busy but, I mean some of it's really busy with way too many people but I mean some of it's just busy enough to keep things interesting, where it's not too crammed with people so I mean, yeah, it's really nice. And it's really fun to go shopping there, err, and the food is amazing, love the food there (18, university student).

AT: And what was it like in Hong Kong?

Kat: Because Hong Kong is more kind of vibrant and there's more things to do, like, shops in England close at five. Whereas in Hong Kong they perhaps close, at ten or eleven and, there's something always going on (20, university student).

The similarity of accounts here is I think rather interesting. Our understanding of the literature on British Chinese experiences of racism and social justice for example might lead us to think that negative comparisons between the UK and Hong Kong would

mainly be focused around notions of safety, a reduction in racism or perhaps greater acceptance of Chinese identities. Instead the initial comparisons between Hong Kong and the UK were framed around somewhat lighter concerns, such as shopping and entertainment. By looking at Louise's comments in more detail I want to highlight how some of these on the surface quite superficial seeming interactions with Hong Kong are founded on more complex sets of belief and understanding:

AT: Maybe you could tell me about it, tell me about Hong Kong?

Louise: It's a nice place and there is a lot of things to eat, play and have fun, quite relaxing.

AT: How does it compare to here?

Louise: Here? It's really boring. Well the like pub life and night life it's not really suitable for me so normally I just enjoy going back to Hong Kong more than staying here, so yeah.

AT: What do you enjoy about the, maybe the nightlife in Hong Kong then, it's different to here? Or is it not comparable and do you do something else?

Louise: Yeah well I normally stay home 'cos like I don't really know my way around Hong Kong that well but just like shopping, the shops doesn't really close that late well close that early... (17, sixth form student).

The comparison many participants were making, Louise in particular, is between various parts of the UK the young people grew up in and Hong Kong itself as a city. That the comparisons were sometimes unfavourable on the UK, for Louise reflected in the seemingly dull pub life and shopping available, was not always critically reflected upon by participants. Many of the participants were either too young to travel alone, or widely in the UK, or aboard, which perhaps limited their ability to compare the UK more critically to Hong Kong, or able to explore Hong Kong itself on their own. This created a recurring rhetoric in which young people might only have their normal everyday lives, perhaps school and remaining either in Newcastle or their local area, they then became quite excited and happy on reflecting on their holidays and trips to Hong Kong. That trips or experiences of Hong Kong were most likely to be holidays is quite clearly reflected in the following accounts by Harriet and Kat:

A: What do you do when you're there?

Harriet: Well it's more like a holiday so we just do the whole thing of, well I don't know what we do actually, we just seem to enjoy it without having to do very much. I mean we go to sort of like the named tourist attractions and stuff, I mean we went to Disney Land Hong Kong last summer, and that was fun but I mean it's just nice to err even just go shopping there cos it's just a bit different, and, yeah just walk around (18, university student).

AT: What things were going on? I haven't been so just explain it to me.

Kat: Restaurants always open, there's karaoke and there's arcades, yeah lot's of shopping centres and there's transport everywhere, interrail metro so it's really convenient and, it, it's quite good to like, to see the Chinese culture, there as well 'cos it's a lot different to England, like, and...

AT: What would young people do say, on, you've mentioned what you might do in a typical week here?

Kat: Yeah

AT: Would there be any difference in Hong Kong?

Kat: It'd probably be the same, same thing, but I think it's just a different atmosphere, they have different food, different language, different people (20, university student).

As Harriet states here her time in Hong Kong was similar to that of a tourist. In Kat's example when I pressed her with a question over the activities she was listing she responded that in actuality she might do the same things in the UK during a usual week compared to Hong Kong, she did add though that the general atmosphere and life would be different. Whilst it might be the case, that regardless of age, a holiday abroad is more likely to hold positive memories when compared to everyday life, the relationship between many participants and Hong Kong remained a complex and varied one. As I have noted Hong Kong may represent a home away from home of sorts, though I was sometimes surprised that participants, who clearly had done well as families financially, were still able to position the whole of England negatively compared to a single city.

On the other hand participants' experiences in Hong Kong were not universally filled with exuberant experiences of food and fun. These aspects of modernity and difference which made Hong Kong attractive were also interspersed with reunions with relatives and family friends. As can be seen in the accounts below:

AT: What about Hong Kong you said you were thinking of going back do you go back quite regularly do you have quite a strong link with it?

Peggy: I really like Hong Kong, that's one of the main reasons I want to go back and most of my holidays with, with family were to Hong Kong so if not Hong Kong, the other holidays I've had is, were from Hong Kong so if my whole family will go back to Hong Kong (yeah) and then we'll stay there for like a month but in the week in between we'll go off to Taiwan or we'll go to Thailand or in mainland China somewhere, so it was like a holiday off a holiday, but we go now back to Hong Kong to visit my granddad and like older relatives and things like that. But I think my mum and dad still have friends back in Hong Kong from back when they

were in school and things so, and actually my dad keeps in contact with his friends from primary school (ok that's quite far back) yeah because he left err he left Hong Kong when he was about nine when he came to England and so they were his last friends in Hong Kong and yeah so then he came to study secondary school in England so he still keeps in touch with his primary school friends (20, university student).

Joan: We normally go somewhere every summer, not always abroad, I think like the last few years have been in the UK like Scotland, Wales, we go over to, we're going to Hong Kong in February with friends, 'cos my cousin is getting married and also it's Chinese new year, so it'll be the first time... (17, sixth form student).

Annie: We used to visit a lot more...than now, but mainly I used to go to see some of my cousins but, some of them have moved away for uni now, ones down in London, which I do see him every year anyway, in the summer there is always some time I will see him. And we usually go back to Hong Kong, mostly on average every year, hit and miss maybe one or two years we might not go maybe one year we might go twice, but we keep in contact with them quite often so every time we go back, huge family reunion kind of thing, so, and weddings, weddings, always bring the entire family regardless of which part of the world you are in...so it's quite still quite a tight kind of bond (21, university student).

In these three accounts the participants related Hong Kong to the family that was there. Hong Kong in this sense was acting as a hub for their whole family at times, and weddings were mentioned as being specifically significant. Although there would seem to be some difference between the notion of Hong Kong as a place of play, and the potentially more naturalised idea of returning home to visit family, British Chinese participants were engaging in a mixture of both. Hong Kong could be enjoyed as a site of escape from the ordinary lives of participants, as a holiday escape, but it was often also inflected with meaning due to awareness of ethnic and family ties. Distance between the UK and Hong Kong, and the resultant costs involved in getting there in both time and money, meant that young people were unevenly privileged. The financial situation of families could therefore affect quite significantly the ability to maintain relationships with family or explore new relationships for young people.

The often predictable mix of meeting relatives, shopping and eating, was not always seen as unwaveringly positive. Some of the difficulties young people expressed in going to Hong Kong were precisely the same reasons they enjoyed being there, as will be explored in the next section.

5.1 - 2 Reflections and ambivalences

I noted previously that the experiences of young people in Hong Kong might be repetitive or predictable. Whilst some of the younger participants still found the mix of shopping eating and meeting relatives fun, older participants such as Mandy and David also said that they did not know anybody but family in Hong Kong, which could make trips lose their interest sometimes:

Mandy: I don't know, go visit relatives as I don't know anyone in Hong Kong so maybe everyone wants to go shopping or, go to, for food in restaurants and things I just go with them since I don't know anyone my own age in Hong Kong (20, university student).

AT: ...and you said you go for tea and these sort of things are there any other things that you tend to do while you're there?

David: Not really 'cos, I don't really know anyone there so I just tend to follow my parents round, so we just go visit people and go shopping and, yeah, that's about it really! (19, university student).

Reflections such as these I think often echoed the young people's own ambiguous and mixed relationship with Hong Kong. As a place Hong Kong could be considered close to them, due to parents being from there and relatives still residing there, yet at the same time it contained various things which were un-homely or uncomfortable. David recalled:

AT: Would you like to, how would you like your relationship with Hong Kong to be in the future? Do you think you'll maybe live there at some point or do you see yourself staying here?

David: I think I'll be staying in the UK myself I mean Hong Kong is a nice place but it's a bit too crowded for me I don't know if it's because I grew up, I'm used to this place now since I've grown up here, but, every time I go back to Hong Kong I think it's a bit too crowded and it's all public transport and all this, so...I don't think I'd be used to living in Hong Kong 'cos it's all like I said it's crowded, you live in flats and it's just, not how I like it. I like my own space and that... (19, university student).

Here the same features about Hong Kong which also made participants excited, the hustle and bustle of streets, bright lights and hyper development, especially compared to smaller towns in Britain, might also heighten the young people's appreciation for England. Another smaller factor was the weather in Hong Kong:

AT: What do you err, think of Hong Kong? What are your likes and dislikes about Hong Kong?

Mandy: I like that it's quite busy and things and that there's something always going on and that the shops don't close early, also everything's sort of conveniently located, shops everywhere, transport links...I'm not really keen on the weather sometimes but that's about it

AT: What's up with the weather, I heard it's quite hot?

Mandy: Yeah, really hot if your there in summer, not used to it so I don't like it (20, university student).

Although we might dismiss feelings about the weather as of low importance, such experiences were also picked up on in Harris' (2006) research with young British people of Bangladeshi descent. In Harris' (2006) research young people complained about returns to their parent's homeland which:

...involved illnesses picked up from the water, rudimentary toilet facilities and flying, biting insects. Their alienated endurance of these hardships appeared to be decisive in confirming for them that Britain unambiguously counted as home (Harris, 2006: 146).

Not only the environment might seem foreign, such feelings could also combine with other ideas about the general population in Hong Kong, these might produce a general feeling of unease. For example in Irene's experience Hong Kong people were quite unfriendly:

Irene: And...I've think the Hong Kong people they are so snobby and people live in London are so friendly.

AT: Oh you think they're friendly? Have you got some examples?

Irene: Yeah um I couldn't find a place, then I asked someone and she told me where to go (17, sixth form student).

We might wonder at the reasons for young people's assessment of Hong Kong people as unfriendly, in Irene's example 'snobby'. When I began to ask John about his feelings and experiences he introduced an interesting link between language and feeling in/out of place in Hong Kong, which he still recognised and claimed as having a link to him through parentage:

John: It's very strange I know, I mean, I know Hong Kong is like my, parents place but, but I, when I go to Hong Kong and I go into the streets I feel like I kind of don't belong there. I don't know why because I grew up in the UK and I feel like I'm quite British in a sense, and just being in Hong Kong and, you know trying to

... speak Cantonese properly, I mean I feel like I kind of don't belong (24, working in parent's takeaway).

I was able to explore the issue of language more thoroughly in later interviews considering its importance to a sense of self and the links to Chineseness. John reflected more specifically on his difficulty in reading Chinese, and the resultant emotions attached:

John: I can manage you know, I can manage, but sometimes, let's say I go to a restaurant I'm reading off a menu in Cantonese I mean, I find that, I find that quite difficult, you know. And sometimes I end up like, having to order something in English. But that, again I feel quite weird about that 'cos, I'm in Hong Kong and I'm Chinese and ordering in English and people might think that I'm a bit strange you know, you must be from somewhere else... (24, working in parent's takeaway).

Looking at John's quote above it is interesting to note how what might have been seen as a return home, John's relatives are from Hong Kong, could highlight the sense of a British-Chinese identity. John, despite being one of the participants with the best ability in (Cantonese) Chinese, felt less confident in Hong Kong, describing embarrassment at having to sometimes order in English when abroad. Visits to Hong Kong then highlight the ambivalence of a British Chinese identity. When located in England a certain capability in Chinese would clearly mark you as Chinese and not English (Gilroy, 1991), yet in Hong Kong the presence of more proficient, even authentic language users shows participants as hybrid and perhaps in-between (Bhabha, 1984, 1985).

Harris (2006) rejects the notion of in-between or a splitting of self perhaps made possible through notions of hybrid identity. Consider for example this reflection on the state of British Asian identities:

Typically, for instance, people with origins in the Indian subcontinent are portrayed as members of a variety of tightly bounded homogenous 'South Asian' cultures which allegedly contrast with so-called 'British' culture. People with this experience supposedly have to live with the daily anguish of having to choose between one culture or the other....experience mostly comfortable everyday membership of a variety of communities... (Harris, 2006: 118).

However whilst a rejection of the idea of being in-between might avert us from judging individuals as having less than authentic identities, problematic considering the reflections of Hall (1992) and Ang (1998), young people nevertheless did and do experience periods of heightened difference and ambiguity over their place. Of use perhaps is Ngan's (2008a) argument that '[w]hile the concept of hybridity has been utilized as a centering tool to understand the entanglement and complexity of diasporic communities, it has largely been formulated as a means to understand the experience of recent migrants' (Ngan, 2008a: 78). As we have seen in this thesis though, young people who were the descendents of migrants also had attachments to identities rooted in diaspora and migration. In particular it was the role of language which allowed young people's identities to be challenged in spaces and situations such as found in Hong Kong. The variable competencies participants felt they had in Chinese could therefore be uncovered, for example as Hong Kong is a space of confident language users and perhaps felt by implication a more secure Chinese identity. Therefore other Chinese people, as well as the spaces in which they inhabited, could instil ambivalent feelings of both being and not being Chinese (Ang, 1993). Likewise Heighley was able to relate to the issue of language and a felt deficiency due to ability "*Yeah nearly everybody who is Chinese has laughed at me 'cos my English isn't good and my Chinese is really poor also*" (17, sixth form student). Heighley's family was unable to afford group trips to Hong Kong, the point of her comment is that British Chineseness can be seen relatively to other Chinese identities possibly sitting within a felt hierarchy in which some are felt to be more Chinese than others, questioning to what extent Britishness is felt in relation to Chineseness (Harris, 2006: 145). Heighley ultimately stated she had little desire to go to Hong Kong "*...it's unfamiliar with me it feels foreign to me so I just don't like to go anywhere much and, they always say how hot it is...*" (17, sixth form student).

Perhaps Heighley's rejection of Hong Kong comes from her feeling that her language skills were the subject of jokes and laughter by 'everybody who is Chinese', the addition of *Chinese* here underlining that assumed authentic and correct Chinese identities show up those which are felt to be incomplete or as Valentine comments not-belong (Valentine et al., 2008: 380). Again Ngan's reflections on Australian Chinese are useful, she found that '[t]here is little room in the diasporic paradigm for the

principled ambivalence about physical return and attachment to land which characterizes much of their experience' (Ngan, 2008a: 76).

Other participants also noted the ways in which they might feel inadequate in relation to those with better Chinese language skills, such as relatives in Hong Kong:

AT: Do you think about Hong Kong as like the place where your parents used to live and, do you think about it at all or...?

Flo: Well yeah, kind of but, 'cos I don't speak any Cantonese, I sort of lost it when I was younger, I'm quite embarrassed to go back without speaking it. 'Cos I feel like they'll think I can't...Yeah, whenever they ring up during holidays and things I get quite embarrassed.

AT: And who rings up your relatives?

Flo: Yeah like during like holidays and things (16, sixth form student).

Or in Kat's case friends, as well as relatives, who spoke not just Cantonese but other forms of Chinese such as Mandarin:

Kat: It is a little bit, yeah, because sometimes with, like the, especially like the Hong Kong, if, like the Hong Kong Chinese people, they'll say like, "oh where are you from?" and stuff, so then you'll say like "oh erm, I'm not from Hong Kong", "where are you from then?", I was like "do you want the long story or like the short story?" And then you know they've made a distinction that, you're not, from Hong Kong, if you get me? Just like, I find with, especially with Chinese friends and stuff, who are from China, it's kinda like they have to make a special effort to speak English, and that always feels really bad, 'cos, it's like obviously they might be more, 'cos you can tell they're more comfortable speaking, like, Mandarin or other, and then, some, some small things as well like when they have a joke, in Chinese or whatever, and then they're all laughing, and then I'm like crap I can't actually, I don't understand, so then they have to like, explain it to you, and then that like kills the joke, it like, just like little things like that its quite hard sometimes like, especially with Chinese people from the mainland... (20, university student).

Because young British Chinese might not meet many Chinese people or have many relatives to interact with, especially if they live in other countries, this could be felt to place a certain burden of proof upon them to present themselves in certain ways. Identity was tied up with a sense that authentic, even 'real' Chinese people, spoke Chinese, possibly specifically Cantonese Chinese. Other understandings such as the jokes Kat mentioned, or a notion of correct home connected to ethnicity, were also apparent. The issue of identity, Chineseness, and acceptability was one which could

make painful listening; because the participants still had the opportunity in life to explore their sense of self in greater depth. In particular I felt Kurt's comments illustrate the complexities of being in relation to Chineseness, from a British Chinese perspective. Kurt, unlike some of the other participants, felt quite confident in both his Chinese language ability and having a lot of contact with Chinese people, many of who are from Hong Kong. Yet despite these attributes, he might yet be noticed as different:

AT: So would you say that you have quite a strong grasp of the language?

Kurt: Erm well for a British born Chinese my Chinese level is like really good that's what I know 'cos I've been with a lot of Hong Kong friends and they just tell me that their other BBC friends have really poor Chinese or whatever but equally for a Chinese person I'm also very westernised like I just know that because when I hang out with them they always tell me like how a lot of things I do is really characteristic of someone born here...like I met some Hong Kong people on this course like I just met her and talk to her and she said that I just like have the air of a BBC... (18, university student).

From Kurt's comments I can pull out a couple of relevant points about British Chinese identity and its relation to language. First we have the notion of a BBC or British born Chinese, an identity related to birth in the UK which sits within the British Chinese grouping. Kurt suggests that BBC's tend to have a lower language attainment in comparison to, for example here, Hong Kong people. Secondly we have the idea of being 'westernised', an interesting comment perhaps considering Hong Kong's fluid identity, which has a colonial past, and is often held up as a model of modernity and western meets eastern influences. Kurt suggests that it is his ability with language which enables his friendship with Hong Kong people to work so well, but his British Chinese status is conferred by others relationally; the act of others identifiable as Chinese commenting on Kurt brings about awareness of his British Chinese and not simply Chinese identity, despite his confidence in Chinese as a language. In other contexts, for example, Heighley and John would be thought to be very Chinese, both come from families in which the takeaway is the main source of income, and both have, and continue to, work there in supporting roles. These experiences make Ang's (1998, 2003) call for a hybrid identity relevant, especially if we take into account Bhabha's (1984, 1994) discussions on ambivalence, though we still end up with some participants referring to a sense of an authentic Chineseness located elsewhere.

It has been important to explore the meaning of Hong Kong to participants in this study, because as we have seen so far the place itself has often acted as a gateway for parents to the UK. Hong Kong acts as an important part of many young British Chinese people's lives for a variety of reasons. On holiday in Hong Kong young people often imagined the city as modern in relation to their homes in the UK. The triple joys of shopping, food and family were a common experience as mentioned in this section. Attachment to Hong Kong allowed young people to re-connect with geographically distant family members as well as come to understand how the city and its people in general had changed since their parent's migrations.

On reflection though, Hong Kong was not always seen as better than the UK, nor was it often upheld as a possible other home away from home. As participants became older they may, for example, justify disconnection with Hong Kong, perhaps for financial reasons or notions of difference and preference, such as the weather being too hot, the city being too busy or people being too cut off. Most importantly young people felt challenged through the requirements to speak Cantonese Chinese when in Hong Kong and not knowing people their own age there - in effect the young people could become increasingly aware of the significance of Hong Kong to their parents and background, but the need to build their own relationships to their family histories in time. As a result a smaller number of participants could feel that their sense of being British Chinese, or at least being raised in the British context, was heightened through their interactions in Hong Kong, and when at university with Chinese people.

5.2 The significance of language

As the British Chinese are a largely settled population, who have tended to form families and invest in businesses and work for the longer term, a specific relationship between transitions and transnationalism has been shown to influence participants in this study. My analysis of links with Hong Kong for example has suggested that, for those that do maintain such transnational links, interactions with a place which can be considered an ancestral home often revealed several fracture points around the relationship between experiences of transition and identity. Whilst it can be said that young British Chinese possessed a specific ethnicity and (diasporic) heritage which formed part of their identity, around the issue of language, this identity was often

likely to be open to challenge. In this section therefore I focus on the issue of Chinese language and its significance for participants.

Chinese language, rather than being innate, often had to be actively learned and maintained in order to make it both relevant and functional. The process of 'learning Chinese' as a choice and process supports the comments of Hall (Hall, 1990, Hall, 1992), particularly the idea that identity is about 'being' a certain way and how individuals can 'become'. The founding reason to use Chinese is parents' encouragement, on the other hand though parents might decide that young people should not attend Chinese school, this makes for an uneven level of proficiency amongst the participants in this study and means there was variation in what Chineseness and language meant. There is also the problematic status of Chinese as foreign language within Britain, this often meant that (as Li, 1994 found) young people favoured English with friends and siblings, switching to Chinese only if they had to.

Earlier I referenced Harris' (2006) study in which he looked at the significance of language for Bangladeshi youth. Harris (2006) pointed to a similar range of influences for his participants as I found in this study, for example:

The young people are, here, clearly subject to larger social structural forces, which defy voluntarism. In other words there is something in their British ethnicity which constrains the utility of the community languages and reduces them gradually to the kind of symbolic status which accommodates the continued use of phrases like 'my language' and 'my culture' (Harris, 2006: 123).

The young people in Harris' (2006) sample were often willing to claim ownership of their heritage and language through the use of the word 'my', however on top of this they were often less likely to claim proficiency or actively try to learn the language to reverse this position. Harris (2006) argues that a new ethnic hybrid culture emerges in which British ethnicity and Bangladeshi are able to co-exist, young people drew on a limited knowledge of their heritage language to communicate with parents when they needed to, whilst at the same time they recognised in interviews that they were not engaged in the same relationship to language and identity as their parents or relatives back in Bangladesh.

The most obvious comparison for this research might be Li's (1994) work in Tyneside. In his study Li (1994) worked with local Chinese families, spending time as a participant observer on family conversations and researching the process of language acquisition and the use of English and Chinese in families. Participants from the younger generations were most likely to use Chinese with parents, but would often switch to English with siblings. English was used by young people outside the household in daily life. While Li's (1994) work is of great value, as it represents a rare example of Chinese people being studied in the North East, the focus is closely on language use itself. Rather in this study I have been trying to demonstrate the way in which many facets of identity and experience come together for young people, language for example, is only one element in their sense of identity.

Varied relationships to Chinese language challenge the notion of a complete and perfect Chineseness and suggest more hybrid understandings (Ang, 1998, 2001). Unlike young Chinese who might migrate in the short term, participants' associations with Chineseness can be shown to be less straightforward as they navigate a variety of meanings for language and therefore Chineseness itself (Huang and Yeoh, 2005, Yeoh et al., 2005, Waters, 2005). There is a process of identity learning and construction as well as change over time, found through the interaction between parents' views on Chineseness, and those that the young people eventually come to identify with.

To address the entanglements around language and identity I have arranged the discussion to start with parents, moving on to the issues around Chinese schools and finally a look at some of the ways in which young people summarised their understandings of language.

5.2 - 1 Language and parental influence

In using the notion of habitus, authors referenced in this thesis (Archer and Francis, 2006, Parker, 2000, Reay, 1998), have suggested that certain values and ways of being are imparted to future generations. Although the originator of the notion of habitus, Bourdieu (1996, 2010) did extensive study into:

..the countless ordinary and continuous exchanges of daily existence - exchange of gifts, service, assistance, visits, attention, kindnesses - and the extra-ordinary and solemn exchanges of family occasions, often sanctioned and memorialized by photographs consecrating the integration of the assembled family (Bourdieu, 1996: 22).

It is important, in particular for families with diasporic and migratory backgrounds, that we highlight that habitus is about change and transition. The choice of what should and should not be passed on to future generations is one not only shaped by parents but also the contexts within which they live. Bourdieu (1996) and others have suggested that this package of life lessons might also be thought of as a form of capital, and in the case of Chinese families we will see in the next chapter (chapter six) that one form of social capital was the value of education and learning.

Although the social lessons passed onto young people might be seen as valuable by parents, this is not always the case outside the family, or within society as a whole. It is important then to note that capital in a Bourdieu (1996) sense does not equate to value or universal value outside of certain boundaries. Language for example was a key and important capital for some Chinese families. Because many parents were unable to speak proficient English, communicating in Chinese could be essential for young people. Outside the family the utility of Chinese language might not be so obvious much as Harris (2006) and Li (1994) have found. The significance of language could most clearly be seen in the bonds formed and created through its learning Kurt: *"Err well my mum taught me when I was young and I went to Chinese school..."* (18, university student). Mothers often played an important role in helping the young people to learn Chinese. Although mothers were sometimes mentioned in isolation fathers were mostly mentioned coupled as 'parents' when talking about language learning:

John: ...yes, I think that mine's quite similar as well because obviously I speak Cantonese with my parents at home... (24, working in parent's takeaway).

AT: Do you use it then at home or when might you speak it?

Julia: Oh yeah when I'm talking to my parents (17, sixth form student).

Though I have noted that parents were sometimes not proficient in English, many parents chose not to make use of English with their children. The decision to value

language and pass it on was also found Valentine et al's (2008) work with Somali families in which:

...battles over linguistic hegemony within the home matter because language is regarded by parents as an important vehicle through which children learn to be Somali, and as crucial if their children are to be able to communicate with, and therefore have a sense of belonging to, what are commonly diasporic families – whose members can be scattered in Somalia, surrounding African countries, Europe and North America. For many of the parents the possibility of a 'return' (either permanent or a visit) to Somalia figures significantly in their geographical imaginations. Therefore, ensuring their children are fluent in Somali is also preparation for their imagined futures, although this vision is not shared by the majority of the children (Valentine et al., 2008: 380).

There are clear comparisons here with the notion of language as essential to being Chinese or being Somali. Beyond notions of identity though, the issue of language was also significant not only for speaking to relatives, as we have already seen, but also in helping parents. The inabilities of parents to comprehend English lead some of the participants to have various responsibilities which went beyond communication, acting as translators between parents and society:

Annie: ...my parents wanted me to know Chinese 'cos they think it's really important, apart from they don't really know English that well so it's kind of, erm, it's so I can learn Chinese, I can explain it to them or they can explain it to me so it's kind of, while I'm learning Chinese they're learning English, trying to do a compromise... (21, university student).

Peggy: ...my parent's didn't really know English a lot of stuff I had to translate and I was the oldest child so, they didn't really have anyone else to do it in the house... (20, university student).

In both Annie and Peggy's experience language was essential and they explained bills and letters to parents as well as communicating to them in Cantonese Chinese. Similarly in Valentine et al's work:

Children are also commonly less fearful of attempting to communicate with local people than their parents, and may assume the role of family interpreter at an early age (Anderson 2001). Taking on what can be extremely adult responsibilities in the family can shape children's self-identification (Valentine et al., 2008: 379).

In the case of British Chinese families these responsibilities have different potentialities to those in the quote above, perhaps being combined with work in the

takeaway. While to most participants the fact of speaking Chinese to parents seemed quite ordinary, the depth to which conversations could be had and which an understanding of Chinese could be applied beyond interactions with parents were varied. As we saw earlier Yu (2007) has noted that this could cause tensions around transitions to adulthood based in sexual maturity. Young people could be acutely aware of the importance of speaking Chinese (Ang, 2001). In John's case he was in the less common position of working with and for parents and being part of a wider Chinese community based around his church. Indeed Li (1994) also discovered that certain pockets of community which existed in Tyneside could enable a feeling of confident Chinese and English language use in some participants:

John: I always felt that I needed to know Cantonese, I mean I don't know why maybe, I don't know if it's because I'm Chinese or, I mean I always felt I needed to know Cantonese, you know either for communication wise or, it's, it's very important if you're communicating with grandparents and my own parents (24, working in parent's takeaway).

As I noted in the discussion on Hong Kong however, John was also ambivalent about his Chinese abilities when travelling abroad, which highlights the way in which contextual frameworks are important in self assessments of identity, authenticity and ambivalence. John's experience contrasts with the earlier experiences of Flo who did not speak much Chinese and therefore felt uneasy communicating with her relatives.

For the smaller number of participants who came to England as children, a different engagement with language might emerge because English was not their first language. Previously, some have argued that those arriving with English as a second language might have trouble fitting in (Pan, 1994). Adam, having come to the UK when he was nine, adapted to the new situation by learning English and stopping his Chinese tuition at home:

Adam: What happened was when I came into England when I was nine, nine and a half, I kept up with my Chinese, because my mum was a primary school Chinese teacher in China and so she used to bring all the Chinese books with her to teach me but then I think that only went on for two or three weeks since I came here and then my dad decided to stop Chinese completely because he wanted me to focus on English, purely on English and I think that's good in a way because it helped me to improve English a lot faster as opposed to learning two languages at the same time, but obviously the down side is now my Chinese is quite bad I

can really only speak quite fluently but reading it's quite difficult writing, you know it's even worse, so yeah I didn't attend any Chinese schools or anything but within a month from when I came here I could communicate with the primary school student (20, university student).

Adam's example highlights the variations in young British Chinese people which might be found. The language in Chow's (1997) work for example suggests that an appreciation of these changes allows for the possibility of erasing singular notions of Chineseness. From Adam's account though, such breakages and choices made due to a combination of practicality and necessity (for fitting in and making the transition to successful student) also could be dislocating, meaning he now struggled with writing Chinese. Similarly if we look at the accounts of Peter and Edith the notion of erasure and resultant loss might be addressed:

Peter: ...she actively chose that it was not important for me to learn Cantonese and therefore there was no driver for me to learn Cantonese at all it was entirely off my own back and the only practice was me speaking to my mother... (32, university student).

Edith: my mum told us that it was ok, like we didn't learn how to speak Chinese because it's not really appropriate in England, like you don't really need to speak it fluently to talk to someone in the street... (17, sixth form student).

In Peter and Edith's case they did not speak Chinese, as a result of their feeling it was of no use or limited use. The notion of language as capital re-emerges here, though in their own sense not speaking Chinese (Ang, 2001) did not directly link to a feeling of not-being Chinese, or probably more accurately a crisis of being. In Peter's case I actually met him whilst he was learning Mandarin Chinese at night classes, and Edith's family had run successful Chinese food businesses in Newcastle. Therefore in this sample of participants it was both possible to be part of the same transnational and diasporic backgrounds most migrants shared, yet at the same time have different aspects of identity based in language. One reason for example why language might be less important within a family might be the relative wealth of parents, in both Peter and Edith's case they did not ultimately expect their children to need to use Chinese.

Much like Li (1994) found then, language was quite varied amongst participants, but the significance of its usage often related to whether or not parents were enabling. Though there were instances of confidence, a flexible relationship to language was

often adopted, and as Harriet's quote shows varieties of Chinese language use does not always mean contact with other Chinese people is precluded:

Harriet: Yeah, I mean I can speak Cantonese but not very well so with the help of my mum, you know, I can communicate with them. But it doesn't flow as easily as say me and my brothers we just speak to each other in English, but even when I phone home I speak to my mum and dad in Cantonese (18, university student).

5.2 - 2 Chinese school

Harris (2006) found that young people who had migrant parents were subject to structural forces which made the use of heritage language less likely over time. Though the participants in this study often displayed varied competencies in Chinese, the use of complementary schools attempted to combat social structures which might otherwise result in Chinese language not being learned.

The existence of complementary schools, so called because they usually run after mainstream school or at weekends, is discussed at length by Li (2006). Complementary schooling is interestingly not solely limited to one ethnic group or language and there is a long history of their existence in the UK:

The first group of complementary schools emerged in and around the London area in the late 1960s for children of Afro-Caribbean families. It was a direct response by Afro-Caribbean parents who were very dissatisfied with what their children received from mainstream education at the time. In particular, they felt that the mainstream school curriculum often failed to reflect the interests, experiences and culture of the Afro-Caribbean community. Moreover, the Afro-Caribbean community had long felt itself unable to influence the nature and direction of mainstream education. The comparatively small number of Afro-Caribbean teachers, and their conspicuous absence from positions of authority, the limited representation of Afro-Caribbeans on school governing bodies and on Local Education Authority committees were all likely to have contributed to this feeling of impotence (Li, 2006: 76).

Wrapped up within the existence of complementary schools is the notion, by parents and founders, that in the UK their understandings and values might go unnoticed. Many of the same concerns evident in Li's (2006: 76) quote above are upheld in the work of Archer and Francis (2005a, 2009) in which parents likewise felt that a parallel set of schooling was required for young people of Chinese descent.

Chinese schools are organisations which were originally set up for overseas workers to maintain Chinese language for children and future generations. Chinese schools act as community centres as well as educational spaces, though the activities and numbers of attendees varies widely as do the levels of language taught. In the USA for example Chao mentions '82,676 students are taking Chinese in 634 language schools' (Chao, 1997) whereas in the UK the system seems to be smaller and less centrally run (Li, 2006). Schools make use of spaces such as Chinese society buildings, schools, churches and even homes – this makes for an uneven learning environment with some schools operating a curriculum of language and cultural events, accepting payment for lessons and having a school structure with a headmaster/mistress and formal teachers. Other schools may be run totally by parents or volunteers and offer more basic language training. Something in between a formal school and volunteer run practice is probably most common. Although there have been studies in Tyneside such as Li Wei's (1994) work academic study has largely focused on the London area and major cities (Creese et al., 2006, Francis and Archer, 2005a, Francis et al., 2009, Francis et al., 2008, Strand, 2007). Comparison between Chinese schools in the USA and UK demonstrates key differences between the status of Chinese people in both nations. As a larger and longer settled community, Chinese in the USA have perhaps had more time both to consolidate their position on complementary schooling, as well as using these schools to tackle a more pervasive and open experience of racism as 'Unlike other European ethnic groups, however, who were under pressure to assimilate, the Chinese were legally excluded from the melting pot and their children were deprived of equal educational opportunity' (Zhou and Kim, 2006: 8).

Attending Chinese school was a common experience across participants interviewed. Out of twenty four participants most had attended at some point. Despite commonality in having attended Chinese school experiences were not uniform and ranged from being long term members to only attending for a short time. In addition to the length of time attended, participants had different qualitative experiences; this comes from the nature of the schools with the possibility of variation in class provision and structure of the time there.

Chinese schools took place at the weekends and typically lasted a few hours, in this sense they were 'complimentary'⁷ to the school attended during the week. Participants mentioned a number of experiences of attending the schools:

Annie: ...I went to a Chinese school, so it was a Chinese community so every Sunday there was like non-stop in the week, go to school Monday to Friday and I had a tutor on Saturdays and then Sundays was school, so it was, it was quite interesting though, it's like, we don't learn everything like you would do in English, like normal school, English history, geography or whatever, it's just more about learning it as a language, so it was more, like Chinese language... (21, university student).

Annie was rare amongst the participants in that she attended Chinese school until sixteen and had also been to two different schools in the area. Most Chinese schools either end at sixteen with GCSEs or at eighteen with A-levels. Annie's parents were keen for her to do well in education and also felt that learning Chinese was important, particularly in being a Chinese person. Archer and Francis (2009) have discussed the way in which Chinese school can operate as a space to explore a sense of Chinese identity, and also sides of identity which might not be felt possible elsewhere (Francis and Archer, 2005a, 2005b, Francis et al., 2008). Examples of these alternative identities included pupils being more open and talkative, being noisier and perhaps assertive. In Archer and Francis' (2007) work the Chinese school was seen as a space in which pupils were less likely to be marked as different in the way they looked, the same stereotypes which might be present in the classroom.

Chinese schools were talked about as having a quite different function to weekday schools, their form and style was also different:

Kat: ...kinda like a club more than a school, 'cos schools there some kind of commu-, like everyone's together kind of thing, it's like, you kinda know everyone's names and stuff but like Chinese schools like, we have two, two hours a week, and it would just be like, we have a book, like a chapter book, and then each week we just go through a chapter and the chapters kind of like stuff, just like a story... (20, university student).

⁷ Although the literature refers to Chinese schools as complementary schools I will keep the term Chinese schools in my discussion from here on, as this is what participants called them.

Julia: ...they just 'cos we study from exercise books passages...they just explain passages and try and what it means and, you get tests. You used to get test every week like spelling tests and get like assessments twice a year (17, 6th form student).

Kurt: ...well you meet every Sunday, it's one to four and err basically just they have like a set curriculum and they buy this book and they teach you one err story from it and they they'll test you on that story like how to write it and stuff so you have to memorise like a paragraph and they'll, she'll dictate it to you and you have to write it the next session and then they'll form an average of all your scores for the entire year and then you get like an exam at the end of the year... (18, university student).

When talking about what Chinese school was and how it worked, young people such as Kat described it as more like a 'club'; similar to Annie's comment previously that you don't learn the same things as 'normal school'. This sense of separation between the schools came out quite strongly, often weekday school was referred to as 'English school'. Perhaps the separation in some pupils' minds between schools were also reinforced by the separations Parker (1995) found, between customers who were classed as 'English people', and families who served them, and on the differences between the two types of school curriculum. The experience of attending Chinese school was different to weekday school not only due to a primary focus on language or its time at the weekend, it was also taught from textbooks which supports the notions of informality and community/volunteer run status (Francis and Archer, 2005a, 2005b, Francis et al., 2008, Zhou and Kim, 2006, Zhou and Li, 2003). Even the way classes could be structured varied from school to school:

Eric: No, they're all like a, split into different age groups so if you mix them it's not really fair, so like, if you like kindergarten, reception and stuff like that its just certain age groups start from the bottom like learn the basics and stuff like that (25, working in parent's takeaway).

Julia: Lasts from one to four o'clock and you get put in year groups. Not according to like how old you are but according to what level, what stage you're on. So you might end up with lots of little kids even though you're big... (17, sixth form student).

Here Eric says his school would be unfair if age groups were mixed, yet Julia's school separated pupils by ability not age. Differences in school form and the seriousness with which language learning was able to be provided meant quite an uneven level of Chinese was attained by participants in this study. Kurt and Eric for example went

through Chinese school much like Annie and their confidence in Chinese could be contrasted with that of Kat or Julia, neither of which finished and left when still in their early teens. Ability in Chinese was also shaped by home situation and whether parents spoke Chinese, how often and if they reinforced that learned at school. In many cases I was aware that participants seemed quite able to communicate with parents in Chinese, yet at the same time stating they didn't finish school or that they felt their Chinese was not good enough. Even those finishing school at sixteen felt that their level only went so far. Chinese schools therefore imparted a sometimes partial and ambivalent understanding of language, though this was enough to instil a sense of Chineseness being linked to language and the importance of learning (Bhabha, 1984, 1985, Gilroy, 1991). In Creese et al's paper the experience of pupils at complementary schools:

...allowed young people and teachers to develop narratives about their identities as bilingual and multicultural. Within these discourses, ethnicity could be seen as both ambiguous and resilient. It also allowed teachers, parents and students to project a discourse around successful learner identities (Creese et al., 2006: 26-7).

Whilst bilingualism is perhaps inherent in the need to attend a separate school to learn Chinese, participants in this study did not seem to frame their experiences from a political, multicultural, standpoint. This is perhaps why the schools existed outside the mainstream system, as Li (2006) notes, because parents felt on principle that their children were likely to miss out on aspects of cultural identity without their efforts. Complementary schools therefore exist because a multicultural environment is *not* felt to be sufficiently present. Additional cultural classes were therefore a part of many Chinese schools, and complementary schools. These classes were put on to inform and give pupils a taste of Chinese culture:

Heighley: Well I used to go but I remember I sang a song about numbers yeah... (17, sixth form student).

Julia: Like, we sing Chinese songs mostly but when we draw we just draw like Chinese style (17, sixth form student).

AT: Do you remember anything about it? 'Cos I've heard quite a lot of different things about them.

Amy: Erm well the only thing I remember is there was a tuc shop and you just buy sweets there (16, sixth form student).

The 'club' like feeling Kat mentioned can be illustrated, in the school Chinese songs, and art that were encountered. Parents were quite aware of these activities being provided and as Archer and Francis (2005a, 2009) found felt that it was important to at least give a taste of Chinese culture. Indeed a taste is what most participants described as having got out of Chinese school. Amy and Heighley for example did not attend Chinese school for long, and though they both could speak Chinese they complained about its pronunciation and usefulness (Harris, 2006). The format of Chinese school being textbook based gave the Chinese school less formality but also less credibility as a learning environment for many participants. Studies conducted by Wu and Wang (Wang, 1996, Wu, 2006) suggest that the textbooks might contain examples which seem irrelevant to older pupils, or are not culturally specific to those living outside of China or Chinese communities in Asia.

Attendance was to some extent due to parental influence and a hope that some 'Chineseness', understanding of Chineseness, and identification with Chineseness, would be passed on. In most cases the activities of Chinese school, in particular passing on Cantonese language, would need reinforcement at home if they were to become strong enough to use with other Chinese people. Participants finished Chinese school either as 'graduates' around sixteen, having completed the full years of learning, or having stopped going before this age. Experiences such as John's were quite rare:

John: I grew up in Chinese school as well, and, I mean I've learned quite a lot of like new words and things but in, to be honest I have because I graduated from Chinese school like years ago. I think I was only about fifteen at the time when I finished Chinese school in church (24, working in parent's takeaway).

Perhaps part of John's reason to keep attendance was the attaching of the school to his church, the same Church that Eric also attended. However as we have seen completion of Chinese school does not always equate to a good proficiency in the language. Much more common were examples of leaving Chinese school early:

Amy: Well when I was little we used to then we dropped out for some how, I don't know I don't remember why we dropped out but we just didn't go anymore (16, sixth form student).

Flo: Yeah I went to Chinese school up until I was about like seven maybe and then I didn't want to do it anymore, because I think something about I was missing all my friends parties and things 'cos I was at Chinese school or something, something like that. Some excuse (16, sixth form student).

Peter: I'd, I'd well yeah when I was little err again I guess about eight I did go to a local Chinese school or I went to classes run by the local Chinese association, Cantonese, and I kept that up for two or three years, learnt some basics and for some reason, I think, you know basically at that time it didn't seem to be a very important thing to be learning I mean that's probably the influence of coming from a mixed race family... (32, university student).

Despite existing due to positive intentions to help both parents and young people adjust and understand Chineseness, '[s]ome students will reject the schools' dominant ideologies around linguistic and cultural heritages and learning. Such students may experience the schools' ideologies as coercive' (Creese et al., 2006: 31).

One reason for leaving Chinese school was the child's choice. Flo who was a sixth form student when interviewed was doing well at school and hoped to go on to university and eventually perhaps be a teacher. Flo did not speak Chinese at home and she seemed to place priority in staying and working in the UK. Perhaps then Chinese school was less attractive to participants whom felt their futures were less related to Chinese language and the other experiences provided at school. In Amy's case, although she appears to have forgotten why she stopped going, her family did speak Chinese to her, she had to work nights for parents in the takeaway, and for participants in her position perhaps Chinese school only offered so much, considering the pressures of school and working for parents. In a similar fashion Peter recalls that Chinese school provided him with little of 'importance' at the time, coming from a mixed race background he lacked the reinforcement of Chinese at home too.

Along with participants finding Chinese school was no longer of use to them, there were another set of reasons for dropping out. The challenge of getting to school and sometimes paying for the attendance meant a number of participants stopped going '[o]ften the young people said that the reason why they did not attend community language classes was that they couldn't fit them in' (Harris, 2006: 123). In this study though participants also talked about financial reasons for not attending:

Edith: No, well, I did go to Chinese school but because there was no one to pick me and my sister up from Chinese school we ended up having to stop going but two of my cousins they can speak fluent Chinese... (17, sixth form student).

Harriet: ...we never went to Chinese school just because it didn't fit their working time. They couldn't drive us there, pick us up, they were working during that time... (18, university student).

Heighley: ...it was £8 for one lesson and my mam had three children at that time, which means it's a lot of money and she didn't have a lot of money so we didn't go after a while... (17, sixth form student).

In Edith and Harriet's experience their parents working in catering meant that they simply did not have the time to take their children to school. Edith compared her ability in Chinese to her cousins, though by implication here she suggests that Chinese school helped them, it is likely other factors were involved as they were for many participants. In Heighley's case her family could no longer afford the costs per lesson, she told of how her family had become larger over time, and that paying for more children was too expensive. These reasons for not attending Chinese school are not covered in the UK literature, and raise additional concerns over how finances might influence access to cultural and linguistic education in the UK context. On the other hand participants also felt that some of the activities at Chinese school and attending on the weekend were less than desirable:

Peggy: ...there was a lot of other activities at the time we were like 'oh my god I can't be bothered to do this' erm we did er, they taught us how to do Chinese chess and they also taught us Tai Chi... (20, university student).

With hindsight though the benefits of additional language support and community at Chinese school may come through for young people:

Peggy: Well at the time obviously your young and it's like 'oh school, an extra day!' so I didn't really want to go there and, but I did go...I think if I didn't go to Chinese school then obviously I wouldn't know Chinese as well as I know now... (20, university student).

In Peggy's case she was able to make use of her Chinese skills at home and so despite not always enjoying the schools activities she was grateful, on reflection, for having gone. Feelings about Chinese school were ultimately therefore mixed. Entering Chinese school was a result of parents feeling that their children should know

something of their heritage and cultural background, this beyond what could be found at home but also often supported by it (Archer et al., 2009, Francis and Archer, 2005a, Francis et al., 2008, 2009). The young people tended to be ambivalent about the success of the schools in language provision and some became proficient at home even without school. The most common experience was attendance for some period, then leaving before the full time possible. With hindsight many of the older participants commented that they wish they had attended for longer, or that they missed out not becoming confident with their Cantonese Chinese. Li has commented that:

After nearly half a century, there seems little doubt that complementary schools for immigrant and ethnic minority children in the UK are here to stay. This may reflect badly on the current mainstream educational system in its failure to fully meet the needs of immigrant and ethnic minority communities. It also highlights the achievements of the immigrant and ethnic minority communities in their fight for equality and social justice and for their fundamental belief in multiculturalism (Li, 2006: 81).

However if we look at the pressures younger people in the study faced - perhaps parents financial and time constraints, the need to do well at mainstream school, feeling simply that Chinese school did not provide anything relevant - an uneven experience often resulted. While in the USA Chinese schools are much bigger and more organised affairs, sometimes with fees running into the hundreds of dollars (Zhou and Kim, 2006), in the UK they tended to serve a support function, easing the transition for both parents and young people from migrant Chinese identities to Chinese identities influenced by the British context.

5.2 - 3 Identity

Identity is always incomplete, they argue, so we 'freeze' it in order to analyse it. Yet in doing this, we run the risk of erasing a sense of movement and complexity, producing an arbitrary closure (Noble, 2009: 876).

Noble (2009) accurately captures the difficulty involved in researching experience and identity issues. Whilst language was an important and constituent element in British Chinese identity, complexity arises from the variations of not just Chinese languages, but also migrant histories and the reported ambivalences around the way language might be learned in the British context, and made use of both at home and abroad. Noble (2009) questions if we are able to correctly recognise the ways in which

identities are combined, not only at the moment of analysis and discussion, but after any research has been conducted. Ang (2001) has for example suggested that if we do freeze Chinese identities, then we risk alienating those with a Chinese ethnicity, who may not meet the criteria so to speak. But what of young people themselves? In what ways do they determine language to be of importance? So far I have perhaps played into Harris's (2006) observation that structural inevitabilities in the UK shape ethnic identities and make the acquisition and value of language different. I am perhaps unable to suggest that the inability of second generations to continue speaking their heritage languages is a negative circumstance, and certainly unable to state that this represents a general loss for ethnic minorities in general. To argue for that would really mean supporting stasis and a freezing of identity, which is at odds with the project of empirical research based in a range of testimonies.

Nevertheless some participants did frame the learning of Chinese as necessary for a complete Chineseness. Emma for example was quite vocal about the virtues of attending Chinese school:

Emma: Well some people don't like going but I do 'cos like I want to learn Chinese, it's really important...

AT: Why is it important?

Emma: Because I was born here and then if I don't learn Chinese then it will be a disadvantage for the future...

AT: Why do you think it might be a disadvantage?

Emma: Because more languages is better (16, sixth form student).

In the quotes above Emma, who was still attending Chinese school to do her A-levels there, language is equated with advantage and generally seen as 'good'. Perhaps Emma's rationale for wanting to keep learning the language, when many dropped out, was down to her stronger Hong Kong connections than many participants. Emma described preferring her time spent visiting Hong Kong, listening to music from there and suchlike. Speaking Cantonese Chinese enabled Emma to engage with her sense of identity as a Chinese person and we again have this sense here of a Hong Kong Chineseness as important (Parker, 1998, Verma et al., 1999). What place does Ang's (2001) argument have here, when participants are so willing to attest to the need for Chinese, despite being marked in so many ways by what might be described as hybrid identities? Even those who admitted they could speak Chinese (Cantonese) might

suggest that the learning of Mandarin Chinese, and even other non-Chinese languages, was in itself necessary Mike: *"...I like to learn languages I think, 'cos I, I'm Chinese but I can't I would like to read a newspaper and be able to, you know, be more Chinese"* (19, university student). Mike provides a clearer rationale here compared to Emma. Language can be about access to more than just communication with parents, as we have seen. Language also gives access to knowledge(s) found in books and newspapers.

For those individuals whom were born outside the UK, holding onto Chinese language was important as a constituent part of identity itself:

Louise: Err well the main reason is because like I don't really like communicating in English I don't know why but like I don't really like, it's harder to express what I'm trying to say (17, sixth form student).

For Mike and Louise language was important in terms of accessing information and communicating the self respectively. The content and structures used to communicate in Chinese can be different to English, something I have explored through learning Mandarin Chinese alongside doing this project. Use of the Chinese language to engage with information and express the self has gone under discussed in research on British Chinese, which tends to focus on the relation to attitudes to education and learning. Louise later contextualised her comments, she had come from Hong Kong when six, and still felt more comfortable at school speaking in Chinese, and having friends whom were ethnically Chinese. Louise mentioned feeling uncomfortable around 'English people'; she worried about racism and generally getting on with them. Language could then be useful in forming a stronger personal identification, and in these examples Chineseness is sought after and worked towards through learning and using Chinese.

In discussions between British Chinese researchers though language has been featured, such as in Li's (1994, 2006) study of Chinese schools or Francis et al's (2009, 2008) dissection of the meaning of Chinese schools for parents and young people, it can still be explored further in relation to its function as a social identity, as well as a skill in itself. Parker and Song (2006a, 2006b), for example, tap into the role that being able to talk about 'being' Chinese in Britain plays, for young British Chinese over the internet. In their work in the USA, Zhou and Li (2003) have suggested that practices of learning

Chinese, particularly the support in Chinese schools, could provide 'a strong Chinese identity and ethnic pride instilled in the children...necessary to help the children cope with racism and discrimination' (Zhou and Li, 2003: 62). Language might then play a part in young peoples' identities because it allows them to feel confident in themselves and their heritage, in contrast to the possibility of an absence of discussion on Chineseness outside of family and connected networks.

Here Kat mentions several reasons for the need to learn Chinese, as well as expose herself to Chinese culture. In Kat's example her parents felt that it was necessary to pass some of their 'knowledge' to the younger generation, perhaps 'helping children to relate to the Chinese culture without feeling embarrassed' (Zhou and Li, 2003: 70).

Kat: it's really important for kids nowadays to learn a little bit about, like, their roots and stuff, and it's important for the older generations just to pass on just a little bit of the knowledge [...]

Kat: ...they have a lot of Chinese friends and stuff, and like quite a lot of Chinese culture around them, but like they, said they probably only like they got like twenty, thirty percent of Chinese culture and then they said that we probably only got like two percent from them (laughs) and so they, for them, for us, it's just quite important to learn a little bit... (20, university student).

Kat talks about 'roots and stuff' as well as older generations passing on a 'little bit of the knowledge'. As Harriet experienced:

Harriet: ...because you've grown up with a different education and stuff. I mean their history, our history includes like nothing about China pretty much, I mean the only time China's come up in my history education is the Manchuria incident, and that's it! (18, university student).

Authors whom have written about the myriad of experiences of Chinese diaspora point to a trend of finding ways to come to terms with the act of migration and the reaction of the societies settled in (Ang, 1993, 2003, Kuah-Pearce and Davidson, 2008, Lin, 2003, Pan, 1994, 1999, Skeldon, 2003, 2004, Thuno, 2007). Discourses internal to migrants, perhaps around what Chineseness is, or ought to be, can sometimes be passed down through the family or within institutions such as Chinese school. When participants note an absence of discussion about their own backgrounds, perhaps this might contribute to a desire to defend or explore understandings of identity.

However it is equally possible that as young people become older, they will lose some of the supporting structures as well as rationales for maintaining aspects of their identity, which seem important now. This of course is the process of transition. As example my interview with Tony stood out. Tony rejected the idea of language as part of an identity project, though he conceded that he did speak Chinese with his parents, but that he did not seek actively to make use of the language in the way the participants in the previous examples did. As most of my participants were towards the younger end of the age bracket it is entirely possible that future research with young people might produce quite different results and identifications, or non-identifications around language. This marked Chinese school in particular as an important space for many in shaping their identity and functioning as a support structure in between their parents experiences and those found in the school or outside the home.

If, as so many participants have argued, language is related principally to its inherent value for communication, its relevance may not stand the test of time universally. It would be useful to look relationally. Relationally at the interplay between British society itself - as Harriet commented there is hardly felt to be a strong or equal treatment of Chinese history or issues - and how Chinese parents and young people want to see their backgrounds valued and interpreted.

5.3 Conclusions

In the literature review we saw that discussions on Chineseness shifted, between identity as fixed, and ways in which it might be located and changed, through social experiences. Historians of the Chinese diaspora, such as Wang (1993, 1994), Tu (1994) and Pan (1994, 1999) have, whilst their ultimate conclusions shown to be different, described the way in which the past comes to influence the present. In certain circumstances, particularly in Wang's (1993, 1994) work, it was evident that the social situations Chinese communities found themselves in, particularly after the modernisation of mainland China, shaped which elements and in what ways Chineseness as an identity remained relevant.

The chapter began with exploration of the young people's connections to Hong Kong. Discussion revealed a range of experiences around fun and holidaying, visiting relatives, as well as marking a site of alternative home from the UK. For some participants it was important to note the existence of Hong Kong due to their parents and relatives connections to the place, or perhaps as a distraction from the perceived ordinariness of their lives in the UK. On analysis Hong Kong could also emerge as a site which tested and uncovered anxieties and ambivalences around Chinese identity in Britain. Whilst Hong Kong might seem less than familiar, perhaps being too hot, too crowded or full of unknown strangers, there was added tension around language proficiency.

I then moved to look more directly at the issue of language because participants, not only those whom had links to Hong Kong, also shared a background of Chinese as a 'heritage' language. Language also seemed to form the base for a set of ambivalent feelings around identity. Language was most clearly related to the issue of parental encouragement, and the possibility of supportive spaces and interactions, such as Chinese school, relatives and the existence of a viable need to speak Chinese. Young people were willing to offer a range of opinions on Chinese school in particular, and variation in attendance at the schools demonstrates why British Chinese identities might on paper be seen as less than authentic; especially in the face of confident language users in sites like Hong Kong, or perhaps in the eyes of relatives and parents. Harris (2006) has made the valuable point that due to structures in British society, mainly the obviousness that English, not Chinese, is the main daily language outside of the home, it is perhaps inevitable that a majority of young people growing up in the UK will not speak their heritage languages.

As Li (1994) found though, Chinese language amongst the Chinese population might be employed flexibly, if attendance at Chinese school and within the home is maintained young people might be able to make use of the language functionally. Chinese schools, which as we have seen also fostered a notion of community through games and non-language activities might also pass on values such as Archer and Francis found '[s]ocial competition functioned as a source of motivation to high academic achievement and was internalized by pupils, such that personal achievement (or failure) was viewed in collective terms (Archer and Francis, 2006: 36). Chinese schools, the existence of which

might highlight difference and separation between Chinese identities and non-Chinese, at the same time have the potential to offer resources for a coming to terms with difference and even transition from Chinese to British Chinese.

In considering the contribution of this chapter I am minded to point to Hodge and Kam's observation about the opening up of mainland China to tourists:

When China opened its doors to foreign tourists and business people in the 1990s, what the Western visitor found was a country without much nightlife and a drab daylife. Where was the splendour discovered by Marco Polo or the mysterious and sinister China of the Fu Manchu years? It had to be created. Chinese writers and film makers were happy to oblige. Exotic and erotic images inundate the pages of novels and cinema and television screens...The twisted and contorted images were said to be non-mainstream, such as southern Chinese or Communist Chinese, but Chinese nevertheless (Hodge and Kam, 1998: 14).

Similarly young people's attachments to family and their own Chinese cultural heritages were bound up and entangled with constructions of Chineseness embedded in modernity, transnationalism and change. As members of British society young British Chinese people are situated in their own experiences of Chineseness, related to how this background is balanced in everyday life. Because of the difficulties then of reproducing or accessing Chinese, specifically Chinese-linguistic, spaces of interaction parents often made use of Chinese schools to try to impart some sense of their own experiences of being Chinese. As has been addressed through discussions in this chapter the effects of Chinese school as well as interactions mediated through, or influenced by Chinese language, such as in Hong Kong or with Chinese friends, highlight the young peoples increasing awareness of self and identity and the significance of being Chinese. Ambivalences around language and its proficiency could painfully mark them as different to their family and Chinese others, who were both Chinese ethnically and coming from geographically distant spaces understood as 'Chinese'. But my conclusion is not that young people necessarily felt they were lacking or less Chinese overall, but that at certain points this could either be reinforced or challenged depending on the circumstances. Indeed as we shall see in the next chapter, transition towards different Chinese futures is essential to young people's wishes and hopes for the future.

Chapter 6 - Education as transition for young British Chinese

At the thesis introduction I made the point that, prior to 1990, Chinese ethnicity in the UK was not looked at as distinctly as it would come to be during that decade (Pang and Lau, 1998, Parker, 1995, 1998, Song, 1995). For the Chinese in Britain they had tended to be ignored, or caught between stereotypes which cast them as foreign and other. As we have seen though, British Chinese people were forging their own place within British society. Whilst for the majority it would be difficult to enter British society on a social level, often due to long working hours in catering and a combination of language difficulties, their children were less constricted. It appeared by the 2000s that young British Chinese had finally succeeded on the back of their parents' work, when statistics were produced about their attainments in school. As key authors on the combination of race, ethnicity and education in Britain have found, the attainment level of ethnic groups does not always reflect fully in statistics, or foster a desire for deeper understanding:

Until 1990, the main debate concerning ethnic minorities and higher education centred upon an unsubstantiated impression that ethnic minorities were under-represented in higher education (Modood and Acland, 1998: 158).

...recent figures indicate that at GCSE, 75% Chinese children gained at least 5 A*-C passes, compared with 51% of white children and 65% of Indian pupils (DfES, 2004). They are also proportionally more likely than any other ethnic group in Britain to enter higher education (Gillborn & Gipps, 1996). Thus the relatively high achievement of many British Chinese pupils is taken to signal that they do not constitute (or experience) any significant problems—and hence are not requiring of specific attention or resources (Archer and Francis, 2007: 388).

Despite wider awareness of their academic success, the image of young British Chinese perhaps remains positioned between the assumptions around ethnic minorities as 'disadvantaged', or being the product of some kind of magic formula. This chapter serves to better integrate the experiences of participants into a larger frame of work around youth in Britain. A key section of the work on youth in Britain is a focus on transition (Hollands, 1990, MacDonald and Marsh, 2004, MacDonald et al., 2005, MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007, McDowell, 2000, 2002). The accounts of participants have been shown to reflect lives shaped by family and understandings of identity which are still undergoing exploration, but have formatively been encountered in the

family and through Chinese schools. Transitions in existing youth studies tend to concentrate around the key events which mark the shift from child to adult. Often these have looked at the place of education and how it shapes this transition. I will begin by giving an assessment and précis of youth transitions work, and then move to integrate young British Chinese into a body of work which has tended to omit their experiences.

6.1 Youth transitions

6.1 - 1 A youth transitions approach?

Academic consideration of the transitions young people make is often traced back to the period of the 1970s and 1980s, in which it has been observed that 'standard' routes young people were making were becoming disrupted, fragmented and elongated. Before this period it is commonly held that British society was stratified, with most members of the 'working' class progressing through school and then to work as soon as this was possible. Members of the 'middle' class would enter the professions by staying on at school or within education, increasingly at university. The definition of youth at this period was quite different to that today, with a perhaps more clearly defined mark between childhood and adulthood, and less time in between for the exploration of the period we now define as youth.

Arguably there have been several key debates throughout the study of youth transitions, early writers quickly focused on notions of class, defining ways in which related attitudes and cultures might re-produce similar values and attitudes towards work and transition. A prominent example is the work of Paul Willis (1977), who, conducting ethnographic work with working class boys in school, sought to understand better the reasons why they made the transitions they did. Willis (1977) highlighted the way in which a mismatch between the boys views on school and those of teachers and other students could combine. In particular the 'lads' were seen to reject school, a position which both assured many of them ended in the jobs they expected to obtain (unskilled labour) as well as confirmed the views of teachers within the school environment. Willis's (1977) work was followed by Christine Griffin (1985), who conducted a similar study, though it notably focused on young women's experiences,

and also discussed ethnicity, vitally highlighting the differences and varieties in transitions, the further influence of gendered expectations and inter-generational factors.

Since this period, sometimes referred to as the 'school to work' period in research (Goodwin and O'Connor, 2005), a complex mix of influences was further investigated around young people's transitions. It has been shown that not only class and gender influence the outcomes of transitions, but also structural, as well as agent-related factors. Two theorists have been influential in the discussion on how a modern transitions landscape looks very different to the one that Willis's (1977) 'lads' expected to find, firstly:

Beck (1992) argues that we are witnessing a historical transformation in society. The industrial era, which has been characterised by rationality, scientific knowledge, social hierarchies and tradition, is being challenged by a new modernity in which changes in the labour market, familial relations and class cultures are creating new life situations and new biographical development patterns, and a shift in ways of thinking about how individuals relate to society. Notably, the life course is no longer organised around employment history with the consequence that the possible pathways young people can follow after school are becoming more diversified. Traditional agencies such as the nuclear family, school, church and so on are no longer key agencies of social reproduction, channelling individuals into set roles (Valentine, 2003: 40).

According to Beck (2008) society has become more risky in terms of job security. A reduction in opportunities for structured and safe employment, sometimes referred to as 'jobs for life', prompts young people in particular to engage in either longer transitions to their chosen futures or fragmented ones, composed of multiple jobs. The effect of these fragmented or elongated transitions has the potential to be huge upon established social norms and expectations, such as home ownership, forming a family, because without financial security such things are difficult to afford. It has been argued then that:

Individual choices become all the more important, and the choice biography takes over from the standard biography. Choices involve planning at every crossroads in life, thus Beck-Gernsheim's (1996) phrasing of 'life as a planning project'. Some writers (for example, Giddens, 1994) portray this process somewhat optimistically in terms of a weakening of constraints and increased liberation for individuals, which is signified in the very term 'choice biography'. By

contrast, in some commentaries there is an emphasis on the burdens which the continuous process of making choices and decisions places upon individuals (Brannen and Nilsen, 2002: 516).

Brannen and Nilsen (2002) introduce the second theorist, Anthony Giddens (1984). Giddens (1984) argument was that a new reality in between the existence before - of structure - and the coming existence - of individual agency - was being realised. Termed 'structuration', Giddens (1984) sought to suggest that transitions were now coming to be more related to the choices individuals make. Giddens (1984) work builds on that of Willis (1977) as well seeing in his observations a link between the actions of each of us and the social structures which these actions produce and re-produce 'Willis treats the boys concerned as actors who know a great deal, discursively and tacitly, about the school environment of which they form a part; and that he shows just how the rebellious attitudes which the boys take towards the authority system of the school have certain definite unintended consequences that affect their fate' (Giddens, 1984: 289).

As we will come to see, researchers have increasingly questioned both the existence of such a 'risk' society and the balance between structure and agency in young people's transitions to work. At this point I want to highlight that the notion of a fragmented reality for young people has had significant effect, in British governmental and educational policy and thought. Fears over a 'lost' generation, which persist even now, and worries over the degradation of society and unfulfilled youth, led to policies which sought to correct the perceived gap between school education and work; it was noted that for many young people more training would be required. Whilst Mayall's (2006) arguments, below, seek to critique the policies of Tony Blair's New Labour government (from 1997 onward), I include it as her analysis accurately depicts the growing disconnect between academic thought on youth transition, and government responses of the time:

Though functionalism⁸ 'went out' among academics in the 1970s, it remains the commonsense way—probably for most people—of understanding how society

⁸ Functionalism refers to a mode of Sociological thought in which society was likened to a human body, with institutions such as family, school, university, acting like the organs to support a whole, living state. In order for the state to remain 'healthy' these organs were said to need to function in harmony. The theory was over time eroded as overly structural and top down.

works. Functionalism tells us that people should be trained or 'socialised' to take their conforming place in society (sounds like New Labour!). Children are not part of the society, but inhabit a preparatory stage, first at home and then in school, learning how to be proper members of society. During childhood, they move through a series of stages that gradually equip them for life as mature, reasoning adults. Society functions smoothly—because these methods generally produce conformists. Non-conformists—bad and mad people—can be dealt with by, respectively, prisons and madhouses. This functionalist approach underpins New Labour's approach to children who opt out of school (note: 'truant' is a pejorative term used only to describe children in relation to school); rather than recognise that they may rightly critique schools' behaviour to them and may have alternative agendas, the policy is to shoe-horn them back in. The school is given; children should accept it (Mayall, 2006: 13).

An emergent mis-match has been suggested, between the government (structural) position of finding an educational and training solution to the fragmenting labour market, and the actual experiences of young people on the ground. France (2007) summed up Labour's attempts to address the post-industrial economy of Britain as 'while rejecting the 'no such thing as society' mantra of Thatcherism, instigated policies that located the 'problem of youth' in the actions of individuals, the failings of communities and the poor parenting skills of working-class families' (France, 2007: 153). According to Furlong and Cartmel (1997) then, a situation was created in the education sphere in which '[i]ncreasingly schools are having to sell themselves on the market with parents being invited to select the 'product' best suited to the needs of their child' (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997: 11). The stance of government and education providers arguably created an 'epistemological fallacy...an illusion of equality while masking the persistence of old inequalities. By giving families greater responsibility for the type of education received by their children, negative outcomes can be attributed to poor choices on the part of the parents as customers' (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997: 18). In a structural sense then young people were seen as 'human becomings, not as agents or individuals in their own right, but as dependents and as *future* adults in need of education, training, protection and control' (Evans, 2008: 1664).

6.1 - 2 Criticisms of youth transitions

If, as researchers in the 1970s and 1980s had noted, young people's transitions were changing, fragmenting and elongating, why have some academics come out against the policies of the Labour government? The Labour government in particular had, on

paper, sought to address the supposed chaos of the Thatcher years. During the Conservative Thatcher government, many state owned industries were either closed or sold off, which arguably contributed to both the fragmentation of the labour market and agreement ideologically that companies and industry should be given a freer hand. The freer hand of business then sought to fragment companies and industry, taking many jobs overseas or eradicating them in the UK almost completely.

One of the key arguments running through much of the youth transitions research is that government, of any leaning, seems to respond to changes too late; often without nuance to the conditions and social conditions young people are facing. For example let us take the notion of transition itself. The notion of transition as it once stood, for the marker of change from child to adult, is problematic now. Developmental models such as '[p]uberty, and 'storm and stress' have been continually drawn upon as possible explanations for the 'causes' of young people's 'bad' behaviour. In late modernity these models are as strong as ever and remain a major influence on how policy is shaped' (France, 2007: 154), such models have partially been discredited however, on the back of research which finds 'youth' not a neutral category:

'Youth' is a social construction, and the way it is understood as a concept varies across cultures and over time. Since youth first emerged as a 'stage in life' in its modern form it has been continually extended, largely as a result of government policies. Where a few decades ago it may have been possible to think about a single ordered sequence of transitions from childhood to adulthood, the extension of education and training in particular has driven a wedge between the two (Jones, 2002: 1).

Increasingly the challenging of notions of youth as well as what transitions are, or even the relative value of investigating them in the way which has been done, has caused youth researchers to discuss and disagree on the way forward. Wyn and Woodman (2006) I think correctly diagnose the overall problem with a youth transitions approach which seeks to, inadvertently or not, isolate a singular experiential period called 'youth and transition' because:

These characterisations all rest on the assumptions that (a) there exists a normative transitional process, from which young people deviate; (b) youth is a linear process or position on a life-course; and (c) culture, economy and politics simply add 'flavour' or context to the development process. In the main, the

literature on transitions draws implicitly on popular conceptualisations of generations, in which the Baby Boomer generation has become the implicit norm. The transitions of this generation (from school to work, leaving home, establishing nuclear families) have become the standard timeline against which subsequent generations are judged (Wyn and Woodman, 2006: 498).

Whilst Wyn and Woodman (2006) suggest that a more intergenerational approach would be of use, setting this cohort of young people aside from the experiences of their parents and grandparents, but also looking relationally between them (Hopkins and Pain, 2007, 2008), other academic spheres invested in youth research have continued to produce prescriptive models for development and explanation. A recent model for youth transition is Arnett's concept of Emerging Adulthood, 'the concept of 'emerging adulthood' (EA) represents a new phase in the human lifecourse with five main features representing unparalleled opportunities to transform life: identity exploration, trying out possibilities in love and work, instability, self-focus, and feeling in between (adolescence and adulthood)' (Cote and Bynner, 2008: 251). Emerging Adulthood for example plays right into the earlier academic work on 'risk societies' (Beck, 2008), merely creating a set of new categories for analysis. As Bynner has argued though, Emerging Adulthood, because it is prescriptive, can exist only if we all agree that a new phase of society is in existence, that fragmented transitions to adulthood are becoming a normal situation. As Evans (2008) has questioned, and she is not the only one (Matthews et al., 1999, Philo, 2003), what 'youth' exactly is, when it begins or ends, is difficult to define definitively. For example when commenting on the founding of the geography journal 'Children's Geographies', Evans states:

The terms 'children' and 'young people' are often used collectively or interchangeably (as I have done thus far) and work on both children and young people is subsumed within the subdiscipline 'children's geographies'...as this may result in a tendency to prioritise children and childhoods over young people and youth (evident possibly in the naming of the journal *Children's Geographies*, although the journal aims to, and frequently does, include work involving young people up to the age of 25) (Evans, 2008: 1661).

Categorising young people may place limitations on the ways in which experiences are interpreted and ultimately how we respond to them. It is therefore important that ongoing discussion is had regarding working definitions of 'young people' as a group. Valentine (2003) has suggested that even within the category young people some experiences and categories are interrogated more regularly, particularly the split

between those ages seven to fourteen who have received 'considerable attention from geographers' compared to those whom are sixteen to twenty five (Valentine, 2003: 39). Quite correctly both Hopkins (2006a) and Valentine (2003) note then that:

A young person's life course trajectory towards adulthood often involves negotiating a range of transitions: school to college/university to work; parental home to shared accommodation with peers to their own home; child of a family to partnership/cohabitation to partner with children; 'pocket money' income to part-time work/temporary income to full salary; and general economic dependence through semi-dependence to full (Hopkins, 2006a: 240).

It is these varieties within the broader category of 'young people' which require ongoing research, particularly questioning the interaction between individuals understandings of their position (be it child, young person or otherwise) and wider social factors which might create and maintain these categories.

Young British Chinese people have perhaps been less likely to feature amongst this recent deconstruction of youth; because high grade averages and university success seemed to be evident of transitions which are unimpeded by the changes in economy and society seen to affect other groups. For example, working class culture, and the related transitions, has consistently been a major focus of recent youth transitions research. I already mentioned the work of Willis (1977) and his look at the link between culture and school rebellion. More recently McDowell has provided an update, contextualising the failure of many working class young men to obtain the work they expect, often finding themselves in insecure employment - the 'derogatory term—McJobs—is often used generically to characterise entry-level jobs that are casual, poorly paid, often involving shifts and/or long hours, with few benefits and opportunities for promotion and with high turnover rates' (McDowell, 2002: 52). Whilst Willis (1977) was able to observe that young men could rebel at school and still expect jobs, McDowell (2002) argues that now they may find their working lives uprooted for a considerable period after school.

Not only young men but young working class women may find their working life 'marked by disruption and, often, lifetime immobility. The types of occupations entered by young women are characterised not only by poor levels of pay but also by a

lack of occupational mobility and promotion. Furthermore, a gender pay gap favouring young men is already evident by the age of 19' (McDowell, 2002: 43). McDowell (2002) has argued that due to the restructuring of the economy so called 'jobs for life' are no longer available to the unskilled school leaver, yet despite this reality for many regions of the UK, young people continued to believe in the possibility of work, even holding onto aspects of identity which might prevent them from finding jobs in the service sector; '[d]espite their sometimes intimidating appearance, they were neither the jobs nor idlers of media and government stereotypes, nor was there any sense of a crisis of masculinity among this group' (McDowell, 2002: 55). Working in the Tyneside region, of which Newcastle upon Tyne is a part, Nayak (2006) has looked ethnographically at the experiences of working class men, finding that:

Future generations of young men whose cultural worlds would once have been educationally shaped through a prism of schooling, training schemes, modern apprenticeships and hard labour were now finding themselves viewed as unskilled, unemployable, redundant youth (Nayak, 2006: 816).

Somewhat interestingly then has been the observation, both in interviews (McDowell, 2002) and ethnographic observation (Nayak, 2006), that young working class men in particular are vulnerable in the modern labour market. Rob MacDonald's work on the 'Tyneside Studies' has also highlighted the ways in which working class youth have slipped into:

[A] secondary labour market (Beynon, 1997), marked by pervasive unemployment and underemployment, to which many working-class people – younger and older alike – are now confined:

Low pay is also fair enough if these jobs can be labelled 'entry-level', just a first step on a ladder. But it is now clear that very few of those in low-paid jobs can ever move far ...//... few make it to the next step. They inhabit a cycle of no-pay/low-pay job insecurity. This indeed is the end of social progress (Toynbee, 2003: 5–6).

Byrne suggests that 'what is absolutely missing' from many accounts of the socially excluded is 'the significance of the combination of low wages, insecure employment and dependence on means tested benefits ...//... poor work is the big story' (1999: 69). His argument is that the need of post-industrial capitalism for a 'flexible' reserve army of labour means that low-paid work punctuated by unemployment 'represents the most significant kind of excluded life in our sort of society (MacDonald et al., 2005: 881).

Emphatically the story of modern youth transitions is a result of wider social conditions, localised experiences, and responses to these. Working class men and women must often grapple with the choice between remaining in the local area, perhaps marked by drug use, crime, housing difficulties and poor schooling, and the support of family and friends, which unlike them may not have the opportunity to leave the area. The route for escape is often touted as being through education, though, as we have seen from academic critics earlier, governments successively have chosen to draw on developmental models and set frameworks regarding youth and adulthood. The school is seen as politically motivated to shape certain types of individuals and reject others (Mayall, 2006), or in the work of Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson (2011) struggling to find the right path between 'low-income parents being cast as deficient as they have the wrong ambitions for their children and come from the wrong culture' and 'in trying to ensure some level of social mobility by helping their pupils to benefit more from (or at the very least be less disadvantaged by) that system' (Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson, 2011: 91). Whilst it is easy perhaps to blame young working class people for failure to attain good grades at schools, this perhaps obscures the localised realities which seek to embed young people within cultures of educational rejection, instead turning to expressions of identity which perhaps offend the establishment (McDowell, 2000: 205) or find themselves unable to deal with the pressures around them at home and within school, such as constant bullying, or 'torturing' (MacDonald and Marsh, 2004: 149).

6.2 Youth transitions and young British Chinese accounts

Having looked at youth transitions and some of the criticisms of this line of argument, as well as those seeking to extend it, I now turn to how conceptions of young British Chinese peoples' accounts might add to the debates. Firstly one of the areas in which transitions might be extended is through a wider appreciation of the nature of transition itself:

[T]ransition studies have tended to focus on 'school-to-work careers' (the move from full-time education into the labour market) to the detriment of wider aspects of youth experience... 'family careers', 'housing careers', 'criminal careers', 'drug-using careers', 'leisure careers' (MacDonald et al., 2005: 875).

We have seen in the discussion above that MacDonald et al's (2005) assessment can be supported, many academics have focused on the relationship between school-work.

Interesting too is the way in which the idea of fragmented transitions, or 'yo-yo' (EGRIS, 2001: 104) are felt to be self evident, yet others have suggested they may have existed for some time amongst various groups of society, simply being that '[p]ast scholars were not looking for the individualized, subjective, complex transitional experience. The over-concentration on macro-processes as being central determinants of the transitional process meant that the individual experiences were largely ignored or hidden' (Goodwin and O'Connor, 2005: 217). I have already attempted to address MacDonald et al's (2005) call for a wider appreciation of transitions through exploring the background of young British Chinese participants, and how this impacts on their transitions. This has allowed me to tap into arguments around the nature of aspiration within discussion on transitions for young people. Aspiration emerged as a large part of participants' narratives around transition, and marks, in some ways, a contrast to those of working class youth already discussed.

This brings me to my second point, that by taking into account young people of different ethnic backgrounds we might better understand what transitions mean for various sections of society. If work by geographers illustrates that local effects can have an important part to play in youth transitions, then it is important too to look at differences in other areas. In particular ethnicity, and the related attitudes to transition and educational transitions, has already been shown to play a significant role in the shaping of transitions:

The empirical evidence in relation to ethnic differences in education and employment in the UK reveals that the experience of members of different ethnic groups is diverging and that people of different ethnicity can no longer be seen as a homogenized group. For example, in education, some groups such as Caribbeans, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are proportionally less qualified than their white peers, while others such as Chinese, Indians and Asian Africans are much more so (Modood et al., 1997) (Khattab, 2009: 305).

Much like the working class examples earlier (MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007, MacDonald et al., 2005), a combination of background, in particular stable economic situations for parents, and a habitus, which revolves around aspiration, have lead to significant differences between some young British Asians in particular. Brannen and Nilsen for example comment that: 'as children of first generation immigrants, these young Asian-origin men expected to make their way in the world and to improve upon

their own parents' economic situations. They expected to do so, not only for their own sakes, but for the sake of their family to whom they felt bound by obligations. As sons, they expected and were expected to provide for their parents and to marry wives who would care for their husbands' parents' (Brannen and Nilsen, 2002: 527). Contrary to the young people MacDonald et al (2005) and McDowell (2002) have encountered, 'young British-Asian men were collectively following a route into highly remunerative professions (assumed to be 'safe') in the knowledge that they have behind them the support and aspirations of their first generation immigrant parents and communities' (Brannen and Nilsen, 2002: 530). As noted in the literature review on American Chinese, the observations of Zhou et al (Zhou, 1997, Zhou and Xiong, 2005, Zhou et al, 2008) might also be usefully drawn upon to illustrate the way in which migrant backgrounds affect the initial and later generations when assimilating.

Similarly to some members of Asian youth, British Chinese also come from families which expect them to prosper and do so for the good of the family. On the other hand such a mentality can come at a price, especially for individual freedoms, not only because of parental attitudes towards boy/girlfriends (Yu, 2007), or potential disruptions to educational attainment (MacDonald et al., 2005), but also because of additional family responsibilities in the home and family. Perhaps then it is because young British Chinese are seen as young people on different terms to those from other groups, which enables them to make quite different transitions. These different transitions may be in contrast to members of the white working class, who may struggle to make any of their desired transitions of family, home, and job. Whereas white working class youth might only be left with the desire for straightforward transitions, young British Chinese aspire to and perhaps achieve them.

6.2 - 1 Understanding attitudes to education

I have made use of the word entanglements to describe the complexities of accounts within this project. In this project though the word entanglements is chosen because it reflects, not only the value of understanding individuals' life experiences, but also transnational and cultural influences. Before exploring the participants' accounts I want to highlight the importance of Archer and Francis work (2006, 2009, 2009), socio-educationalists who have looked at the influences on young British Chinese pupils both

at complementary Chinese schools and within mainstream school. I can draw many parallels between my own findings and those of Archer and Francis. For example Archer and Francis have noted the dominance of a discourse of pro-education amongst school pupils:

Of the 80 responses to our question about the importance of education there were only a handful of alternative explanations, and often the pupils concerned mentioned the point about 'a good job' as well. The alternative explanations for the importance of education included learning about things to increase one's knowledge; parents telling one that education is important; and making yourself clever/avoiding being stupid (Francis and Archer, 2005a: 95).

Such beliefs of the value in education were, in a Bourdieuan sense, formulated through a combination of parental reinforcement as well as comparisons between pupils and recognisably similar ethnic others. Parents, who came from a variety of economic and social backgrounds, nevertheless promoted education, often basing this around a naturalising 'education is what we do' line, accompanied by explanations of the sacrifices parents and family had made to give young people the opportunity to educate themselves. As an additional reinforcement, comparison between Chinese people in Britain and those abroad might be made:

Asked why those growing up in China have a more serious attitude, Ying explains that, 'it's part of like basic education in China is taken very seriously', and compared this attitude to the English one: 'here I don't think primary education is taken that seriously, you just sort of like, you know, stroll your way through primary school, yeah.' Indeed, her frequent use of the word 'seriously' to describe Chinese attitudes to education suggests the 'unsaid' of white frivolousness in this regard (Francis and Archer, 2005a: 506).

Unlike the accounts of white working class youth, British Chinese people were enabled rather than disabled in their educational transitions through the discourses Francis and Archer (2005a) found. Despite the possibility of bullying at school (Francis and Archer, 2005b) or abuse in the takeaway (Parker, 1995, 2000), these experiences could be drawn upon to further reinforce the argument about difference and naturalise the idea of education being 'what we do' in opposition to others who do not.

Whilst then readers will find my own participants framing their experiences in similar ways to Archer and Francis' (2005a, 2005b), I want also to note that this study extends

the experiences considerably, because I focus on the age groups directly following these existing studies. What participants have generally noted is that their achievements in school translate to university entrance post school, where they tend to continue to draw on similar themes of valuing education. Where participants did seek to challenge and explore their identity was through the leisure found whilst at university, most commonly a period in which they could escape the combinations of takeaway, family responsibility and parental supervision, which might mean autonomy was somewhat restricted whilst in school or sixth form. I have chosen to extract the experiences of leisure, exploring them more fully in the final empirical chapter to follow. The extraction of leisure is important, because I seek to illustrate in what ways young British Chinese use the transition through education, beyond school, to continue to develop their identities.

6.2 - 2 Importance of education

Rachel, a college student, had grown up in Hong Kong and arrived in the UK to start secondary school. In her attitude Rachel demonstrated the common view across participants, with even participants whom were not British born positioned education in Britain as good, *Rachel: "Education is the most important thing yeah" (18, college student)*. In the previous chapters it was the role of parents which made education so important for young British Chinese people. Parents directed young people as a way to progress themselves through education-as-capital much in the way Bourdieu (2010) describes. Grades at school and then university were positioned as the currency by which desired futures might be reached.

Flo: Grades are really important to me, like, I'll kick myself if I don't get a good grade, but it's not the end of the world. Like I had to resit an exam on Wednesday and I was surprised that I didn't do very well in that but...yea, so... (16, sixth form student).

Joan: GCSE I was I think 5 marks off the top, getting an A in history whereas in the other subjects that I took for A-level I got A*s so I don't know that, might... (17, sixth form student).*

Newcastle itself contains a variety of schools from comprehensives to grammar and private schools. I was unable to access participants at grammar or private school, but despite this there were differences in the participants' backgrounds at the schools. For

example in Flo and Joan's account they were achieving the top grades and expected to go on to university to become professionals. In Flo's case she had planned to become a teacher after university, this rested on good grades and attending university. Nevertheless Flo came from a family which had relied on catering - though they now had sold these businesses - illustrating the strength of her aspirations as well as the discourses of aspiration within Chinese families in this study.

Much of the youth transitions literature has attempted to move beyond what is termed a 'linear' conception towards a 'non-linear' framework which is more flexible to the changes within the UK in the last thirty years. For example Hollands (1990) and MacDonald (1991), both looking at transitions to work in the late 1980s/90s, found that young people on government training schemes were inadequately equipped for a changing work environment in which linear school-work transitions were becoming harder to make (Hollands, 1990). Participants in this study described experiences and the belief that they would make a linear transition through education to work, as Flo and Joan do above, this goes against the experiences of other groups of young people. Joan for example did not have a plan for a degree course, though she was considering her options, yet her grades as we see were good. In some respects she thought about the progression onward more than what she would be studying itself. Participants overall tended to position themselves as naturally destined to progress through education:

Annie: Erm, I've, always had a desire to go to university, I never actually considered taking a gap year or even going to work for a year after sixth form, because it just feel like I need to keep continuing... (21, university student).

Kurt: [B]ecause I was quite good at the sciences it just, it was the logical option to take and after doing some work experience around the place I realised that I wanted to do medicine that's why I signed up for this course and err it's been hard but I've been enjoying it (18, university student).

These experiences contrast with the experiences of young people found in the academic literature. For example Macdonald et al (2005) have suggested that in the Tyneside area economic opportunities are limited; this has led to many working class men struggling to find well paid employment. The social background of working class men in Tyneside may have its origins in manual labour, specifically shipbuilding, yet

there may be a nihilistic attitude towards the education system which is viewed as 'not-for-us' for example (MacDonald et al., 2005). As I discussed in the previous chapter British Chinese families are not necessarily well off economically, yet families generally focus on getting their children in to education, and this is reinforced throughout growing up. Sometimes the lack of a positive attitude to education and resultantly aspiration leads to young people 'living for the weekend', rejecting education-work transitions in favour of clubbing and alcohol (Winlow and Hall, 2009). Such tendencies were controlled by parents reducing free time after school and are explored in the next chapter more fully. Free time was also shaped, for younger participants, through family responsibilities; as seen in the family chapter (chapter four).

Aside from these class considerations there have also been constructions of young people as 'being' nothing - having no purpose, not yet being adult - or even arguments that young people were simply couch potatoes or lazy (Evans, 2008). On the other hand there have been worries about young people as part of gangs or involved in crime (Alexander, 2000, Alexander, 2008). Sometimes these fears are related to certain spaces, or located in the way people look racially (Alexander, 2000) or appear, for example 'chavs' (Nayak, 2006). These discourses might create a social stigma around young people. Neither Annie nor Kurt's experiences matched these characterisations based on class or social stigma. The narratives of participants were more akin to Modood and Acland's (Modood and Acland, 1998) findings, during research with young British Asian people, who they found:

...valued education as an important goal, in itself, as well as a means for obtaining a successful career...So strong was parental pressure that, for some, they were left with no other choice than to enter higher education...Many considered achievement in higher education as the most effective way of combating racism in the employment market (Modood and Acland, 1998: 161).

Annie's experience is similar to the quote above in that she felt there was no other option. We might argue that this lack of choice could create conflicts with parents around the autonomy to choose the future. In the previous chapters we have seen though that participants often agreed with their parents, or at least went along with them, this was due to a combination of being supported but also regulated into the

family, and as Modood and Acland (1998) observes, that through education racism in employment could be effectively beaten. In Kurt and Annie's case their parents both worked in catering and had stressed the importance of education through attendance at Chinese school, with extra-curricular activities and regulating behaviour (was saw this in Annie's case previous chapter).

From the comments of participants in this study I would argue against the suggestion that:

The life course is no longer organised around employment history with the consequence that the possible pathways young people can follow after school are becoming more diversified (Valentine, 2003: 40).

This comment is not sensitive to the conditions of British Chinese young people in this study. Despite coming from a variety of class backgrounds, though many were based within catering, they nevertheless maintained fixity on education and employment. The transitions observed by Valentine fit within the discourse of a society in which young people 'cannot see where they are heading' (Valentine, 2003: 40), one which Beck and Giddens suggest is full of risk and uncertainty, of fragmentation and in direct contrast to linear transitions parents made (Beck, 2000, 2008, Giddens, 1984, 1991). For young British Chinese though the belief in a linear transition, through education to work, was quite strong and indeed participants were on the path to realising this; by staying on at school or entering higher education. In this way British Chinese participants' experiences fit closer to the notion of:

A lengthening in processes of youth transition is widely attributed to more extended periods spent in formal education and delays in young people moving out of home or forming long-term, stable relationships (Jeffrey and McDowell, 2004: 135).

This would suggest some success for their parents in bridging the gap between their own migrant experiences of entering the UK, often without many opportunities, to their children's, who have more choice for their future. Again these experiences of transitions mark a break with parents who did not experience a period of youth or growing up and were much more likely to have prioritised having a family and working at an early and similar age. Young British Chinese may therefore grow up making

transitions across class boundaries, social mobility, as well as transitions from being young and in education to working (Khattab, 2009).

Stereotypes of British Chinese young people in education tend to class them as 'boffins' as found in (Francis and Archer, 2005b). Though there are also stereotypes of Chinese young people as 'triads'. These stereotypes are not supported in general statistics, which do support the 'boffin' label and may reinforce this at a national level. So far participants' comments on the transitions they want to make in life prioritise education and work, though their views contradict current opinion on young Chinese attainment because they reveal the hard work and family commitment to education which was evident. Educational attainment was not a gift of birth for the young people in this study, rather the family environment they grew up in as well as their own hard work at school combined. The strength of the interview methodology used in this study is that participants could better relay their experiences about their time in education and this has encouraged me to explore the conditions and ways young British Chinese people enter and stay in education.

6.2 - 3 Parental sacrifice

In the chapter six the influence of family on the young people's attitude to educational aspiration was discussed. Participants might position themselves as different to their parents and desiring to further themselves through education:

Kat: ...I think you see how hard your parents work and they didn't necessarily get the best education... (20, university student).

Amy: Oh erm I wanna do better than them. Which I already have 'cos I got GCSE grades and he hasn't (16, sixth form student).

Obtaining education was therefore seen as important, but it could mean quite different things to individual participants. In Kat's case her parents had promoted education to her, and having seen their experiences and having run a restaurant in the past, she felt this justified education being a transition worth making in future. For Amy the experience of working for her parents in the takeaway as well as having a large number of siblings were reasons to place her faith in education for the future. She did not want to stay in the family business in future and wanted more freedom.

Both participants' aspirations were therefore similar, but in interview we see that their family situation gave them a different set of reasons for making the transition through education. Similar to participants in Fortier's (2000) account of Italian migrants in London, young British Chinese responded to similar expressions of sacrifice, which Fortier introduces as 'sacrifici' (Fortier, 2000: 50). Sacrifice was a dominant theme amongst those transnational family formations found in the work of Yeoh, Huang and Waters (Yeoh et al., 2005, Waters, 2005), parents utilised the discourse of sacrifice and a social debt young people had to repay this through educational attainment. The use of sacrifice as a rationale might be linked in with discussions of Confucian values, which place emphasis on the social debts and ties members of family and society owe each other. However, I have already made some attempt to suggest that a reductionist explanation for young people's attainment to Confucian parenting is not sufficient, instead it was the very real experiences of many parents having been observed working long hours (see the family chapter), and the resultant family formations which were a key driving force for young people in this study.

6.2 - 4 Comparison to China

A small number of participants were able to reflect on the experiences of relatives, who might also be young people of similar age, or parents' experiences abroad, in framing their attitudes to education and transitions. In particular I felt Charlotte expressed these ideas most fully.

AT: I wondered if you'd noticed any differences erm living in China and coming here 'cos you mentioned those three things the environment and things like that (yeah) I wonder if those things..?

Charlotte: That's definitely the difference I mean when I go, whenever I go back to China I, for the first couple of days I would feel very ill because of the air and because of the dust and because of the noise it's getting better since the Olympics because China has been putting a lot of efforts trying to control these things but then there's still a massive difference from here because here you have a lot of open spaces, you don't really have a lot of high rise buildings you feel like, and there's a lot of greenery (um) but in China like in all, in city then it's roads, traffic, buildings and noise just from the traffic and there's a lot more people, there's definitely a massive difference but then after I get used to these things, in China after a couple of days then, and after I see my relatives I will think, I tend not to care about these things anymore, yeah, but then you can't really compare because whenever I go back to China it's always a holiday I mean for example the

education I can't really compare because I haven't received any like erm higher education in China.

AT: You went to primary school there?

Charlotte: Yeah I did. But when, I have a cousin who was...younger than me (um hum) and whenever I go back I see her, I have seen she is under so much stress because of the situation, the education system in China, because you know there's too little people for too little jobs so everybody, for better prospects you have to go to a really really really good university in China, for a really good traditional subject like medicine or maths or engineering, something like that and then, hum, it's just a lot of competition. These children they kind of like go to school at seven thirty every morning and come back at six and they have to do their homework until twelve midnight and it's just so stressful I can see that, they even have to go to like lessons or classes outside of school just to receive extra help so they can score higher in the final exam (20, University student).

Here Charlotte, who was born in mainland China, suggests that the pressures of education in China are too great. Clearly Charlotte's account is also infused with understandings drawn from personal experience of being educated (primary school) in China, being educated in the UK (post primary school) and then a comparison she can make between the countries. In her comparison Charlotte can factor in those same environmental factors which stand for difference, seen in the chapter on identity and language, as well as her relatives' experiences as well. Rachel also noted that from her experiences in Hong Kong the schools were too rigid. It seemed that the British education style could be counter posed against that in China and Hong Kong, as being of high quality, yet without the pressures to learn in a restrictive way.

6.2 - 5 Aspirations

So far we have seen that participants valued education. Education was in part valued because it was deemed to be so by parents, something passed on during upbringing. This valuing of education was reinforced through both young people and their parents being aware of the sacrifices which had been made in settling in the UK; 'Chinese parents were passionately committed to providing their children with what they had lacked. Perhaps this is indicative of a general high valuing of education among the Chinese, as well as of a migrant outlook...' (Francis and Archer, 2005a: 99). Finally the use of China might be employed as a comparative site in which education was much tougher, competition much greater and yet opportunity not necessarily equivalent to efforts put in.

All of the above combined to produce an aspirational outlook with specific features. We have already seen that some transitions researchers have placed aspiration of working class young people as one reason for their problems at school. Others have commented that the attitude of teachers, which tended to have a middle class outlook valuing education as capital for work, were to blame, because these aspirations did not match those of working class youth. Brown has focused on aspiration in-depth conceiving it thus:

First, I consider aspiration as an affective orientation to the future (aspiring to become something). Second, I discuss aspiration as an emotional disposition (being aspirational). Third, I examine aspiration as an emotional state that can be affected (the act of 'raising aspirations' through widening participation activities specifically designed to act on the emotions). Fourth, I recognise aspiration as an emotional state that affects other emotions (through, for example, the excitement of deciding on a personally fulfilling career, or the fear of actually leaving behind friends and family to go to university) (Brown, 2011: 9).

I will not follow Brown's (2011) four part model of aspiration directly, though the line of argument is useful in understanding both the role and effect aspiration can have for young people. In particular Brown's (2011) observations about aspiration chime with the findings of Archer and Francis (2005a), that young British Chinese people's attitudes driven by aspiration were often able to a) overcome the possible problems of racism and bullying at school and b) the fact of having aspiration towards good grades and further education seemed to suit the pupils well to current modes of education and learning, they were therefore rewarded with good grades.

We should take care though not to assume that just because young British Chinese may appear to share the ideal aspirations of those in the educational spheres, that their reasons and drives are the same. I would argue that largely they are not. Whilst for middle class pupils the acquisition of grades might be part and parcel of their own backgrounds and understanding of education as capital (Bourdieu, 2010), their experiential background is likely to be quite different as I have already detailed in the previous chapters. For example many British Chinese might identify with the experiences of those in the United States (note in the United States Chinese and other ethnic groups from the Pacific often are termed Asians):

Asian Americans were constrained by the structure of opportunity for upward mobility in areas such as politics, sports, and entertainment. The experience and perception of blocked mobility in these non educational areas thus allowed Asian Americans to devote more energy to education and disproportionately succeed in it (Zhou and Kim, 2006: 4-5).

Achievement in the UK case for British Chinese may be more about aspiring to achieve and consolidate their position in the UK, unlike those from middle class families, who might for example have a long history of family attendance in education and higher education. These aspirations therefore lead to *shaped transitions*:

...even these pupil's interviews often reflected high parental expectations, such as 'having to' go to university. Perhaps such narratives to some extent represent a reproduction of Eurocentric discourse that presents a dichotomy of 'repressive traditional/liberal modern' cultures (Francis and Archer, 2005a: 101).

As example within my own study participants often noted that university and education were the normal routes, *Louise: "Well they hope I will go. But, yeah, everyone hopes to go to uni" (17, sixth form student)*. Here we see the direct link between parents and young people's hopes to go on through education. Alternative transitions are not considered. That so many of the participants had this experience, and agreed with it, perhaps goes against the argument for fluidity in transitions. For example Hall and Ang (Ang, 1993, 2001, Hall, 1990, 1992) suggest that we should remain aware of processes of being and becoming, in particular the nature of hybrid experiences. Supposedly then 'becoming', with its focus on the fluidity of personal identity and orientation toward the future has space to include many kinds of difference' (Worth, 2009: 1058).

In Joan's case she mentioned not knowing what to choose in future, though as we saw earlier her grades were around the A mark at A-level. Joan's parents had a strong influence on her educational background, she played piano, sang and was being advised to take on subjects which would lead directly to professional, and high paid work, such as law, *Joan: "I guess, yeah, at the moment I think it's looking more towards law, but again I think that's my parent's influence as well" (17, sixth form student)*. Whilst Joan's parents did not have catering in their work backgrounds, the stress on these higher paid jobs was often deliberate, as parents wanted their children to shift

away from catering and established professions (Archer and Francis, 2006). In some respects families were hoping to make a transition through their young people. Shaping the transitions through education meant that increased security could be assumed. This allowed them to avoid the niche food market (Pang and Lau, 1998) and the associated employment discrimination their parents had felt.

Furlong and Cartmel (1997: 18) observed that an epistemological fallacy meant many young people are unable to enter work following education at school, staying on at school and then further education or training. In the experiences of young British Chinese this observation is inverted. Young British Chinese seemed to exist in a world set apart from the one youth researchers have been discussing recently, in which young people are characterised as being troubled and unfortunate victims of either their parental background (MacDonald and Marsh, 2004, MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007, MacDonald et al., 2005, McDowell, 2000, 2002) or government policy (Hollands, 1990, MacDonald and Coffield, 1991). Although the participants no doubt were able to make use of their parents economic resources to support them on to education, which tended to be stable financially, as well as relying on the governments loan schemes for university, it was the family aspirations and attitudes to education which were most influential. There seemed to be few worries about not making the right choices or not being able to make a transition.

Pressure to perform was quite high amongst those interviewed, for example Adam discussed his worries over grades, which for other students might have been considered very good, *Adam: "...I only got about ABB and so, err I decided to maybe take a science related course err and then apply for medicine in the future..."* (20, university student). Adam's transition through education might be extended due to his strong desire to continue on to medicine because he missed the grade by one or two A's. Both of Adam's parents were professionals, one an academic and one a teacher. It is arguable that those with professional parents, such as Joan and Adam, were better placed to take advantage of cultural capital, they had a knowledge of the professions some parents did not and might better be able to advise the young people (Bourdieu, 1996, 2003). However for many participants their parents did not have an extensive

knowledge of the UK education system, often not having had these experiences themselves as young people (Francis and Archer, 2005a).

There were some differences in the transitions young people imagined themselves making, for example Amy discussed the value of coursework to her, and how the quite pressured experiences of participants, such as Adam, whose futures might be shaped by missing a grade boundary, were rejected:

Amy: I prefer coursework more 'cos I do more writing than, I do it if like coursework type, I do more, do better rather than exams 'cos I sitting there for an hour and I don't know what I'm doing (16, sixth form student).

Here Amy was thinking about a career in design or fashion which set her hopes apart from most other participants. Similarly Harriet expressed doubts over the nature of her transition post school being linear, she instead framed it as different to others, *Harriet: "Oh erm, I, I wasn't one of those people who thought 'oh I want to be a Doctor so naturally you go through medicine'..."(18, university student).* Arguably, though it is natural for alternative paths or futures to be imagined, these might be difficult to realise, due to the shaping effects mentioned so far. In the chapter on family, for example, we saw how David and Eric had been either moved or placed in schools their parents felt would increase their chances to go to university. David came to agree with his parents, as he was able to enter university, and felt that had he remained with the old friends, he wouldn't have achieved the grades nor had the attitude to continue. Similarly to David, Peggy mentioned:

Peggy: [M]y parent's didn't let me hang out after school with the kids that I err hung out with in school so I only saw them in school and, so I wasn't ever really that close with anyone in secondary school like they would hang out like after school and like drink and things like that and they would come after school and tell all their stories but I wouldn't be there I'd only be there in school... (20, university student).

As we have seen, transitions research has often emphasised the difficulties class and location place on young people making successful transitions. There seems an almost fatalistic link being made in the research, between class and lower socio economic position, geography of depressed areas, gender, and failed transitions due to masculine cultures, which emphasise being tough over education and performance at

school (Willis, 1977). In the case of Peggy she was surrounded by young people that lived in the same geographical area. However her parents decision to move her from this space, in addition to her agreement with this, enabled her to avoid the possible consequences of low employment and social problems; which are common in the research of McDowell and Valentine (McDowell, 2000, 2002, Valentine, 2003) for example. Findings from participants therefore support that:

Many of the uncertainties, shifts, tensions, and overlapping of interests that young people are experiencing in their daily lives can only be revealed and understood by letting them identify for the researcher what is really important for them, and what sense they are making for themselves of the risks and dilemmas in their lives (Wyn and Woodman, 2006: 155).

Arguably the documented racism against Chinese people in Britain could be a reason young people strive so hard to educate themselves. For example the reports by Adamson et al (2005a, 2009) and Chan et al (2004) suggest that there are many hidden hardships facing Chinese people, which centre around racism in employment, as well as ignorance of the populations needs, particularly for elder members whom may not speak English or be aware of social entitlements. As noted in Parker's (1995, 2000) work on racism in the takeaway space, as well as Britain itself, suggested that young British Chinese were also the victims of racism and ignorance, and this experience growing up, in the 'habitus', affected them. In this study I questioned young people's transitions, and therefore did not directly question them on racism, and the associated difficulties. However as we have seen already the atmosphere of inequity between those of Chinese origin, and some established British residents came through in interviews, despite it not being raised directly. Awareness of their parents' marginal economic position in catering work could be one reason young British Chinese strove to do well and thought education was the best way to make it through. In one rare instance Peggy did describe her school as having problems with racism:

Peggy: ...I was like the only Asian there so, and since it was the roughest school I think a lot of the people were like of a lower class so there was quite a lot of racial abuse there... (20, university student).

Here she suggests that class (positioning herself as not a member of this class as well) was partially to blame for attitudes of racism. Peggy believed that her parents' decision to keep her at home during evenings meant she was protected from some abuse at

school. Avoiding contact with those whom were 'rough' also positioned this group of people as separate and other, much in the same way young Chinese might feel their family experiences, as well as their ethnic background, marked them as different. Parker and Archer and Francis (Parker, 1995, Archer and Francis, 2007) suggest that racist attitudes to Chinese people might cause problems for them at home, work, and in schools. Less directly, racism could be observed as inequality in the employment of parents or perhaps, as suggested in chapter two, in the education sector, which does not inform about China or Chinese issues; and therefore parents make use of complementary schooling (2005a, 2005b, 2009).

6.2 - 6 University

Despite having a positive attitude towards education, young British Chinese also face the growing complexity around entry into the university system. Baker and Brown (2007) have found that the systems surrounding university entry in the UK can be hard to navigate, even for parents and students who come from families who have lived in the UK; as 'The establishment of the post-1992 universities, the publication of university league tables and the ability of a variety of other institutions to now offer degree courses has led to a variety of choice for potential degree students' (Baker and Brown, 2007: 378). Discourses around a hierarchy of university and post school options were noted and Baker and Brown (2007) draw on Bourdieu's (2010) notion of 'doxa', a term describing the unwritten rules of social engagement, to explain how certain, often middle class parents and pupils, were much better placed to take advantage of further education options. Whilst then 'for the middle class parent, their investment in a 'good education' brings with it an implicit assumption that providing the 'better' start, demands a reciprocity on the part of the child. It is assumed by the family that the young person will work hard in school and succeed' (Pugsley, 1998: 76), working class parents had 'an inability to engage with the process of institutional choice. The parents feel that they are out of their depth, that this is an alien environment and one in which their perceived incompetence will hamper rather than facilitate the progress of their child. In consequence they have devolved the responsibility of researching higher education processes to the child' (Pugsley, 1998: 80). This difference between those of a working class background and those of a middle class background manifested in a difference in attitude towards the process of applying to higher education, perhaps

with middle class families expectant and well informed, and working class parents unprepared and apprehensive.

How then might these underlying structures and unwritten rules surrounding the university system affect young British Chinese? Like the working class families in Pugsley's (1998) research parents, who did not know about the education systems tended to devolve decision to their children, in part, as they were often unaware of the application process. However a significant difference was that they, alongside being unaware, tended to suggest to their children that they choose 'safe' subjects, such as medicine and rely on a 'traditional' understanding of university rankings and education provision:

Flo: Uhh, I don't really know it's just, well I heard Newcastle's the more red brick and then Northumbria's the more modern polytechnic so Newcastle's more of a specialist, Newcastle's better for English language than Northumbria (16, sixth form student).

There was a split between young people with professional parents, who might be able to understand the systems around application from personal experience, and those from so called 'non-traditional' backgrounds, who had no or little, experience of family staying on at school. As 'universities in their advertising promote themselves as 'leading', 'excellent', 'quality' or, even more demotically, offering a 'brilliant student lifestyle' (Baker and Brown, 2007: 380), arguably applying a lens of tradition to university choices allows the parents of young British Chinese (of any background) to avoid making a potential 'mistake' in choice of university.

Experiences of university choice then overlap, between those identified amongst white working class, and white middle class students in the UK (Baker and Brown, 2007, Pugsley, 1998). Another way in which overlap occurred was in the discourses around staying local some participants expressed:

John: The decision was, erm, yes. I mean I did want to stay local, but I did also apply for like Edinburgh (yeah) and places like that but obviously my parents thought that, if you can, if you've got the...the course here you know, you might as well just stay here then and just live at home (24, working parent's takeaway).

Peggy: Erm well we had choices but Newcastle and Northumbria were always my top choices only because I wanted to stay at home, well my parents persuaded me to stay as well... (20, university student).

Financial grounds tended to be cited for parents suggesting the young people stayed local, though if we consider the input parents have on their children, as discussed in the previous chapters, it is arguable that keeping young people close and within the family is also a strong part of staying local. We have seen, for example in John's case, that he had worked for his parents in their takeaway, and by staying close he would be able to continue to support them in this way. Additionally John's church community remained nearby and, as it was a Chinese congregation, with migrant links to his family, this was also a positive to staying at home. As we saw in the last chapter Peggy's responsibilities with looking after her brother were able to continue through university, staying local then meant she continued to contribute to the family in this way. There was a balance to be struck for some participants, between family and education. If parents perceived the local university to be good enough then young people might be convinced to stay on there after school. The transitions young British Chinese ended up making from school to university would then cut across class and agency lines. Macdonald has argued that:

[O]pportunities in youth and final destinations in adulthood are still strongly influenced by an individual's original location in the class structure, despite the fact that the risks and uncertainties of restructured transitions tend to engender a greater sense of individual autonomy (MacDonald et al., 2005: 874-5).

The participants in this study however were often working towards escaping class and locational boundaries, individual autonomy was less important than parental influence and the influence of the family environment. Whilst in Pugsley's (1998) study, working class and middle class parents framed their understanding of the use of university in different ways:

In the working class families in my study, parents were unaware of, or unconcerned about, the ranking of universities. What did concern them was that their child should go to a local university, in order to 'keep close' (Pugsley, 1998: 82).

In contrast, the middle class families demonstrate an appreciation of the advantage of institutional status rather than proximity to home. They also regard

moving away from home as the ideal way for young people to gain psychological, economic and social independence (Pugsley, 1998: 83).

The parents of young British Chinese might mix both of these discourses, understanding as implicit that university might allow their children to gain important social and qualification advantages, but sometimes too being constrained by finances. Although there was agreement over the importance of education, there were challenges over pressure to perform, strains on relationships with others and, though less discussed in the interviews, there was discussion on racism in schools. Exploration of these themes demonstrates that there is more to consider than the directions young people are going, transitions are made up of influences ‘emanating from home, from school and from wider society’ (Valentine, 2000: 258). Vitally, it is the support of parents within this transitional period from school to university which makes the difference between British Chinese accounts in this study and those indicated by authors like Macdonald who tend to focus on white working class experiences (Francis and Archer, 2005a, Francis et al., 2009). Unlike the young people in Baker and Brown’s (2007) work, participants did not seem to have the feeling of alienation produced by some campus visits: ‘terrified’ and ‘intimidated’ at interviews, they noticed other students ‘with money’ and they felt like ‘yokels’, yet they also described a gradual mastery of the new identity’ (Baker and Brown, 2007: 389).

Some authors have suggested that these differences, hybrid and difficult to essentialise experiences, might be better captured by breaking down the experiences of young people. These broken down experiences perhaps focus on critical moments, these “Critical moments’ provide a link between the theoretical understanding of ‘fateful moments’ and empirical accounts’ (Thomson et al., 2002: 351). Or perhaps:

In seeking an open ended-future, one is not required to affirm that misnomer, “free will”, but to acknowledge the capacity of any future eruption, any event, any reading, to rewrite, resignify, reframe the present, to accept the role that the accidental, chance, or the undetermined plays in the unfolding of time (Grosz, 1990: 18).

Such a conception gives priority to epiphanies in young people’s lives. In this study there were such events which we could point to, which affected transitions in education, for example being moved to a different school, or perhaps being prevented

from hanging out with other young people after school. It was it seemed parent and family discourses, which prioritised education and the future in work which was not so segregated economically, rather than specific critical events which propelled young British Chinese through their period in education.

We might otherwise believe that having made these decisions for their young people, Chinese families have a perfect model for achieving successful transitions. However this does not mean that the participants experienced their time in education as easy, despite them having to achieve good grades in sixth form to pass on to university:

John: ...it was a tough time though and it, it was quite hard, it wasn't like, going to a lecture, listen and then go home, you know it was like, you go to a seminar, you go through translations and then you get more for next week... (24, university student).

Here John notes the pressures placed on him at university, the regulation of time and the workloads associated with many of the degrees participants chose tended to result in similar stories. However by choosing a more work heavy degree, perhaps medicine, science, engineering or law participants offset worries about finding work later. Experiences such as John's refute the notion that young Chinese people are 'boffins' and somehow naturally more intelligent than others (Francis and Archer, 2005a, Francis et al., 2008). In fact the pressures of making successful transitions through school and, on to university, could impact upon the young people's relationships with others as Edith and Kat said:

Edith: ...I think it was a lot of moving around and you could never quite get settled where you were, you had to just, you weren't really, like you couldn't make friends properly because you'd probably lose contact with them... (17, sixth form student).

Kat: Erm, if it's like, to be honest all I do is work... (20, university student).

Edith's family experienced upheaval when her parents divorced and she also had the experience of moving school a few times when younger. The effect was similar to that on David and Peggy in that she felt that friendships were hard to sustain at this time. Edith's experience illustrates well why young people are:

[N]ot a homogenous, discrete or bounded category but rather varies according to time and place, being ascribed and proclaimed, lost or gained, through the aging process and a variety of personal decisions and life events (Langevang, 2007: 269).

Langevang goes on to argue that lack of appreciating these differences in young peoples' lives:

[H]as hampered a holistic understanding of the economic, social and cultural lives of young people and the changing situation that characterises their environments (Langevang, 2007: 268).

In the case of young British Chinese we should therefore appreciate the personal impacts a transition model which is led by parents might have. As Edith says her parent's decisions impacted upon her ability to make friends. In Kat's case adherence to education as her main priority at school and university led her to observe that she only worked, and in this she placed herself in opposition to 'other' students, who may go out at night more often, or be seen to enjoy life more openly.

6.2 -7 Futures

Participants came to construct education as valuable because it might allow them to have choice in employment as adults:

Annie: ...I think going to uni also opens up more kind of, open up the job market really, and have more things I can do. And more things that I'll probably enjoy doing rather than running around on my feet in retail... (21, university student).

John: And it was only when I got to university that I thought, you know, maybe I can get a job relating to languages, maybe like international business, yeah so that's why I studied international business with languages... (24, working parent's takeaway).

Here Annie and John convey their belief that entry into university would get them work afterwards. There is then faith in the transition through education that it will allow them to challenge the experiences of their parents.

So far I have shown that British Chinese people in this study valued education and projected themselves forward on quite linear paths. Parents were influential in the belief and success of these transitions through education and the driving discourse

here was one of aspiration, either to go beyond what parents had or match their achievements. As a reflection of the sample interviewed these understandings do not reveal experiences beyond completion of transitions through education.

Participants tended to frame education as a route to providing them with a job. Education was constructed as being 'good' for the reason that it would provide the young people a way to meet their own and parents' desires for success. When asked in detail about their hopes for the future I tended to find a mixture of responses, some of the young people seemed quite sure of their futures, whilst others were less so. This sense of the future did not necessarily come down to the age of participants, which might be surprising as university degrees might indicate a more direct link to certain jobs. Arguably it was a combination of the young people's own experiences, as well as their home environment, which focused their thoughts for the future. Quite typical were responses such as:

David: Well I'd like to see myself actually being into a job already paying off my debts students debts and basically erm, working hard, rolling in the money and hopefully I'll buy myself a couple of houses, couple of nice cars and that's about it really (19, university student).

Harriet: [N]ot bored out of my mind and erm good enough paying for me to be able to, you know have comfortable living conditions, maybe start having...a house or something... (18, university student).

Both David and Harriet spoke of futures in which they would have financial reward, or be comfortably off. These non-specific hopes might seem mundane though a more complex picture emerged through interviews (Kraftl, 2008: 82). David was working towards completion of his degree in a medically related subject, his future was shaped by a similar set of background and beliefs to other participants, his family had worked in catering and he saw education as a route forward. David was however inspired by his brothers' success in education beyond, and in addition, to his family background. Harriet came from a similar background in catering, but was less decided on what she would do after studying. She did believe though that education would bring her a better future. The sense I had was that older participants combined their parents' influence that education would lead to a better future, with their own experiences as

they got older; this challenges the notion that parents simply dictated their views to children.

Other participants did express a stronger sense of what the future held, for example Mandy was thinking about working in Hong Kong and Annie planned further study:

Mandy: Yeah, I was planning on living at home probably until I graduate then I was hoping to maybe get a job in Hong Kong, then move abroad (20, university student).

Annie: Erm, hopefully in a job that's, that's the main thing, but probably further study... (21, university student).

Earlier I tried to show that parents and family influenced the young people's transitions through education. Participant's experiences were structured by their parents but they also had 'aspirations for their own future [that] are not simply a carbon copy...' (Pimlott-Wilson, 2011: 115). Appreciation of the differences in young people's aspirations, such as Mandy and Annie's examples, are further evidence to support hybrid conceptions of Chinese experiences (Ang, 1993, 1998, 2001). Young people's experiences in this project bridged the gap between linear transitions conceptions, and the realities around this; experiences were fuzzy and blurred.

We might contextualise British Chinese understandings and hopes for the future within broader UK debates on education. As Brown argues the current philosophy, where 'higher education and professional careers are promoted at the expense of broader ambitions related to 'quality of life'' (Brown, 2011: 13), may tend to see middle class values of education, and work as targets to be met. In addition Brown, Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson (2011: 91) have commented that aspiration raising tends to connect middle class values to success, without valuing the backgrounds of working class young people. In the case of young British Chinese people in this study, the aims of the UK government to inspire young people towards aspiration filled transitions, fits well with what their family and personal experiences often teach them. For young British Chinese there was not the same issue as for white working class families, which might have negative aspirations towards work due to their parents own situation. Participants in this study tended to locate their identity within their parents migrant experience, defining Chineseness as having an attitude to doing better in future in

terms of employment. Thereby the experiences of many participants in this study matched the attitudes of the current UK education system quite well on paper, but through interviews we could see they were founded on a specific and different set of backgrounds.

Only a small number of participants interviewed had completed the transition from school to work. One was Eric (twenty-four) and the other John (twenty-five). Neither Eric nor John were in full time work after education in the local area and both continued to work for their parent's in their takeaways after completing their degree.

John: ...maybe in future, maybe they'll pass the business to me and, maybe I'll continue with that business. But I'm not, I'm not really sure yet (24, university student).

From the interviews with Eric and John it was clear though that their family context, and their links with community in the local area, made it difficult for them to consider leaving the area in the short term. In these examples the participants might not be seen to make the eventual transition from education to work, despite a family background which supported this. However the interviews revealed that rather than considering themselves to have failed to make the transition, they were able to rely on their parents continued support, as well as making the possible choice in John's case of continuing to work at the takeaway longer term. In the case of other participants though, very different experiences might come about after graduation, of which we cannot specifically speak from this set of participants.

6.3 Conclusions

In this chapter I have looked more directly at the nature of youth educational transitions. The findings regarding young British Chinese and youth transitions suggest that a combination of factors has led to participants in this study having a positive outlook towards education, both at school and beyond. Previous studies, particularly those with young working class men, have suggested that the current educational system favours those from middle class backgrounds, who have been seen to prioritise education as important for their future. In contrast young working class people have been shown to be victims of their own social situation, perhaps unprepared for school,

discouraged by their peers or family and hopeful of finding work after school. Recent studies have indicated though that the hope of finding work without good education is largely misplaced, especially in the area local to this study – Tyneside. Young British Chinese have in recent studies been found to take advantage of the way in which the education system functions – with a focus on grades and examination scores, a result of this has been confirmation in studies with young British Chinese that they do indeed value, prioritise, and achieve at school level (Francis and Archer, 2005a, Office for National Statistics, 2006a).

Behind the achievements of young British Chinese lay a set of social causes and influences. Whilst the occupational background of many British Chinese families might suggest their classification as working class, there have not been found to be similar attitudes towards youth transitions when compared to white working class youth. Indeed the evidence from this study is congruent with that from others who have looked at both the young British Chinese and other ‘successful’ ethnic minorities in the UK (Khattab, 2009, Modood and Acland, 1998). Whilst commentators have argued that the contemporary world of work requires management of risk and that transitions are likely to be fragmented and elongated (Hollands, 1990), young British Chinese in this study combined awareness of their parents' experience as migrants, with the accompanied struggles to fit in and work in the UK, to justify their faith in education as the best route to a stable future.

This chapter has demonstrated therefore that the effect of the experiences primarily in the first findings chapter (chapter four) has been to justify education as a way to both avoid similar experiences in catering, or if not reliant on catering for work, find work as professionals in future. Interesting are the somewhat similar transitions being followed, and that backgrounds of parents were largely not shaping similar paths for the young people, which tended to contrast, being laid out through education and ultimately higher education. It is notable that this sample of participants was drawn from sixth forms and universities, so this has shaped the views of participants. Nevertheless the main contribution of participants' own accounts has been to demonstrate that success in education often runs parallel with other experiences of transition, such as helping parents in catering, or as we will see in the coming section giving up free time.

Although this study has not been able to comment on the post-education phase of young people's transitions, the experiences of the smaller number of young people at the older end of the age bracket does suggest some caution about linking education to the expectation of work. In addition other studies of the British Chinese have not focused on those experiences after school, which this study does contribute to.

Chapter 7 Leisure

This chapter serves to integrate British Chinese young people's leisure experiences into the current debate on Chinese in Britain, it also contributes to existing leisure studies which tend not to focus on British Chinese youth.

The chapter is divided into three sections. Initially I discuss youth leisure, noting how there has been a general shift from leisure as resistance, towards more nuanced understandings. This review of the debates around youth leisure throws up various questions for study with young British Chinese. For example, what are their experiences of leisure? Do certain factors such as ethnicity and identity shape choices or aversions? And if so what might this mean for the future research in the area? The answers to these questions can be found in the latter two parts of the chapter; a section on how childhood leisure was experienced, and then a look at the transition away from childhood, principally when at university, and leisure practices which have emerged there.

7.1 Youth and leisure, relevant debates

Looking back at work on young people and experiences of leisure a distinct pattern can be detected, shifts in focus between accounts of leisure as 'resistance' and as creation and exuberance. Perhaps these shifting debates, which emphasise in differing degrees the way leisure is a response to the politics of everyday life, or merely that time in which we enact dreams of escapism, can never settle on one or the other. MacDonald and Shildrick's (2007) work suggests that there is a necessity for researchers to understand the political effects on young people's lives. They do note though that there can be a tendency at times to view transitions as the more important area for research, in particular because transitions research has so often focused on issues around school and work, seen as essential by the structures of the state for its continuance and success:

The current state of play in youth research in Britain can be characterised therefore as one that remains divided between a 'mainstream' transitions approach (that *largely* ignores issues of leisure, youth culture and identity) and a

more 'marginal' ...youth cultural studies tradition (MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007: 340).

As we may ourselves, not so long ago recall, experiences of youth are often not shaped by constant thoughts about our 'next step' in life, and a great deal of time may be spent at 'play'. If the more formal term 'leisure' attempts to capture a broader spectrum of experiences of play, not just those of children but young adults as well, then perhaps it too reveals the imposition of adult language and perspective on what play and leisure is, something Evans has called to change:

I wonder if there is scope for a 'youthful' geography that engages with young people's experiences around issues of 'fun', exuberance, and the excitement of new opportunities and possibilities. This is not to essentialise young people, or reinforce constructions of young people along these lines, but I wonder whether the value of these qualities has been lost in the deconstruction of youth and childhood (Evans, 2008: 1675).

Previously I noted how recent youth researchers have begun to explore the experiences of young people. Some of these researchers have noted the diversity of experiences of youth, in particular that the category itself is often interpreted broadly (Hopkins, 2006a, Valentine, 2003); often being sixteen to twenty five, but sometimes overlapping with younger ages as well. In many studies the findings may be applicable across age boundaries, principally because experiences of youth and childhood may not change at specific times.

Furlong and Cartmel (1997) describe how previous youth researchers have focused on youth subcultures such as 'mods' and 'rockers' of the 1970s. The reasons for these subcultures were, either as acts of resistance to adult ways of being, and also as a result of changed societal factors such as having free time and more spending power (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). At the height of these investigations, Griffin commented that:

The radical analyses of most youth cultural and subcultural theorists during the 1970s represented young white, heterosexual, working-class men in particular as oppressed, marginalized and in resistance against the social and economic conditions (Griffin, 2001: 150).

Since the 1970s there has been an opening up of sorts around youth leisure, in particular it is not just young men but also women featured in research. At the same time a significant body of work continues to focus on young men, suggesting that experiences of alienation continue to shape practices of leisure for some in the UK (McDowell, 2000, Nayak, 2006, Nayak and Kehily, 2008). Much of the recent work on youth and leisure is more nuanced in its portrayals of young people, switching variously from single 'portraits', to larger studies and assessments of youth activities. For example, in a closer look at the intertwining of leisure practices for his participant 'Helena', Nayak (Nayak, 2003a, Craig and Dyson, 2008: chapter 13) illustrates the possibilities for complex meanings within leisure. Helena is a white young woman of Norwegian origin, yet she strongly identifies with black culture and Chinese culture, and was living in Newcastle upon Tyne at the time of interview:

By using her body as a type of 'corporeal canvas', Helena could express a multicultural identity invoked through belly-button piercing and tattooing. 'I've got a Chinese tattoo on us,' she revealed (Nayak, 2003a: 32).

A primary way in which Helena is able to stage the precarious interplay between race and class is through the recognition of mutual understandings of oppression. This became evident when Helena discussed her identifications with hip-hop music, a genre she depicted as the style of the "underclass" (Nayak in Craig and Dyson, 2008: 17).

A surface glance at Helena on the streets of Newcastle may not reveal the personal politics and choice, which has gone into herself expressions displayed openly on her body. Whilst some young people are able to express themselves in the ways Helena does, such open displays can be felt to transgress the boundaries of taste and acceptability others hold. In a similar vein to the criticism of post-modern notions, of transitions being free flowing and all about 'choice biographies', youth leisure is rarely completely unfettered by relations of power. In their study of a small community in New Zealand for example, Panelli et al (2002) noted divisions in the community towards certain groups of young people. Skateboarders in particular were seen as pests, with signs and verbal rebukes used to try and reject them from various spaces; 'in any one 'community' the heterogeneity of youth may mean that inclusion and exclusion are complex, diverse and sometimes simultaneous social processes' (Panelli et al., 2002: 124). As further example if we return to look at Newcastle, in Alexander's

(2008) study of the Fenham area of the city, the author found that young people might refuse the controls placed upon them by, in this case, adult others:

[A]fter a CCTV camera was installed in the school. The young men responded to this by ignoring the camera, and continuing to behave as they normally would in full view of the camera. They describe how they have made this urban space their own – refusing to move on even when local police patrolled the area. In a similar demonstration of ‘boldness’ the young women have taken to gathering at a local bus stop, which is well lit in the evenings, and thus they feel it to be a “safe space”. They speak about this part of the neighbourhood in territorial terms – “nee one would bother us there!” – and they describe how they have used graffiti to mark out the area as their own (Alexander, 2008: 190).

Whilst some might rebuke the actions of Alexander’s (2008) young people, for hanging around the streets or spraying graffiti, the claiming of these spaces can paradoxically be about finding space of their own, even a response to feelings of fear - despite them often generating it as well. Green and Singleton (2006) make the observation that space is itself *in* transition, finding at night that some ‘girls expressed fear and anxiety about what might happen to them in outside spaces, especially in the evenings, which they considered to be their time for leisure. They linked this fear with perceptions of ‘dangerous men’, figures characterized as ‘men out of control’ (Green and Singleton, 2006: 860). During the day those same streets may not be viewed in the same way.

Massey’s (1994, 1998) work has been key in determining that space is complex, through the possibilities in a globalising world for a range of cultural influences, as well as different subject positions around class and gender. In a piece reflecting on the influx of technology and brands into a remote Mexican village, Massey (1998) observed:

The youngest generations of diaspora societies wrestle constantly to find an enabling interlocking of the different ‘cultures’ in which they find themselves: it is a struggle indeed to build another, different - hybrid - culture. And yet the evidence seems to be that all youth cultures - and not just those more obvious cases such as the children of diasporas - are hybrid cultures. All of them involve active importation, adaptation and adoption (Massey, 1998: 122-123).

I also feel Matthew’s (1995) definition of culture builds on Massey’s (1998) observation:

Culture is the way in which individuals handle the raw material of their social and material existence and the 'codes' through which meaning is constructed, conveyed, and understood (Clarke et al., 1976). Accordingly, 'cultures are "maps of meaning" through which the world is made intelligible' (Jackson, 1989: 2). This leads not only to a world view or a 'way of seeing', but also to common patterns of behaviour which often shapes how individuals come into contact with everyday places (Matthews, 1995: 285).

Calls for an appreciation of young people's view of the world (Matthews, 1995) are further extended through the need to take into account the cultural backgrounds of others (ethnicity) as well as the cultural influences operating through modernity and globalisation (transnational cultural influences). I have already illustrated for example how young British Chinese identity draws from a somewhat hybrid, amalgam of experiences and parental background in shaping notions of culture and identity. In particular I have been demonstrating that culture can often be ambivalent, in both its interpretation and application, by individuals. Whilst Matthews et al (2000a) later argue that '[w]e liken young people on the street to Bhabha's notion of 'the oppressed', a group caught between two cultures, yet constantly asserting their right to autonomy and independence' (2000a: 282), I have suggested that similar work questioning the homogeneity of culture and ethnicity might be interpreted as destabilising any notion of either oppressed or un-oppressed.

In particular the investigations into the influence of alcohol on youth leisure present us with the opportunity to challenge established views of young people, leisure and excess. Hollands (2003: 69) has investigated the night time economy and the place of young people within it. Hollands (2003) argues that modern drinking practices amongst the young are the result of a confluence of changes in youth experience; encompassing a diversity of drinks and spaces to partake in them, increasing numbers of women, and the financial capital to accompany all night revelling. Shildrick and MacDonald (2006) have argued that research all too often focuses on the extremes of youth leisure. In particular suggesting that:

[T]he post-subcultural equation of youth culture with the stylistic exploits of minority music/ dance 'scenes' and 'neo-tribes' at the expense of the cultural lives and leisure activities of the 'ordinary' majority...As a consequence, youth culture research lays itself open to accusations of pointlessness and its relevance

to youth studies and sociology more generally comes into question (Shildrick and MacDonald, 2006: 128).

Whilst this may be true for some researchers, which do perhaps over-focus on the idea of tribes of young people, such as 'Goths' or 'ravers' for example, Hollands (2003) has attempted to ground his study though acceptance that 'the main focus for the development of downtown nightlife is a more 'mainstream' form which exploits existing social cleavages...' (Hollands and Chatterton, 2003: 70). In essence then those most obvious examples of popular youth leisure, can at the same time obscure the continuance of social inequity, often which can be traced back to class. This observation about the continued prevalence of class again chimes with the previous discussion on educational transitions, in which schools and education policy was sometimes shown to conflict with the values of working class youth in certain localities (MacDonald et al., 2005, MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007, Nayak, 2006).

Hollands (2003: 74, 78), has also suggested that the night time spaces, such as clubs, may serve to regulate and homogenise experiences of leisure. This was problematic for the young people in Winlow and Hall's (2009) research into friend and peer networks, and the effect of fragmented work practices (call centres) and leisure time. As example I include this assessment of a young woman's experience:

If she is to maintain her friendships, she cannot fail to be a regular participant in the weekly jaunt along the local drinking strip. If she does not or cannot keep up with appearances and comply with the double-bind demand to 'fit in and stick out' in an acceptable manner, she runs the risk of being jettisoned from her friendship network (Winlow and Hall, 2009: 95).

However beyond, and also within these positions of class and youth, are still more facets of experience. Nairn et al (2006) have looked at the practices of non-drinkers, finding that they often construct alternative norms when out with friends who are drinkers, perhaps framing their actions as keeping 'healthy' or 'sporty', or 'passing' as a drinker through holding the same drink all night (Nairn et al., 2006: 289). In addition notions of the abject were apparent in reinforcing non-drinking attitudes - '[m]any of our participants, therefore, took up roles of being carers and/or drivers for drinking peers. While being the non-drinking driver conferred some status, being the carer often reinforced our participants' decisions not to drink as they witnessed the abject

bodies of their drinking peers' (Nairn et al., 2006: 298). Experiences of leisure then are a matter of perspective. Some such as James (2001) have found that leisure need not be an overt or spectacular show, as those in the 'neo-tribes' of the night time economy might suggest. Girls for example might make use of the bedroom space to explore aspects of their identity, through talking to friends online or on the phone, creating a space of their own away from parents and others whom might criticise them in public spaces (James, 2001). Indeed the fact that girls might make more use of the bedroom space is a finding in itself, revealing a marked inequality in access to outside spaces which is gendered.

7.2 Recollections of leisure, young British Chinese leisure

The combination of diaspora and cultural studies, transitions, and leisure research presents a strong platform for investigating what leisure practices young British Chinese engage in. Rarely have young British Chinese people's leisure been looked at, Parker's (1998) work is a notable exception here. Perhaps this suggests there is little to say, little distinct about British Chinese youth and their leisure practices? Whilst there have been the problems associated with crime, or triadism (Francis and Archer, 2005b, Parker, 2000), such experiences may be either an artefact of the past or rare occurrences, especially as many British Chinese families do not live in high mono-ethnic concentrations. Otherwise, unlike the formations of 'new' ethnicities Stuart Hall (1992) spoke of, and even Paul Gilroy (1996), in his reformation of the significance of Blackness, young British Chinese have perhaps been seen to have little to offer, or are simply a minority in minorities, not adding much to create their 'own' ethnically based leisure cultures.

Must all ethnic groups form their own cultures though? I prefer to offer the interpretation that there is both a growing youth culture for British Chinese in the UK, and simultaneously a lack of creation of such a formation. The reason I offer this perhaps divided analysis is that it sometimes seems certain groups are attempting to create a unified British Chinese identity based in youth culture (See Parker and Song's findings, 2006a, 2006b, 2007), yet many remain uninterested or detached from such formations. This seemed true for the majority in this study.

My assessment does not mean that young British Chinese are devoid or lacking culture. Leisure time was reported to be used in a variety of ways, some of which sought to connect young people with their sense of Chinese, or broadly 'Asian', identities. We have for example already seen how the majority of participants had some experience of Chinese language learning, this too provided some with the knowledge to expand and explore their identities as Chinese individuals, perhaps through watching Chinese media or listening to Chinese music. Alongside what we might view from the outside as Chinese inflected leisure, were activities such as those already discussed, enjoying the night time economy, shopping, spending time in bedrooms or with friends. I want to be clear too that the age differences between participants played a quite significant part in the transitions through and within various leisure practices and experiences. It was rare to find specific identifications because of these transitions being made, such as 'neo tribes' (Hollands and Chatterton, 2003). Divorcing leisure practices from the other areas of young people's lives I feel gives a false impression of the contexts within which such activities are engaged in. It is for this reason that leisure only makes up a part of this thesis, and is preceded by in-depth discussions on background and aspirations, which I believe demonstrate the young people were very much in touch with their heritages and sense of self, though they were making their way through this over time.

I asked participants to tell me about their free time and what they did in it. The responses were congruent with the observations of Matthews (2000a, 2000b) and Valentine (2003, 2004), that young people are often constrained in their leisure choices during their upbringing. These constraints may be for a variety of reasons, and their existence is not necessarily negative, though Matthews et al (1999, 2000a) in particular does highlight questions of social justice and power inequality. Various structural factors contributed to the shaping of leisure time during childhood and later teenage years. Firstly we have the family, we have already seen that a significant number of participants had responsibilities at home; working in the takeaway or looking after siblings for example. Secondly, in addition to the responsibilities at home, young people were also influenced by a lack of funds and a lack of time outside school, in this sense they lacked the free time in which to engage in leisure and also the means. Third the expectation that young people would be in education for most of their time,

and often in Chinese school for several hours on a Sunday, also shaped the amount of free time young people had during this time.

Surrounding these three factors were a set of powerful discourses, which we have already encountered. Aspiration to do well in school could partially be a result of seeing parents work hard in catering and/or their sacrifices made to find work in the UK. Attitudes to free time might then be shaped through the lens of responsibility to parents both in the short and long term. Much as in Archer and Francis's work (2005a) Chinese parents tended to value education above all else, these views were also reinforced through possible fears about their children's performance and safety combined into one. Specific to Newcastle areas such as Fenham (Alexander, 2008) and groups such as 'charvers' (Nayak, 2006) have safety assumptions about attached to them. Young people in this study indicated that at times their whereabouts were highly regulated (see Annie's experience in chapter four) parents were using notions of 'belonging, security, and surveillance' (Hashimoto and Ikels, 2005: 437) in this instance. For other young people, particularly boys, (see Eric and David's accounts in the educational transitions chapter) parents might move them away from other groups of young people they feel might harm their educational chances, this could mean a change of school and loss of established peer groups. In the discussion on family we also saw how recent presentations of some Chinese mothers as 'Tiger mom's' (Chua, 2011) suggest some parents also subscribe to the view that by entering their children into certain activities they can gain attributes and skills which might improve their chances for work and education. For Bourdieu (2010) the addition of skills and understandings of taste might relate either to maintaining in a person their ways of 'being' with others of a similar class or perhaps help gain entry into other classes, 'become' part of them. Giving the young people activities to do further ensured that they would make 'good' use of their time if it was not spend on education or working for parents in catering. Bourdieu's comments on the use of hobbies to add cultural capital are useful here in interpreting this practice (Bourdieu, 2010: 68). I could therefore identify some participants clearly experiencing this influence from parents to make use of their free time outside school, to learn instruments. Joan's account was perhaps the most 'ideal' example; she spent a considerable time outside of school learning music:

Joan: ...well I do a lot of music in band, outside of school I've been playing piano and singing since I was five and a half about, erm and so I'm in like orchestra and choirs and everything in school (17, sixth form student).

However such idealised examples were rare. Edith for example recounts her experience of learning musical instruments when younger:

Edith: I used to play the violin but I don't play anymore because I've got like, it was also one of those things that I also had to take a lot of time to do because you have like gradings and things like that and I stopped doing it when I was in year 11, but I'd carried, I'd done it since year seven and I was rubbish at it! (17, sixth form student).

Both participants learned a classical instrument, this as Bourdieu (1996, 2010) comments might give them access to certain taste appreciations, they come to see the value of classical music, can have a conversation about it, they can play it for friends and guests. The act of playing music both removes young people from the possibility of having 'free time' which may equate to 'nothing time' or 'wasted time' and further gives parents the possibility to structure the young peoples' time within and outside the lessons (as we have seen with Amy Chua).

On the other hand we have Edith's admission that she was not very good at the violin and ended up giving it up. For Joan, although she continued to play, when I asked her if she would like to make a career of music she referred to her parents advice that it would be hard to make a career out of it, that most likely she would only be able to 'teach' music. Here I think the point of learning music is made clearer, participants did not necessarily come to play instruments in their free time as a leisure activity, parents instructed them or initiated their learning (Bourdieu, 1996). Over time the young people may give up learning the instrument or carry on privately once entering education; however the main reason for beginning was that parents could shape the young people's taste perceptions, as well as regulate free time into learning time. In the same way that attendance at Chinese school might pass on a certain understanding of Chineseness, based probably on Cantonese and various cultural elements, some after school activities were expected to give a sense of western culture and ways of being (Chow, 1997, 1998).

If not music, then physical activities such as dance, or sports, might be practiced in a similar way to musical instruments. Differently to music, which arguably followed a western middle class taste sensibility, as Bourdieu (2010) has described, these physical activities might tread the line between cultural instruction and learning to acquire a middle class sense of cultural value. Flo for example talked of doing dance competitions when younger, dance might be constructed here as a feminine or female activity which instead of learning music would give a girl an appreciation of movement, grace, watching how you move, as well as the extra effects of appreciation for the music played and interactions with other girls and parents whom attended:

Flo: No. Erm, well when I was younger I did dancing competitions, but then I just picked it up as a hobby, like lately, just a weekly sort of class that I just do for fun really and exercise, I went to the gym for fun 'cos I didn't really want to lose weight or anything it was just to go (16, sixth form student).

Similar to Edith we can see that Flo over time became disinterested in the activity and came to take up going to the gym for 'fun' instead. For Kurt it was not dancing but championship chess which took up his free time when younger. The chess sport requires skill, time commitment to learn, Kurt had a coach who travelled with him to competitions and he was successful. Both participants' accounts contain this element of competitiveness which parents may have been using to challenge the young people to challenge themselves and value aspiration.

Kurt: ...earlier on yes like when I was about ten or eleven I was one of the best in the country because I, I practiced quite a lot I played a lot in my spare time but as I grew up it was sort of less popular with just like people around school so I think I just lost interest in it really...Yeah so I still play now and again but as a rule it's generally been pushed away (18, university student).

These experiences raise an interesting challenge to the arguments made by Ang and Hall (Ang, 1998, 2001, Hall, 1992) regarding hybridity. In this project I have tried to show that British Chinese experiences are indeed varied and hybrid to some extent, there are unique migratory histories and practices which have shaped young people's transitions. Ang and Hall (Ang, 1998, 2001, Hall, 1992) have less to say however on the practices of daily life which affect how young people might be influenced and these hybrid experiences come into 'being'. The process of 'becoming' then is not necessarily an innocent one without negotiation. In the activities young people did as children

their parents had chosen to prioritise middle class interests such as piano and classical music, giving young people a broader understanding of these western cultural activities. These middle class cultural experiences might be taken as an example of the changing or erasure of the Chineseness parents might have had when they were young (Chow, 1997, 1998).

When participants were younger, free time was often a limited resource. Use of time needed to be negotiated between young people and parents. The negotiations over time and free time dictated to some extent processes of being and becoming on an everyday scale, which suggest a quite complex relation between the everyday, power relationships between parents and young people and the social setting which may allow or deny freedoms (Brannen and Nilsen, 2002, Grosz, 1990). Brannen and Nilsen (2002) have argued that we might better perceive young people's transitions if we take into account notions of time. Though Brannen and Nilsen (2002) have suggested that there is validity in exploring "moments" which young people are in the process of negotiating, and the ways in which their expectations are shaped by their gender, ethnicity and educational and other resources, for example, related to the social class of their families of origin' (Brannen and Nilsen, 2002: 520), they restrict their analysis to transitions around work and life course, by taking into account leisure practices this notion could be extended further. Likewise Worth (2009) has suggested that without an awareness of the value of time and its place in young peoples' lives we may be '...stuck within a linear or even static understanding of time that focuses on the past. The lack of attention to temporality in much youth geographies work is ironic, as the subfield is rooted in the life course, a concept that is inherently about experiences of time' (Worth, 2009: 1050). The coming together of notions of culture, diaspora and transition in this project is supported by the need to consider time in particular, otherwise how are we to avoid boxing young British Chinese in, keeping them tied to static identities such as 'Chinese' without analysing the changes in interpretation and experience going on.

In response to parental controls young people might seek other spaces in order to gain a space from their parents, for example in research about bedroom cultures there was the possibility for girls to explore musical genres in expressing themselves, as well as

making a safe space away from perceived dangers (Lincoln, 2005, James, 2001). In this study there was some evidence of this, considering the prevalence of media and other interests which might be enjoyed in the home, not challenging parent's hopes for their young people. In Peggy's case for example, which was matched by other participants, it demonstrates the way in which family and parental views might be acted on through keeping young people at home:

Peggy: ...interests and hobbies, well I really like watching dramas mainly Asian dramas, as in East Asian dramas I think that's mainly because I was brought up watching TVB which is a Hong Kong TV channel which has a lot of dramas on, so, when I was younger I was brought up by my aunt because my parents run a takeaway, so it was, my parent's went to, out to work, they would take me over to my aunts house and I'd be with a lot of my other cousins and she would cook dinner and we would just hang out and as kids (20, university student).

In this environment adults supervised the young people whilst parents were working. Rather than spending time outside the home as we find in some accounts of white working class youth, young people in this study might grow up closer to the family and within it (Green and Singleton, 2006, MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007). Alongside the various transitions young people are making, ways they define themselves, may be shaped through their experiences doing activities which might seem otherwise unrelated. We therefore need to consider the agency of the young people in this study more closely. For example, some participants spoke of free time in which they might go to town or 'hang out', possibly with friends from school. As Julia recalls: "in town with, on Friday afternoons, just walking around and just going in all the shops" (17, sixth form student).

These experiences mundane as they may seem can tell us quite a lot about the young people and the differences in family attitudes to free time. We have already seen that free time access could be limited and restricted and that this might mean after school activities for young people. Lack of money might further restrict young people to rather ordinary uses of their free time, for example leading to spending time in the shopping mall (Matthews et al., 2000a). Nevertheless academics have suggested that engaging in leisure time outside, in the visible space of the streets, shops, or other sites, allows young people to demonstrate aspects of their identity and self (Evans, 2008, Green and Singleton, 2006, Lincoln, 2005, Matthews et al., 2000a). For example

in Julia's case being outside might mark her as having less restrictive parents than her peers, the time she spends in town walking around might allow her to socialise with other young people. During this time in town young people might socialise with others, learn about new trends in fashion or what is popular. Parents might define this time socialising as 'doing nothing' and seek to reduce it whilst young people are still at school. Away from the regulatory regimes in the family for example Asian American⁹ youths were shown to experiment with drugs at clubs, forming quite different relationships and priorities than parents from 'traditional' backgrounds might agree with (Hunt et al., 2011). The experiences of alcohol and drug taking are undoubtedly ones parents might seek to prevent as these may disrupt or curtail a successful transition through education and on to work.

Youth researchers have argued that young people are not just automatons or products of the adult world. Matthew's has suggested 'that they may know 'something else'' (Matthews and Limb, 1999: 68) and that this set of experiences and competencies may be significantly different to that of adults. In research with non-Chinese groups of young people we have seen for example explorations of outdoor space such as the park and the street as well as night time spaces, particularly of alcohol (Jayne et al., 2008, Hollands and Chatterton, 2003, Winlow and Hall, 2009). There have been reactions to the young people using these spaces, perhaps constructing them as dangerous or criminal and requiring a response from adults (Pain, 2008).

7.3 The meaning of fun, leisure and its place in transition

Existing research might characterise young people through their practices of music and alcohol consumption (Hollands and Chatterton, 2003, Hunt et al., 2011, Jayne et al., 2008, Winlow and Hall, 2009). Earlier we saw how Macdonald (MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007) worried about the narrow focus of youth cultural research, that the focus has tended to be on 'loud' and somewhat flashy experiences at the cost of the more mundane. I have been conscious of how young people's accounts of leisure might be erased in this work and want to show now that experiences of leisure were important to the young people (Evans, 2008).

⁹ Asian in the American sense, which includes Chinese, Japanese, Korean and other ethnic groups from the South East.

Nevertheless discussion about the young people in the project, as a whole, has tended to focus on issues of constructed identity. In part the focus on construction and process is due to me drawing on the work of Hall (1992) and Ang (2001), both of whom have stressed the need to focus on the experiences which make individuals' identities, to look at being as well as becoming. It can be difficult therefore to balance appreciation of leisure activities, which might seem mundane, giving them emphasis as much as those more lively (and perhaps therefore by implication seemingly meaningful) activities. Indeed those exuberant leisure activities have been ongoing for some time in the UK, the phenomenon of Beatle-mania¹⁰ being an early example:

...being a fan is based on activity that is positive, affirming and overwhelmingly creative; in its heyday the screams of abandonment and adulation expressed by Beatles fans swamped the music to the point where the fans as much the band became the spectacle (Nayak and Kehily, 2008: 146).

In terms of young British Chinese I have identified that many were less likely to be seen as a part of youth culture in the UK. However, appearances are deceptive and participants discussed at times being quite engaged with similar fan-cultures and having a range of interests, hobbies and pastimes. Greater autonomy tended to be found as participants became older, and the responses discussed were clearly shaped by the positioning of participants either still in sixth forms or being at university. Whilst time was still structured to some extent at university, the removal of parents from the daily lives of young people, and the loosening of timetables compared to school, allowed for greater amounts of free time to explore latent, as well as new, leisure experiences. One example of this, by which experiences of transition influenced the leisure activities being explored, was enjoyment of media such as television, films and music. Having grown up with less free time than some of their peers, many participants referenced watching television, specifically TVB and anime. Beyond these identifications with media, which I will demonstrate could form the basis of exploring a Chinese and Asian identity in the UK, there were clearly a range of other non-Chinese or non-culturally specific, interests. I shall take these two broad areas in turn and explore the meanings within them. In particular I seek to highlight the way in which

¹⁰ The Beatles were a very famous English pop-rock band from the 1960s who had a large following, notably amongst young women.

leisure could allow exploration of identity aspects such as ethnicity and gender, which might not be so easily explored in other areas of the young people's lives.

7.3 - 1 TVB (*Television Broadcasts Limited*)

Although Sean had never been to China until recently, the ideology of an imagined China as the homeland was largely developed through the reinforcement of stereotypes in movies, TV, music and also through intergenerational influence throughout his lifecourse (Ngan, 2008a: 89).

In chapter five I drew on Ngan's (2008a) research with Chinese people in Australia. Ngan (2008a) noted that generations after migration, young Chinese might still identify with being Chinese, though that during this time a process of change had occurred and the way in which attachment and meaning to Chineseness came about was different than that for previous generations. Similar to the quote above, young British Chinese may also come into contact with media which influences their identification with China, and aspects of their ethnic identity.

As Verma et al found in 1999 many young British Chinese people had access to Chinese language media in the home "we watch Cantonese videos together because my mother records the Satellite Chinese Channel at night" (Verma et al., 1999: 145). These media, though not analysed heavily at the time, gave (and continue to) young British Chinese an alternative set of narratives and entertainment. Verma's (1999) finding that young Chinese people have a strong association with Asian, specifically Chinese language media was present in participants accounts in this study. Whilst videos are now largely defunct, visual material has migrated to other formats and will be discussed in the next section; though a constant from the 1990s study is TVB (<http://www.tvb.com/>). TVB is a Chinese language channel, or package of channels, which can be received in the UK through a subscription. The channel is Hong Kong based, and airs in Cantonese Chinese, making it also popular in Guangzhou (mainland China, the capital of Guangdong province in the South). Reception of TVB marks an interesting point for departure in discussion, because while politically separated from China mainland, Hong Kong television could still be received by some in the South. Hong Kong television, such a TVB, therefore 'presented and prescribed a pseudo-world for the mainland Chinese audience. This pseudo-world might not be exactly reality, but

it is an approximation of what happens in the Western world' (Fung in Kim, 2008: 92). Awareness of the history of TVB as Hong Kong television is important for this research, it illustrates further the divisions within Chinese populations in the UK and globally. As Fung continues, 'The Hong Kong media are not global media; nor are these Hong Kong-produced television dramas representations of the West. After Hong Kong's hand-over to China, these television dramas are still sites of struggle between the authorities who deliberately imposed on them a Chinese identity, and the locals who defended their own Hong Kong identity...' (Fung in Kim, 2008: 95). As we saw in the chapter on language and identity, identification with Hong Kong, Cantonese Chinese and the specific Chineseness within this region could be important to young British Chinese during their upbringing. Certainly from anecdotal experience those from Hong Kong are likely to identify themselves as 'Hong Kongers'.

If we look at John and Heighley's experiences of watching TVB, for example, this opens up a new space for discussion around media, and the meanings young British Chinese can take from this whilst growing up:

John: ...TVB is, I think they broadcast from London and like the whole of the UK will have it, I mean all the programmes will show in Hong Kong as well but they show it before somehow...but we receive that, like that programme as well (24, working in parent's takeaway).

TVB acted as a common experience for participants. As John describes TVB is a channel which subscribers can watch Chinese language programmes on. Most programmes are in Cantonese and programmes tend to vary between family dramas and documentaries. Heighley for example discussed how Mao Zedong was featured in a documentary and her father made a point about this.

*Heighley: Him! *(Mao Zedong) How he got his...my dad really likes it he's like 'he's a hero' and then it's like every time when we have dinner and you just see him watching it and think 'look' (17, sixth form student).*

In chapter four I noted how language formed part of the way in which participants were able to relate to, understand and create a Chinese identity, and sense of Chineseness (Archer et al., 2009, Francis et al., 2009). TVB came across as an important part of the British Chinese population's way of maintaining links to Hong Kong and

China as well. TVB created a space in between the UK and Hong Kong/China (Bhabha, 1992, 1994). Much like Chinese schools gave a flavour of Chineseness not provided at mainstream school; TVB could provide an alternative set of discourses for Chinese people in Britain. The channel tends to feature dramas about family, as well as news and historical plays and documentaries. The inclusion of TVB in a family's home might be seen as one way in which the gap between parents' language and identities as migrants, and those of young people, can be bridged. The need for example for news from abroad, where relatives may still reside, satisfies parents and allows young people to see and become familiar with places, and famous actors/actresses, abroad.

Not all participants did watch TVB though, there were often mixed and ambivalent relationships with 'Asian media' for example Joan said that she enjoyed reality television alongside programmes like *Friends* popular with non-Chinese young people:

Joan: Friends, one of the many re-runs erm, I don't really use the internet to watch Hong Kong soaps erm I did watch it like once when my dad found a website, but I can't really navigate round that website because I'm not really good at reading Chinese. Erm, I'll watch some Chinese films that we buy from Hong Kong or like at my uncles house or something (17, sixth form student).

Interesting here is how Chinese language media is used to bring together younger and older members of the family around the act of watching Chinese entertainment, as Gilroy (1991) has commented the 'trace' of parent's migrant origins remains. In Verma's (1999) findings the presence of Chinese language programming was important for parents to maintain a comfortable and familiar home environment, keeping up to date with latest news from Hong Kong and abroad, and also current stars and entertainment. Whilst we might locate Chineseness in Britain in the takeaway, as Parker has (1995, 1998, 2000), or even in the Chinese school (Archer et al., 2009, Li, 1994, 2006), a look at the media watching practices of young British Chinese adds to an appreciation of young Chinese, as living on the boundary between their parents notions of Chineseness, and the young people's ambivalent experiences. The recent popularity and access to the internet marks another breakage in that young people may have a better working knowledge than their parents.

7.3 - 2 Internet - Asian media/ pan-Asian media

Whilst recent work by Parker and Song (2006a, 2006b, 2007) has looked at the importance of the internet to the British Chinese, this work has focused on community websites such as DimSum.co.uk and BritishBornChinese.com. Neither of these websites were mentioned by participants in this study, though admittedly the subject was not probed deeply. Rather the internet emerged as a space where some could share Chinese and Asian media. Much like the television and video tapes that were found in previous research in the 1990s (Verma et al., 1999), the internet allowed young people to access media that is not mainstream in the UK. There seemed to be a clear link between the types of programme featured on TVB, dramas in particular, and those sought out by young people. Distinctly, modern day internet allows access to a quite different media environment in the 'East'.

Reminiscent of the Beatle-mania of the 1970s (Nayak and Kehily, 2008), the Asian media I refer to here originates from the major industrialised and industrialising countries in the far East, namely Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong and China. During a recent trip to Vietnam I was also able to observe strong influences here as well. When I and participants speak of Asian media then, it is more a reference to the media emanating from these specific countries. There has been a kind of renaissance of late in which, since the 1990s in particular, a hierarchy of media production has emerged, initially based around Japan, and now emerging from other neighbours. Shim (2006, 2008) for example expresses the changes and how Korea has begun to emerge most recently as a player in Asian media, this has been termed the Korean Wave:

...the Korean wave is indebted to the media liberalization that swept across Asia in the 1990s. The Korean wave seems to have come into existence sometime around 1997, when the national China Central Television Station (CCTV) aired a Korean television drama *What is Love All About?*, which turned out to be a big hit. In response to popular demand, CCTV re-aired the program in 1998 in a prime-time slot, and recorded the second-highest ratings ever in the history of Chinese television (Shim, 2006: 28).

CCTV is the state owned media organisation of China. Whilst many countries in Asia have had, and continue to have, strict censorship laws, the popularity of first Japanese, and now Korean media, has been hard to ignore during a period of 'opening up' and

marketisation. More people are able to afford televisions and have the free time to watch them. As Shim (2006) continues, the effects Korean media recently produced are remarkably similar to previous pop and rock movements in the UK:

Korean stars have had a big impact on consumer culture, including food, fashion, make-up trends and even plastic surgery. It is not uncommon to find Asian youth decorating their backpacks, notebooks and rooms with photographs of Korean stars. In the streets of Hanoi and Beijing, it is common to find young members of the 'Korea Tribe', or Koreanophiles, sporting multiple earrings, baggy hip-hop pants, and the square-toed shoes of Seoul fashion (Shim, 2006: 29).

Shim (2006) has attributed the rise of Korean media, not just in dramas but also films¹¹ and pop music, to the unique corporate support the country was able to make use of in rebooting their economy. In particular the role of 'family-owned, big business groups in Korea, or *chaebol*, such as Samsung, Hyundai and Daewoo, to name a few, expanded into the media sector to include production, import, distribution and exhibition' (Shim, 2006: 32). Interpretation, and the spread of Korean and Japanese dramas in particular, should not though be viewed as a mere unstoppable 'wave' which has been adopted unthinkingly. Kim (2005) has found that 'The modern and urban elegance portrayed in these trendy Korean dramas made the Taiwanese realize that Korea had all of the same qualities of a capitalist consumer society as Taiwan, validating the covalence of Korea and Taiwan, the foundation for cultural exchange' (Kim, 2005: 193). In addition Korean media has had to compete with Hong Kong and Chinese media and the previous dominating presence of Japanese media:

Several landmark achievements have led to that sense of "arrival." The earliest East Asian entries into the global pop culture entertainment markets are probably Japanese animation, *manga* and video games... "culturally odourless" because they contain little explicit Japanese content; animation and *manga* figures have always been intentionally rid of Japanese features and resemble no particular ethnic group (Huat, 2008: 99).

The previous dominance of Japanese media was in part due to the ability of its cartoons to be made 'odourless' as Huat (2008) suggests - though I actually disagree here that no trace of Japan is present. Principally it is because such media emanates from a different place, a different environment, that audiences want to connect with

¹¹ Many of the films have received recent international fame, notably Park Chan Wook's twisted revenge thriller *Oldboy*.

various Asian media types. Huat (2008) has for example argued that 'Japan is the most resistant to the penetration of popular cultures' (Huat, 2008: 103), yet Korean dramas have thrived there in particular. Why, despite such known resistance might Korean dramas be popular in Japan? Iwabuchi et al (2004) theorise that nostalgia plays a huge part, audiences wish to be reminded of the years in which Japan was modernising, people were getting rich faster and coming to enjoy the trappings of being a modern and developed state - these are things which South Korea has only recently come to find. In addition Korean media presents a '...representation of the "here and now" in Asian urban contexts. They lucidly articulate the intertwined composition of global homogenization and hererogenization in a different way from those of Japanese media texts' (Iwabuchi, 2008: 128). Korean media then, like the Japanese media before, presents audiences with both a similarity and a dissimilarity to the viewer.

Whilst I have talked about Korean and Japanese media until now, I also want to highlight the recent changes in China, particularly the change in open talk about sexuality. Chan (2010) highlights two intertwined trends, one towards a small but growing number of female writers and internet bloggers willing to discuss sexuality overtly, and secondly the facilitation of changes in market policy which allow money to be made from the consumption of these books and related products:

Mian Mian's *Candy* (1999) and her rival Wei Hui's *Shanghai Baby* (1999) signify the emergence of a new generation of women writers. Replete with portrayals of sex, recreational drugs, prostitution, and suicide, these two novels attempt to throw off the prudential strictures of both Communist Party ideology and traditional Chinese mores (Chan, 2010: 54).

During recent years in China, the economy has been a key deciding factor in almost all aspects of cultural life, including women's writing - women writers have been able to attract a noticeably larger readership by writing about sex and the body (Chan, 2010: 59).

Although previous commentators such as Yu (2007) have suggested that in Britain Chinese parents might frown upon these open expressions of sexuality, in the Asian media context there have been significant changes such as those introduced by books like *Shanghai Baby*.

My observations of the leisure time some participants spent accessing Asian media perhaps is skewed, due to me finding several participants through societies at university which were arranged for this purpose. One society focused on anime, the other Asian dramas. Annie was a keen fan of both the anime and dramas:

Annie: I'm gonna just take the example of anime, quite simply it's something I grew up with when I was little so I never thought it was anything big I just thought it was cartoons and it's in Chinese, and that's about it, or in Japanese, but in primary school you seem to be, you never seemed right because no one knows what you're talking about, 'have you ever seen this' and they'll be like no one really knows what you're talking about... (21, university student).

For Annie an interest in Asian media was fostered when growing up, there is a link here between time she spent at home, watching this media, and how, as she grew older, it remained an important part of her identity. Significantly awareness of the non-mainstream nature of much Asian media in the UK, Asian dramas in particular are not shown on terrestrial or standard satellite channels, made Annie aware of a difference between her and her peers. University though allowed for the possibility to connect in real time with other fans. For Mike an interest in anime allowed for the potential to learn new languages and greater awareness of Japanese culture:

Mike: I was always interested in them Japanese anime, so I just thought it'd be nice to, like, for once watch anime without the subtitles and I'm interested in their architecture as well, like some of their, some of their artwork, so I just thought I'd be, really nice to learn the language (19, university student).

For Harriet watching anime was a social exercise as much as anything else:

Harriet: Yeah, the anime societies just like, you watch anime, you have a laugh, you talk a bit... (18, university student).

In my observations of the anime society in particular I noted the potential for similar discussions to those opened up in China around sexuality, the nature of other cultures and peoples, the changing attitudes abroad. For example some of the anime sessions focused on comedic genres of anime, others looked at 'girl' (Shojo) or 'boy' (Shonen) types. These genres were typically evident through the inclusion of various spatial, plot and image differences, for example a 'boys' anime may feature lots of action and robots, a 'girls' anime may feature more female characters with a focus on fashion or friendship. I would state though that anyone might watch these types, the genre is

often a guide for plot conventions and characters rather than being exclusively for a single audience, though this may well follow. Significantly, and unexpectedly, I found that sub-genres of anime viewed might address potentially difficult subjects such as gender, androgyny and love. Though there are numerous anime sub-genres, two in particular yuri (girl love) yaoi (boy love), included scenes of homosexuality, often between minors or adults and minors. Such types of anime might allow for expression, interest and discussion amongst viewers - audiences were mixed with not only those of Chinese ethnicity but a good number of white English, and some international students present. The watching of anime has sometimes been synonymous with geek identities (Francis and Archer, 2005b), which may make the existence of societies at university an important place to socialise and meet others free from challenge.

On the other hand, anime, because of some of the explicit sexual themes in sub-genres, could be divisive. Some members decided not to attend showings of the 'yuri' or 'yaoi' genres in particular; they were made uncomfortable by the themes and images which sometimes tread a thin line between love, sex and sometimes surprisingly, rape. Such findings, which admittedly cannot be applied to all young people in this study, nevertheless contribute to the possibilities found for more exploratory notions of identity than we might expect from existing research with British Chinese.

7.3 - 3 Music and identity

Music for example has been linked to spaces of alcohol consumption and I am thinking of the UK club scene here in particular. Music and alcohol spaces are often seen as the main activity for young people, particularly clubs and bars. An example here might be Winlow and Hall's paper 'Living for the weekend' (Winlow and Hall, 2009) who lament that youth practices of alcohol consumption result in weak friendships and relationships; 'bonds are not rooted in anything more profound than the display of style and cultural competence in the circuits of consumer signification' Winlow and Hall (2009: 105). We can add to some of these arguments in looking at young people's experiences in this project; alcohol and music spaces were not mentioned in the same ways or to the same extent. This may be because of the sample asked, which was drawn through snowballing at various societies at university and also through friends of these individuals. Nevertheless the experiences of leisure are quite different to

those described by researchers above. Harriet for example talks about becoming interested in Japanese rock and other styles:

Harriet: I'm mostly into rock and I've started getting into Japanese rock, Japanese pop, just something a bit different because like, at the moment a lot of the mainstream, like, rock stuff is just generic Indie stuff from like America or something like that you know, and it all sounds the same but, yeah, it's just something different. And, yeah I'm also into classical music thanks to my piano...and I'm quite into some of the orchestral music, classical music (18, university student).

This experience of music sits in opposition to the one which researchers have identified. In spaces of alcohol consumption music might be loud and adds to the atmosphere of going out, of excitement, bright lights and a beat which can be danced to (Jayne et al., 2008). Harriet's appreciation of rock and classical music seems more close to a hobby or interest which adds to her understanding and entertainment. More akin to the work of James and Lincoln's (James, 2001, Lincoln, 2005) work on bedroom spaces, Harriet describes in this instance a more private relationship with music, perhaps used to express mood or as an escape and pass time. Music enjoyed away from spaces of alcohol and the club does not necessarily reduce the chance to meet others or share interests, although Harriet's experience is about being different, Peggy and Rachel had another reason for listening to their music:

Peggy: ...there are some online like...blogs as in like they'll upload music ... they tell you, they tell you that your meant to delete it within 48 hours but I know a lot of people don't...a lot of my friends, especially they will be like that bands like the boy bands they'll buy their CD (20, university student).

Rachel: For teenagers yes, like older people don't listen to them (18, college student).

Both Peggy and Rachel had an interest in Chinese and non-English language music. In Peggy's case she used the internet to get music, which although she recognised was not legal, did allow access to music not available in the UK mainstream, or even in specialist shops. Rachel told me how she would regularly buy CDs when she went to Hong Kong, and did not use the internet so much.

McDonald (MacDonald et al., 2005, MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007) highlights that for some young people the lack of funds, cultural capital and access to socially accepted

ways of spending time listening to music, can lead to spending time on the streets, where it is obvious to them that they have little power or ability to change their situation. Ability to, or inability to, access popular music or spaces in which to identify might therefore have an effect on young people, in the space of the club or the street certain practices are encountered which further shape young people. An interest in alternative music, such as rock, might also take a young person away from mainstream spaces, perhaps being listened to in the privacy of the bedroom, or on an MP3 player or phone. Participant's experiences and interest in music might therefore challenge the assumptions and understandings gained from youth research, which sees alcohol and music spaces as the most important or worthy of research.

In some instances young people outright rejected the loud popular music scenes researchers have described:

Charlotte: Yes I like listening to all sorts of music, before I don't really like noisy music, like club music, but then I kind of don't really mind anything right now, I like any sort of music I mean pop and rock, r'n'b, yeah (20, university student).

Heighley: Music, it's ok music but sometimes I just get a headache from them so I don't really like them, and the music today's not really good anymore. Err I don't know it just really makes you feel ill so I don't really listen to music (17, sixth form student).

Some participants talked of enjoying music on a more personal level, this could connect them to other young people whom liked the same music, and this is how I found a number of participants for this study. We might contrast leisure time spent in clubs with those of personal appreciation for music and small friendship groups enjoying music from the internet, these are important experiences for some young people in this study. In some instances the use of Asian music could heighten expressions of ethnic identification. For example Kurt claimed that karaoke singing was 'very Asian':

Kurt: Well err I go karaoke-ing it's just a very Asian thing isn't it, so, I didn't used to go but ever since I met loads of friends from Hong Kong it's just like something that they do a lot over there I think so I just joined in with them and it's really fun so yeah I enjoy that. I've done a lot of clubbing but that's generally what people do at uni so not just nightlife I go clubbing as well so, err what else, yeah that's pretty much, pretty much it for hobbies (18, university student).

Openly identifying as 'Asian' and having 'loads of friends from Hong Kong' can be seen as ways in which Kurt feels he is 'more' Asian and Chinese. I note though the different significance of the terms 'Asian' and Chinese here, whilst participants might identify with Asian youth culture or have friends they considered Asian, they were also aware of Chinese being separable from this category. Drawing on the music and distinct spaces/groups of individuals, identity might be shaped strategically. Yet, even this account was necessarily marked as hybrid and ambivalent (Ang, 1998, Bhabha, 1984, 1985, Gilroy, 1991). Karaoke tends to take place in certain restaurants in Newcastle and is a bookable activity, to engage therefore requires a number of abilities, ability to speak Chinese, knowing Chinese others, familiarity with the places which sell time and the finances. This raises questions about how access to Chinese and ethnic identity much be facilitated for younger generations. Young British Chinese might therefore explore different notions of Chinese and Asian-ness to their parents, in many cases drawing on the youth cultures popular in Hong Kong or Japan. Yet as Hollands (2003) identifies the facilitation of spaces in the night time economy might be driven by economic forces, they are not pre-given or inherent.

Interviewees tended to recognise their experiences growing up in the UK marked them as not the same as those they thought were authentically and fully Chinese; for example parents or Hong Kong Chinese. Whilst at the same time the more fully Chinese identities of parents specifically were previously considered problematic and have excluded them from British society at times (Adamson et al., 2005a, Adamson et al., 2009). The examples of leisure activities so far give greater scope for a reformulation of academic understandings of the potential in identities located ambivalently in Chinese and British experiences.

7.3 - 4 Leisure not related to ethnicity

Music and media represented the most common experiences amongst participants in this study. Other more idiosyncratic leisure activities also existed, for example sports, general socialising and specific hobbies and interests. These interests contained less of an Asian or Chinese identity element than music or media might, they tended to allow friends to meet and participants to relax in free time. Eric and Adam for example talked about their time spent at the gym:

Eric: Yeah I go to the gym about three times a week I'll do strength, a lot of strength training err cardio training...and I do a lot of abs training like, circuit training (25, working in parent's takeaway).

Adam: ...we're training five days a week as opposed to two or three times when I trained alone and I think ultimately this will help with my badminton as well as to boost your self confidence and to feel good about yourself (20, university student).

Time spent at the gym may again seem rather trivial and mundane, but it helped participants make peer connections. Eric played football with local teams and also helped coach younger people. Going to the gym enabled him to keep fit and perform well in matches. In Adam's experience weight training improved his ability in badminton, he also teamed up with a friend to go and the sessions enabled them to form a closer friendship. Ability to meet friends and make your own interests was a sign that the young people were becoming older, they had greater autonomy and decided for themselves what to do with their free time. The young people at university like Eric and Adam had similar experiences when children/sixth form age when parents would dictate after school activities and/or require them to spend time helping them with catering or going to Chinese school. Away from the structures of family and school though, young people in this study were able to explore their interests. Previous work on young British Chinese experiences such as Parker's (1995, 1998) work has located their identities as bounded and hidden or more recently as located online (Parker and Song, 2006a, 2006b, 2007). The experiences of Eric and Adam though contradict this idea of an inner and hidden identity. Through sport they could connect to others and make friendships, which is suggestive of a more open identity and social life than previously thought. Interviewing these young people might be seen to extend our understanding of young British Chinese people, who in previous research were not attending university, and thereby may not have had the chance to explore or have much free time.

At university there was more chance to socialise openly in between lectures, this was a different experience than the one discussed in the transitions chapter, in which outside of education young people were not expectant of much free time:

Annie: ...meet up usually, we meet up for dinner, lunch or, go see shows together, cinemas, a, a lot of times we do go and see films in summer, so like if there's

anything good, we meet up and go see it, and we stay over, have sleep overs, or we have, cooking days, and it's just, a bit of everything, just relaxing things. We sometimes would study together if it's around exam time, but most of the time it's just hanging out doing whatever (21, university student).

Charlotte: ...if I have some free time in between the lectures I try to go to the library and do some work...and then after lectures finish I would probably just you know well sit and relax basically with others my friends...sometimes if there's any special occasions I'll just go out with my friends and then come back no later than two o'clock... (20, university student).

When they were at university young people were able to make a transition, from the somewhat restricted social lives as young people pre eighteen, to more open and active ones. Macdonald (2007) suggested that we might look at transitions beyond school to work and that across these different transition careers we might note how different influences impact on young people's lives. In this study I have illustrated that whilst on paper young British Chinese may appear no different to other young people, this is not always the case. I have specifically highlighted differences in music as well as media interests to show that beyond the youth cultures engaged in spaces of alcohol there are many other experiences of equal value, these might involve the internet or private spaces or be shared with a small group of friends (James, 2001, Lincoln, 2005). Across the leisure and free time activities it is also important to note that these acted as bridges between young people. They were able to meet others with similar interests, but not necessarily the same background, and form friendships and relations. Access to free time was a vital part of what young British Chinese people came to see as part of their 'being' and what they were 'becoming'. David talked about how he modified his car and enjoyed working on it alone and with a close friend. Annie had a love for dolls which were a collector's item:

David: I think working on my car is the main hobby...cos I know quite a lot of people that work on the cars as well so basically now and then we meet up and discuss what we've bought for our cars and basically exchange knowledge about them (19, University student).

Annie: ...studying is more kind of like, writing and everything more structured, so something different, and mainly, with the dolls, it's like, they're actually from Asia so, they're quite big collectable dolls, you can customise them... I spend most of my time doing that because it's different and it's not, books all the time (21, University student).

Neither of these participants' leisure time activities are featured in the literature yet they were key to their experiences of being young. Through the cars David was for example able to make a close friend as well as learn about the machines themselves. In Annie's case the dolls were quite a personal object and perhaps reflected her parents being quite strict with her free time when she was younger, the dolls allowed a reason and space for self reflection and learning which parents could not regulate or perhaps find objectionable. Young people were thereby able to make new connections with peers and friends who were not necessarily Chinese, this challenges the notion of a minority which is silent and to some extent invisible (Chan et al., 2004, 2007a, Chau and Yu, 2001). The gendered nature of David and Annie's pastimes, also raises questions about the need to explore ways in which young British Chinese people's conceptions of gendered identities might be explored. Alongside the genres in anime and themes of love and romance in many Asian dramas, a parallel set of ways in which young British Chinese may come to be exposed to these issues exists, and will probably perpetuate with the internet. This has the potential to refute and challenge notions of young British Chinese as trapped by their parents traditional values on sex and sexuality (Yu, 2007, 2009). Exploration of gender might also extend discussion beyond notions of 'boffin or triad' (Francis and Archer, 2005b) or as racialised sexual objects (Parker, 2000).

7.4 Conclusions

In this thesis I have been developing the argument that young British Chinese transitions are worthy of investigation, this has been led by the young people's own accounts, which suggest that Chinese youth are engaged in more than just a single transition towards education and work. The blending therefore of interpretations of family experience, and interacting with Chinese others through language have been shown to be formative. Education, and the resultant transitions being worked upon, was undoubtedly a central part of young people's lives in this study – most of the week would be spent in education at school or university. Nevertheless this chapter has also demonstrated the parallel experiences and meanings found within leisure.

In looking at the recollections of leisure experiences, I framed discussion from a popular perspective amongst youth researchers that young people are often

constrained in their early leisure choices. Time was a primary factor, as was age and agency. Specific to British Chinese has been the observation of the interactions between takeaway and family responsibility running alongside leisure time. A significant number of participants therefore noted that they had little free time in comparison to peers, some parents also discouraged young people from spending their free time outside the house whilst enrolled at school. Nevertheless this period could still contain various leisure experiences, perhaps clubs or sports, and especially the ordinary practices of watching television, spending time with siblings or relatives, wandering around shops in town. A significant question remains though, to what extent does their background influence young British Chinese leisure and the attached meanings?

Participants towards their twenties were at university and these experiences could be compared with those of younger participants, or their recollections overall. From these accounts it is therefore possible to make some suggestions about the significance of leisure to participants with regard to identity and the meaning of Chinese identity in Britain. For a number of participants their earlier experiences of watching Chinese language programmes, perhaps on the channel TVB or on the internet, could become further developed with time. Asian dramas from Korea for example or pop music from a variety of Asian nations, Japan, Korea, China, were important in the development of taste and ways of understanding Chinese and Asian-ness. Such explicitly Asian youth cultural activities and identifications often brought young people into contact with others from a variety of backgrounds, the exploration of both Chineseness and/or Asian aspects of identity were therefore not often founded on ethnically exclusive social groups and practices. There were however some instances in which the exploration of Chineseness and Asian-ness did bring participants into contact with Chinese others, and some of these themes were explored in the language and identity chapter (chapter five). Arguably then young people noted that their tastes could diverge as they grew up, with Asian media at home often comprising TVB or Hong Kong media, but later being shared with friends from many backgrounds. Associations between Chinese ethnic identity and leisure time were evidently hybrid; in those participants which identified as liking Asian media in particular.

Gender was also explored through the leisure experiences of young people in this study. Whilst gender has seemingly not been so strongly present in the previous chapters, when it came to media consumption in particular there were some interesting opportunities to question as well as affirm gender identifications. I have discussed for example the changes in China as well as the types of media in relevant Asian countries to the study, such as Korea and Japan. Within these, especially anime, gender roles could both be played towards hyper-stereotypes, overly feminised characters or macho males, as well as examples of broader sexualities. Exploration of these contents within leisure contributes further to understanding of what British Chinese identities are founded upon, demonstrating key practices and spaces within which identity can be explored and remade, as well as challenging notions of an authentic identity or 'real' Chineseness. Although one of the primary reasons for conducting this research is to expand understanding of Chinese people in the UK, it does not reflect a desire to justify or lament the loss of the identifications of parents, or Chinese individuals who do not share the same youth transitions of young British Chinese. The discussions within this thesis have revealed that young British Chinese are very in touch with their sense of self, and given examples of the interactions and places in which this can and is being shaped, and indeed challenged. Rather however than an openly confrontational resistance to stereotypes or notions of what Chinese is or should mean, young people's quite mundane practices of leisure shed further light on the way in which transition is lived in the every day, and that British Chinese identities are set to change further in future.

Chapter 8 Discussion and Conclusion

By looking at the experiences of British Chinese young people, I have targeted a particularly dynamic section of the British Chinese population. Indeed previous research has indicated as much, by revealing differences in aspiration and direction for their futures which contrast with many of their parents' experiences (Archer and Francis, 2006, Francis and Archer, 2005). I have made use of the accounts of twenty four young people, and this has helped this study challenge the notion that Chinese people are a silent minority, a status which is problematic because it often homogenises and essentialises a section of society. My early discussion on the rationale for, and conditions of, migration (chapter one) illustrates the complexities of those in the Chinese population; therefore a qualitative approach has been used to draw these stories and details out.

Whilst I have made the case that the study of Chinese in Britain does not yet contribute a 'field' in itself, I have however broken deliberately with aspects of this body of work. This has meant not addressing young British Chinese explicitly as the recipients of racism, while recognising the role that inequality may play in their lives. Because this research has been conducted from both a human geography, and youth studies, background it has emphasised the significance of place, as well as the impact that transnationalism has on British Chinese identities. Therefore in each of the findings chapters it has been shown that young British Chinese evoke a notion of 'Chineseness', but this is conjured up through shifting and varied reference points.

In this final chapter I will summarise the thesis, previous literature, and the findings chapters. I will then discuss the three areas of academic contribution.

8.1 Summary of thesis

Previous research, and this project

This study has drawn from a range of sources and studies to inform its approach. In terms of literature the work on young people, specifically the notion of youth transitions, has been important in giving a rationale for the work. As with many PhD

studies the ultimate aim has been to add to existing knowledge in some meaningful way, this has been accomplished by focusing on the British Chinese, a group which has not featured extensively in research, and is not currently a part of our wider conception of youth transitions. That nothing exists and there is no interest in British Chinese youth transitions is untrue, the many GCSE updates in recent years have indicated, newspaper headlines alongside, that young British Chinese have been recognised as 'doing well' in the UK. Sadly this is often where the interest ends. There has therefore been the potential to address three areas of discourse; wider understandings of Chinese in Britain, the youth transitions debate, and academic study of British Chinese and young British Chinese. In order to advance understanding I have interviewed young people in Newcastle, North East England, and expressed their experiences and views under the four headings of family, language and identity, education, and leisure.

Existing studies of the Chinese in Britain have highlighted a variety of issues; in the literature review I sought to show that these can be conceived of as fitting into a broadly racism/social justice and/or, more recently youth, framework. The portrait built up so far shows British Chinese to be a heterogeneous group in terms of their origins, cultural background and capital. For example, whilst the Hong Kong connection, between Britain and China, allowed for a conduit for migration and influence to make this the largest group of Chinese settlers, Malaysia and Vietnam have also at times contributed. Most recently migrants have begun to come from Mainland China, often as students, skilled workers, but also as undocumented migrants. What is sometimes referred to as the 'Chinese community' is therefore much more dynamic, and multi-layered, and often divided along linguistic and other lines.

Youth transitions literature has been a useful starting point and framework for understanding young people in Britain, though I have also drawn on youth cultural studies approaches where appropriate, and agree with the points made by MacDonald and Furlong (Furlong et al, 2011, MacDonald et al, 2005); that a more combined understanding of young lives in Britain is required. Purely to divorce one process 'transition' from other aspects of life is not endorsed in this research.

So what has been revealed through this research and how does it contribute to the three areas of Transitions and youth research, British Chinese study, and Chineseness more broadly?

Transition: how is this added to by this study

As outlined in the literature review, and in more direct detail in the education chapter (chapter six) the concept of youth transitions has evolved and shifted over time. Previous conceptions of a linear route from school to work sit alongside notions of a child to adult binary, and many of these notions remain popular today (Arnett, 2001, 2006, 2007), despite reformulation, and challenges, to this understanding of transition. Challenges for example have come from increasing fragmentation not only of the job and employment structure - this means that linear transitions are less desired in the working world - there has also been a shift amongst young people themselves towards more individualised and specific hopes and aspirations. This fragmentation of the personal, as well as employment, has led some to suggest that only choice orientated biographies, or specific studies, can give an accurate picture of youth transitions. More shifting patterns such as the fragmented, yo-yo, and elongated transition have also been suggested variously (EGRIS, 2001, Hollands, 1990). However some prominent researchers, MacDonald et al (2004, 2007) being an example, continue to find significance in the notion of linear transitions. Perhaps one reason for this is that the level of deprivation in the Tyneside studies indicates that traditional nature/nurture arguments, and as Bourdieu (1996, 2010) has coined cultural capital effects, continue for many to be important in shaping, not just early life, but adulthood as well. The deprivations in home and family life, when predominant within a community for example, can also influence the educational chances and aspirations of many young people - as Paul Willis also found in the 1970s. Fragmented transitions, and perhaps to be underscored here 'choice' biographies, then become more closely linked with the middle and more wealthy in society, whilst the choices and horizons of others are variously less broad; or even cut short by entrance into criminal or non-standard transitions not involving work and qualifications.

In the experience of Zhou et al (Zhou, 1997, Zhou and Xiong, 2005, Zhou et al, 2008) a segmented assimilation model has been shown to reflect how migrants in the USA make the transition to citizens and settled members of community. Whereas in the British youth transitions case there has been a tendency to focus on white working class transitions, though there have been explorations of gender and ethnicity, the difference in transitions experiences between Asian Americans and British Chinese (only in the 2011 census categorised as Asians) makes the need for a more tailored theory and set of understandings relevant. Authors such as Parker and Pan have suggested that the British Chinese are successful in settling in the UK, but that fitting in and becoming a part of the UK as respected citizens sometimes remains a different matter. Continued study has demonstrated that marginalisation, racism and a lack of understanding continue to pervade - examples include the racism encountered in popular places of work such as takeaways and restaurants, and also mis-understanding and stereotyping in schools and places of education (Francis and Archer 2005, Francis, et al, 2008). In a case which is reflective of the 'model minority' argument detailed in Zhou et al (Zhou, 1997, Zhou and Xiong, 2005, Zhou et al, 2008), British Chinese have been seen as self sufficient migrants giving rise to an educated and successful second generation. However such a public view most often portrayed through educational statistics, much as it is felt to be in Zhou's (2008) work, has at times been tempered by stereotypes of the Tiger Mother and related suggestions of an uncaring or harsh regime of parenting. That the question of the 'price to pay' for success has been raised amongst immigrant, and here Chinese people in the UK, is interesting, however as so often with the mainstream examination, deeper reflection is generally missing.

In this study I have therefore taken pains to reflect much more closely on what it means to be a young, mostly second generation, person of Chinese ethnicity. In order to understand the transitions, and the applicability of this notion to young British Chinese participants', experiences of self and identification have been explored. The study uses examples from everyday lives, and with attention paid to the current situation within which they are living. The noted difficulties in finding a sample which fills the age group 16-25 has resulted in two poles, one around school sixth formers and one university students. This allows some exploration of the growing up period,

school and university and there are allusions as to the future hopes of participants. However what occurs post university is largely left for another study.

One of the major findings to emerge from the conversations with young people has been the strength of intergenerational influences, and therefore the sharing of memory and experience, which shapes a sense of self, and also builds projections for the future. As the children of migrants we can relate the influence of intergenerational conversation, and passing of various social capitals (Bourdieu), to the existing transitions literatures. As MacDonald et al (2007) have found a challenging economic situation, lack of resources at home, and an attitude towards education which is confrontational, or even disengaged (see chapter 6), can cause problems in making transition away from parents or following in a similar way. Zhou et al (2008) determine this as upward, downward, or horizontal transition, and a similar potentiality faces British Chinese migrants and their children. Due to the continued dominance of catering in families British Chinese youth were found to be in largely stable home settings, with two parents and a lack of unemployment, aspirations were also imparted which were oppositional to parents experiences, but at the same time reinforced by life lessons. Examples include demonstrably seeing parents lives and how long and hard they worked, being asked to help out, or noting the times when one or more parents were not present due to work. It should be noted that the stability of employment was coated with realisation of the difficulty and hard work often associated here. This realisation also went for many of the parents who did not engage in the catering sector; learning English could present a challenge as one participant's father had been learning ten years before coming over, in another case when parents migrated it was the mother who became the larger earner, as qualifications do not always carry over, and job opportunities may be subject to local conditions.

As might be expected then young people had a range of experiences of transition, and resulted aspirations for themselves, as a result of their upbringing, and personal life experiences. A fine line should be walked between appreciating the importance of habitus, that is nurture arguments, and giving due weight to the abilities of young people (Matthews, 1999). Within this study participants were orientating themselves towards finishing school and going on to university, or if at university finding a 'good

job' afterwards. While it might remain to answer the question 'so what next, where do they go after university?', and this question remains valid, the experiences and views in this study demonstrate perhaps that young people are not all knowing, a general direction towards university and then work was most often expressed. It is enough of a contribution at this stage to acknowledge the depth of influences behind the high GCSE attainments for example. This said there were some individuals who had a longer term view of their futures, as exemplified one participant mentions having planned her medical career out. If we were taking a line from the segmented assimilation argument we might suggest that for some entry into the workplace in the mainstream was aspiration enough when compared to their parents, others still felt the need to aim for what was seen as secure employment in the professions.

The transitions of young British Chinese in this study therefore did appear rather linear, if we consider that all of them were in school sixth forms or university. Many of the school members aspired to enter university. From a more nuanced reading we can suggest that this attitude was strengthened by the experiences of parents, own witnessing of time in catering and helping out, and the discourse at home often being one of promoting education as a part of transition to adulthood.

'British Chinese': identification of what this means in this study

Identification of the ways in which young British Chinese self identify is important for two reasons, it illuminates further the transitions being made from not just an employment perspective, but also a personal and therefore societal level. It also acts to support and refute existing understandings within a dynamic group, which has been under-studied.

In terms of adding to the understanding of transitions, identifications of young British Chinese in this study show a variety of influences and attachments, and understandings of these, which other groups of young people do not draw upon. Examples here include the importance of the catering trade for families, transnational notions of family and linguistic/bilingual aspects of identity. I have presented, across the four findings chapters, an illustration of how young British Chinese were making their transitions away from those of their parents, towards their own futures. Of

course this statement is not made with the suggestion that a whole 'new' era of British Chinese identification is coming into being, it merely acts as an acknowledgement that change has been observed, documented, and engaged in this study, and with this set of participants. The transitions young British Chinese peoples' parents made have variously been demonstrated to be quite different to the majority of their children, this raises the possibility of further study, for third, or even fourth generations should they appear, and also acts as a marker for social history, noting the changing influences and sources upon which this set of young people have drawn. Examples here include the influence of migrant identity by proxy, not being migrants themselves, but always and often being proximate to such an identity when growing up. This upbringing can lead to possible questions of what identity is, and whether individuals see themselves as Chinese or British in the singular, or make use of a hyphenated identification, and set of activities and experiences in life, which support this.

Moving onto the second point about identification, there is a need to stress that young British Chinese are as yet in that position when they are moving beyond purely family influences on identity. Participants were having a gradually more 'social' life and making friends, relationships; coming to enjoy free time and consider what they want to do in life, perhaps when education ends, or to continue in it. Whilst then the previous research on the Chinese population has often taken care to demonstrate the racism and social justice concerns, and that these pervade the places of work for some young people (Parker, 1995, 1998, 2000), or their education (Francis and Archer, 2005, Francis, Archer and Mau, 2009), there is also the need to show how these challenges differ from those faced by parents; qualifications, English language proficiency, awareness of British life and cultural familiarity. None or few of the challenges that their parents identified with will generally apply to young British Chinese, indeed their experience of being settled is one of the strengths of their position, vis-à-vis astronaut, parachute, and satellite kids as noted in the literature review. Invariably then the young people's aspirations and identifications emerged as a combination, not a split, between the transnational experiences of their parents and families, which were often spread across one or more countries, and those seen in the UK. I therefore noted the belief amongst some younger participants that Hong Kong was a place of wonder and excitement, related to the three joys of food, family, and shopping.

However as older participants noted Hong Kong also represented another country, another place possibly full of ambivalence, and even worry, in terms of communicating with relatives and other Chinese people. Hong Kong did not definitively mark a return or certain origin place due to experiences in the UK, which could make it feel more like home. Nevertheless such ambivalences could be variable, related to experiences with language, and time spent in Hong Kong, as well as noting that for some participants other regions in Asia, or mainland China, remained more relevant.

(British) Chineseness/(Chinese) Britishness

What then if anything might British Chinese identities and identifications say about Chineseness as a category more broadly. Ien Ang (1998, 2001) and others, Rey Chow (1997, 1998), Allen Chun (1996), have suggested that we fragment the category Chineseness, others that we should continue to relate the identities of diasporic Chinese, much like the branches of a tree (Tu, 1994), or even offshoots from a distinct root. I think there will always be this interplay between the ethnicity of the individual, face, and then assumptions about identity. After all feminist writers and postcolonial writers have for many years been attempting to effect a shift, in how we value individuals on their own terms, not just at face value. A similar struggle has been laid down by Ang (2001) in particular. The situation itself must also be addressed, perhaps a group or individual may choose later to take on or follow certain practices and ways of being which are felt to associate them with Chinese, Chineseness or China, for example through attendance at Chinese school and the strategic learning of Mandarin or felt compatibility with Cantonese or Hakka. Is it more 'correctly' British Chinese to learn Cantonese because this is what your parents spoke when they arrived here, or perhaps Mandarin is more appropriate considering the various geopolitical changes to Hong Kong, an increase in migrants from the mainland, and even acknowledging that the Chinese diaspora has always favoured adaptation. Erasure and dynamism are built into the success of diasporic and migrant groups, necessarily because they have moved or chose to move. It is a complex question, one which no doubt some become angry and emotional over, nobody likes to think they are a traitor to their parents experiences, and the weight of a whole civilisation such as China might reasonably be considered as big a burden as any to carry. Those reading this looking for a definitive

answer should acknowledge though that identity is shifting, and the modern sense of identity is even more than in the past related to uneven and mobile ways of expressing the self, of hiding, and at the same time announcing who you are.

In the thesis the exploration of various leisure activities therefore goes a way to showing the ways in which identity, not necessarily a definitive Chinese one at that, is played with and explored by participants. Sometimes a pick and mix attitude is adopted such as in the watching of Japanese anime or Korean drama, whilst at the same time mundane activities such as hanging out with friends, listening to rock music, working out in the gym, or working on a car for a hobby, demonstrate that 'being' British Chinese for these participants does not carry an air of stereotype, or must have the tag 'Chinese' attached. That said, young people were very capable of analysing and deciding what the boundaries of their journey through identity was. A participant was incredulous about the lack of educational awareness of China in school, another rejected the views of other Chinese at university, who branded them British, or not Chinese, because they did not speak the same language or had different interests. On the other hand university also gave the important opportunity to meet other Chinese people perhaps from overseas, this allows for a testing and understanding of Chinese identities as they are now, not found in a text book or related on a screen, not just a story told by dad of the old days before migration, but modern, global, Chinese youth.

British Chinese youth identities therefore highlight the continued need for qualitative research on the dynamic experiences which contribute to those in the Chinese diaspora globally, and in the UK. With the advent of a more accessible media, and the mixing possible at university level, I have demonstrated ways in which versions of Chinese and Asian identities might play out, cause consideration, and development of how to identify as Chinese. Chineseness might be seen as one component of self which can be moulded and shaped over time, drawing on what seems appropriate or interesting, in this way it is a journey of self. However we should also not assume individuals freely choose, or felt to have freely chosen, their identity. Discussions and stories of family illustrate background can influence early on notions of identification, whether these be based in economic background, language, the trans-national nature of family.

Final comments

Prior to conducting this PhD study I too, like many, knew little in-depth about the British Chinese. This is a difficult statement to make now as I have spent so much time, years in fact, immersed and learning as much as possible about the experiences of Chinese people in Britain. I remember vaguely in the early 2000s coming into contact with Chinese people from China itself, this encountering led me ultimately to undertaking this study. Are the British Chinese different and distinct for example from those more recent migrants, if different in what ways, and in what sense do they identify themselves? I probably could have chosen almost any aspect of societal enquiry, as I increasingly found the British Chinese to be largely absent from commentary. The contemporary 'rise of China' has in part influenced understanding, though even an initial grasp of the history of China in the modern era, and migration to the UK, should show that for the majority of British Chinese it too simplistic to equate Chinese ethnicity with British Chinese identity, beliefs, and values.

I have been strongly influenced by the work of academics who have taken up the challenge of explaining and investigating British Chinese experiences, and most related to this study I should mention the work of David Parker (1995) and Miri Song (1995), as well as Louise Archer and Becky Francis (Archer and Francis 2007, Francis and Archer, 2005). There is a natural thread too linking my own study to the comments made by Stuart Hall and the observations on family and culture by Pierre Bourdieu (1996, 2010). From further a field (geographically but not intellectually) the work of Ian Ang (2001) and supporting studies in the Australia-Pacific on Chinese diasporic lives has also been very illuminating. Overall I have been struck by both the depth of feeling and possibility for investigating Chinese migrants, Chineseness, and diaspora, which pre-existed my own study, which has in its own way been a sort of biological and cultural journey of self-discovery as well as academic investigation. This work plugs two holes one in the literature and one within myself.

It is my hope that others will read this, and note that I have attempted to bring to life the lives of a group which is rarely featured in research in the UK. The lack of direct

attention also means that the ongoing change, and dynamic nature of the Chinese in Britain, may continue to go forgotten or undocumented. As historians have continued to write, we ignore our past at our peril, and for those of a noticeable migrant heritage, this can be a particularly important point. 'Where is it all going?' remains a question to be answered, but there can be no doubt for me having written this piece, with the support of the voices in it, that the study of the British Chinese should receive more prominence than it has received.

If however this is the last I contribute to the debate then future readers note that I encountered a group of people with a vibrant migrant heritage, who were also capably making their own transitions through life informed by what had come before.

Appendix 1 - Project flyer

 <p>你好嗎?</p> <h3>British Chinese Youth</h3> <p>PhD researcher seeks young British Chinese 16-24 to take part in short interviews for project.</p> <p>The researcher, Alex Tan, is based at Newcastle University in the Geography department.</p> <p>Through this research it is hoped to better understand young people who are British Chinese. The project adds to what is currently a small research field much in need of a contemporary investigation.</p> <p>Participants do not need to have been born in the UK though they do need to have spent most of their life here and live here now (at least 10 years).</p> <p>Participants will be asked to take part in an interview which will be recorded, unless otherwise agreed. The interview will be taken in confidence and pseudonyms will be used in the final write up. Participants will have the option to opt out at any time and they may later decide to withdraw any quotations taken from the eventual transcript.</p> <p>Interviews will be conducted at an agreed place.</p> <p>Please contact Alex Tan at:</p> <p>Email a.m.lee-tan@newcastle.ac.uk Phone: 01912 402693, please leave a message</p>	 <p>你好嗎?</p> <h3>British Chinese Youth</h3> <p>PhD researcher seeks young British Chinese 16-24 to take part in short interviews for project.</p> <p>The researcher, Alex Tan, is based at Newcastle University in the Geography department.</p> <p>Through this research it is hoped to better understand young people who are British Chinese. The project adds to what is currently a small research field much in need of a contemporary investigation.</p> <p>Participants do not need to have been born in the UK though they do need to have spent most of their life here and live here now (at least 10 years).</p> <p>Participants will be asked to take part in an interview which will be recorded, unless otherwise agreed. The interview will be taken in confidence and pseudonyms will be used in the final write up. Participants will have the option to opt out at any time and they may later decide to withdraw any quotations taken from the eventual transcript.</p> <p>Interviews will be conducted at an agreed place.</p> <p>Please contact Alex Tan at:</p> <p>Email a.m.lee-tan@newcastle.ac.uk Phone: 01912 402693, please leave a message</p>
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Experiences of British Chinese Youth

Introduction to the project:

This project forms part of the research for a PhD looking at the experiences of British Chinese youth. The researcher, Alex Tan, is based at Newcastle University in the Geography department. In this research I want to understand better British Chinese ideas of ethnicity, culture and how these are shaped by growing up in the UK.

I am specifically interested in exploring the attitudes of people 16-24 who are living in Newcastle. Participants do not need to have been born in the UK though they do need to have spent most of their life here and live here now.

What will be involved?

Participants will be asked to take part in an interview; this interview will be recorded, unless otherwise agreed. The interview will be taken in confidence and pseudonyms will be used in the final write up. Participants will have the option to opt out at any time, even during the interview, and they may later decide to withdraw any quotations taken from the eventual transcript. Personal details will not be circulated.

If you are interested in taking part or have any questions then please contact me using the e-mail address below or using the telephone number(s) provided.

Project researcher:

Alex Tan

am.tan@newcastle.ac.uk

Department Telephone: (please leave a message)
01912 228510

Project supervisors:

Peter Hopkins

peter.hopkins@ncl.ac.uk

Telephone: (0191) 222 3924

Anoop Nayak



Experiences of British Chinese Youth

Consent form

The researcher agrees to the best of their ability to prevent harm through their own actions in the design or application of this research. This project is intended to facilitate participants and the sharing of their views; the project should enable participants and prevent both physical and emotional harm.

As a participant I can expect confidentiality during this research process, views will be held in confidence and the interviews and following transcripts will not be shown to other participants. In addition pseudonyms will be used.

As a participant I am free to withdraw at any time, during the interviews or any part of the research. Following the interviews participants may withdraw from the project and have their words removed.

There has been information provided and the opportunity to ask questions of the researcher. If there is anything else you would like to know then please contact Alex Tan using the details provided.

Signed (participant):

Date:

Signed (researcher):

Date:

Contact:

Alex Tan – School of Geography, Politics and Sociology, Newcastle University

Telephone:

Department (please leave a message) 01912 228510

Home (weekday evenings from 5.00pm and most weekends) 01912 402693

Email: a.m.lee-tan@newcastle.ac.uk

Experiences of British Chinese Youth

Information questionnaire

Name:

Age:

Country of birth:

Home town:

About yourself:

Where were you born?

What is your ethnicity?

What nationality are you?

What is your job or full time occupation?

What is your educational background?

Do you have any pastimes which are not work/educationally linked? Please list them if possible:

Family:

Where were your parents born?

What ethnicity are your parents?

What nationality are your parents?

Do you have any siblings?

Do you have relatives other than parents and siblings in this country? Please list them if possible:

What are your parent's occupations?

What are your parent's educational backgrounds?

Appendix 5 - Interview questions

Opening questions:

Hello (introduction)...Thank you for coming, I would like to start with a few general questions about your self and time spent during the week:

Tell me a few things about your self...

(prompt) Do you have any interests, hobbies?

(prompt) Whom do you do that with, how regularly?

What activities do you like to do?

(prompt) for example any sports?

(prompt) or clubs or groups?

(prompt) or perhaps things like concerts, the cinema?

(prompt) or eating out?

(prompt) or what about in the evenings? What do you do typically and less regularly?

Describe a typical week for you...

(prompt) So what would you say you spend most of your time doing? Where?

(prompt) What would be the highlight of your week? What do you enjoy most each week?

Whom do you spend most of your time with during the week?

(prompt) For example what about at home? Do you have siblings?

(prompt) What about your parents? What do they do?

(prompt) What about social time, friends?

In the last few months can you think of any specifically important events or activities you did?

(prompt) for example maybe you visited something or somewhere you ordinarily don't?

(prompt) or maybe someone?

(prompt) was there perhaps an important event which you wished to mark? Tell me more about this...

(prompt) in a year then what would you say are your 2-3 favourite 'times', maybe it's a special occasion, a holiday...

(prompt) does one stick out for you for any reason?

1) Transitions

About education, tell me about school.

(prompt) What were your favourite subjects? Tell me about those and why?

(prompt) How about after school, what have you decided to do now it is finished?

(prompt) Have you taken any classes outside of school?

(prompt) What do you think you learnt at school which was not taught formally?

After School, what do you think to the idea of work?

(prompt) What would your ideal job be?

(prompt) Do you have a job? What jobs have you had?

(prompt) Where would you like to be in 1 years time in terms of work or post school life?

(prompt) What might it take to achieve this?

(prompt) What about long term? Maybe a career?

Outside of education now, what about your responsibilities?

(prompt) How about in the family? For example is there something you are expected to do?

(prompt) Or in the community? Do you perhaps volunteer, or are you part of a group, what is your role?

(prompt) What about in society itself, what are priorities for you as a person?

I would like to ask you about the past.

(prompt) What would you say have been key events for you growing up? Name 1-2.

(prompt) Perhaps this is growing up in a particular place, something you went through?

(prompt) What were your life goals when you were younger, say 2-3 years ago?

(prompt) Why have/may these have changed?

I would like to ask about the future.

(prompt) Where would you like to be in the future? Here in the UK? Elsewhere?

(prompt) What do you see yourself doing in the near future maybe 3 years? And what about the more distant future maybe 5-10 years time?

(prompt) Can you see any challenges ahead? How might you face these?

(prompt) So what would be your main hope for the future?

2) Important influences

Identity.

(prompt) How would you describe yourself?

(prompt) What would you say are the most important features of your identity, for example is this related to beliefs, music, ethnicity etc?

(prompt) What is your favourite way to spend time?

(prompt) What about hobbies? We mentioned them earlier, how has your interest in a hobby changed over time?

(prompt) Tell me about food, what do you like to eat?

(prompt) What would you eat most commonly? Do you have a favourite food?

(prompt) What about culture? How would you define culture?

(prompt) How do you engage with culture, do you visit places for example? Art?

(prompt) What about entertainment, film, music etc? How important are these to you? What do you like?

Beliefs.

(prompt) Tell me about an important belief(s) you have.

(prompt) Is anything required as part of this belief? What might that be?

(prompt) What is your relationship to this belief, for example do you have a special role to play?

(prompt) What role might your beliefs play in your future plans and hopes?

(prompt) How might it help with any challenges you already identified earlier?

What about friends...

(prompt) What do you do in your free social time?

(prompt) Whom with, is there a certain group you meet with most often? Or perhaps more than one?

(prompt) Where do you know these people/groups from?

(prompt) Do you tend to spend most of your free time with people of your own age? Is there a reason?

(prompt) What about their post school hopes, what do they plan to do?

(prompt) What about people of the opposite gender, in your circle of friends made up of mixed gender? Why might this be so?

I would like you to tell me something about your family.

(prompt) Where were they born and where did they grow up?

(prompt) What are your parents' main occupation(s), perhaps they had a few, what were they?

(prompt) What do you tend to do with your parents?

(prompt) Do you have any siblings?

(prompt) What do you tend to do with your siblings?

(prompt) What is their main occupation?

(prompt) How might your parents views fit with your hopes for the future? Have they had any influence here?

(prompt) Tell me about other relatives you have? What role(s) have they played in your upbringing?

What about other role models.

(prompt) Are there any important people to you who are not family?

(prompt) What role do they or have they played in your life?

(prompt) Is anyone influential to you who you don't personally know? For example a leader of some kind, or even someone famous to you?

3) Personal priorities and the future

I would like to ask you about Expectations for the future

(prompt) What do you imagine your future to be like? Do you have any expectations?

(prompt) Are there others who have influenced this? How?

(prompt) What are you doing to achieve these expectations?

(prompt) What do you prioritise for the future, regardless of any expectations?

(prompt) How, if you think they have, have your attitudes towards expectation and priority changed over time?

(prompt) What do you think might cause you to re-evaluate in terms of the future?

Talking about your life currently...

(prompt) Do you have a life plan? Where do you see yourself in this today?

(prompt) Perhaps things are not this structured for you, describe the current situation you think you are in.

(prompt) How do you hope your current situation will change? And what will you need to do in order to change it?

(prompt) Maybe you've talked to others about your life as it is today, who has offered guidance? Can you give a couple of examples?

What are your goals for the future?

(prompt) Do you have one main important goal? Perhaps there are more, give 2-3?

(prompt) Earlier we talked about how ideas of the future might have changed over time, what do you think has been influential on this change?

(prompt) For example is a person(s) influential, an event?

(prompt) Maybe a personal change?

Challenges?

(prompt) What challenges might there be ahead regarding your future goals?

(prompt) How do you think you will face these challenges?

(prompt) When challenged in the past, is there something you found got you through it? For example maybe music or another release?

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