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Life Trajectories, Socialization, and Identity

An ethnographic study on the influence of intergenerational relationships in forming a Chinese identity in Dutch society.

家和万事兴

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家和万事兴

“If the family lives in harmony, all affairs will prosper. ”

This proverb tells us about the important place of family in ‘Chinese culture’; family over everything.

Table of contents

Acknowledgements

The Chinese traditions, language, and 'culture' have for a long time intrigued me. My bachelor in Oriental Languages and Communication focused on China contributed to the start of my strong interest in the country and its 'culture'. After living in Beijing for three years, I continued creating this fascination. When I was back in the Netherlands for the master of Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology, I decided to relate my thesis topic to the Chinese people or communities. Yet, during my pre-master and beginning of the master, I struggled with the academic environment. Later on, I doubted whether to put an end to it. Despite specific difficulties, I continued my studies with the support of numerous people and therefore, I owe them a big thank you.

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1. Introduction

春节 – Chinese New Year Festival

According to legends, there lived a monster deep in the sea. This monster was called Nian (年), 'Nian' means 'year'. Nian sleeps 364 days a year, and only on New Year's Eve he wakes up and comes onto the mainland. Since he has slept for a very long time, he is terribly hungry. He searches for anything, big or small, something to devour. Everyone in the villages and towns is afraid of Nian. Every year they flee to the mountains to protect themselves. One year, an old traveller came to the village and asked the villagers: "Do you have some food for me and a place to rest? Because I have travelled a long way, and I am starving." But no one had time for him. Everyone was packing and preparing to leave the village and flee from Nian. Except for one old lady. She offered this traveller a warm soup and shelter. "Come with us to the mountains before Nian is coming, she said; why aren't you afraid of it?" In reciprocity of the warmheartedness and hospitality, the traveller told the old lady his secret about why he was not afraid of Nian. The traveller stayed in the house and started to decorate the walls and doors with red paper. New Year's Eve had come closer. It was midnight. Nian was awake and arrived in the village. But he noticed something strange. Everything was dark, except in the old lady's house. The candles were lit. Out of curiosity and ready to attack, Nian kicked in the door. However, the silence was interrupted as firecrackers were lit. Out of fear, Nian immediately went back deep into the sea. The next day, on the first day of the new year, the villagers returned. They were amazed why the old lady and the traveller were still safe and unharmed. So the old lady told the villagers the secret on how to protect themselves from Nian.[1]

[1] The livestream of Verhalenhuis Belvédère at the Chinese New Year Festival 2021 can be watched via facebook: https://fb.watch/66Vj5WrYfu/.

Passed down through generations, it has become a tradition to protect the house and everyone in the villages from Nian. By doing this, the Chinese decorate their home with red paper, and on New Year's Eve, firecrackers are lit. It is a tradition to celebrate the New Year in this way.

The Chinese New Year Festival, also called Spring Festival, is celebrated every January or February, depending on the lunisolar calendar. Each year represents a zodiac animal, which in total includes 12 animals, starting from 2021: Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, Pig and Rat. It is the most important festival of the year where families reunite, and traditional practices are passed onto future generations. The Chinese New Year is a public holiday in China, to such an extent that most institutions, businesses and organisations are closed. Consequently, many people living in the big cities go back to their hometowns to celebrate with their families (Tan et al. 2009). This migration process shows the importance of family within the 'Chinese culture'. The Chinese New Year Festival is a tradition and, for many, the only holiday of the year.

This year, on February 12, 2021, it was officially celebrated. On this day, I joined two live streams: one told the historical story on the origin of the Chinese New Year Festival as described above, the second was an online cooking workshop *Hot Pot*[2] *at home* held by one of my interlocutors. For Chinese, it is tradition to get together with family and friends to eat Hot Pot, especially during Chinese New Year. Because of this live stream and the information shared during my first few interviews, I noticed the importance of family relationships within Chinese communities outside the nation-state.

Therefore, my focus shifted towards family dynamics and to what extent family contributes to their lives in the 'new' society. In my case, the Chinese families in Dutch society. I was interested in how first and second generation Chinese immigrants find a place in a 'new' society while at the same time, possibly, holding on to their Chinese background. The new focus also involves generational relationships within these Chinese migration families in the Netherlands since I focus on both the first and second generations. I analyse the life trajectories from the start of their-, or their parent's migration process to the Netherlands, until their current stage of life. How is it like to be raised within two 'cultures'? How does one adapt to another society after migration? How to deal with two 'cultures' in one life trajectory? And to what extent are intergenerational relationships playing a role? Not only shared practices and beliefs are transmitted to the next generation, but also upbringing values play a key role. Raised by

[2] Hot Pot is a Chinese-style fondue. The pot is filled with a simmering broth, surrounded by plates of various ingredients which can be cooked in the hot pot. It is a kind of shared dining.

Chinese parents, yet at the same time adopting the beliefs and behaviour of the Dutch society. These processes are influential in the formation of an individuals' identity, raising questions like Who am I? Where do I belong?

Thus, I changed my focus from the Chinese New Year Festival towards Chinese family relationships as an involving factor contributing to identity formation, examining how Chinese identity is formed in Dutch society by considering life trajectories after migration, intergenerational relationships and socialization processes. These factors are the main topics in this research, including the topic of identity itself.

"We are not viruses": research problem

Two days before the official Chinese New Year Festival day, on 10 February 2021, the headline *"Chinese Dutch file a report because of 'discriminatory' song Radio 10"*[3] hit the national news and caused much criticism. An example of many racial and stereotyping occurrences that have been problematic in Dutch media. A Radio 10 DJ released a song linking Chinese identity with the Coronavirus. Many filed a complaint against the song *"Voorkomen is beter dan Chinezen"* (Prevention is better than Chinese). At that time, almost 40.000 people signed the petition *"Wij zijn geen virussen"* (We are not viruses) that was started right after the release. "Coronavirus!" was one of those discriminatory words used to insult or yell at people with Asian physical appearances.[4] It shows the years of systematic stereotyping and discrimination against the Chinese community in Dutch society. These problematic matters are influential in shaping identities through socialization.

Recommended by a Chinese Dutch friend, I started reading a book about the double life of Chinese Dutch citizens (Wu 2019). Wu writes his autobiography on being raised by Chinese parents in Dutch society, from the obstacles he faced growing up in a Chinese family to his Chinese Dutch nationality (Wu 2019). He was going on his search for other Chinese Dutch while discussing and sharing experiences. The habit of assuming natural associations of "a culture, a people, and a place" is a challenging naturalism affecting identity (Gupta & Ferguson 2007:341). For example, the Dutch live in the Netherlands, and China is where the Chinese live. I argue that it cannot be assumed that one 'culture' or one person is associated with one place. Processes of globalization resulted in increased migration and, therefore, cultural changes in

[3] https://www.nu.nl/binnenland/6029809/chinese-nederlanders-doen-aangifte-vanwege-discriminerend-lied-radio-10.html

[4] https://nos.nl/artikel/2321252-nageroepen-vanwege-het-coronavirus-dit-is-geen-excuus-om-racistisch-te-zijn

the ‘new’ society. But to what extent have these changes had an impact on immigrants’ lives and their identity?

> “It is so taken for granted that each country embodies its own distinctive culture and society that the terms ‘society’ and ‘culture’ are routinely simply appended to the names of nation-states” − Barnard & Spencer, 2010

In this research, I am looking beyond what is taken for granted. I consider ‘culture’ and ‘society’ on an individual’s identity after migration. In other words, life trajectories influence someone’s identity formation, but socialization processes also play a significant role through upbringing and stereotyping. Taking into account dimensions of gender, time and space. I examine this by answering the following sub-questions:

- How are life trajectories shaping individual identity?
- How is socialization shaping individual identity?
- How is Chinese identity formed?

Hence, intergenerational relationships are fundamental to all the factors mentioned above. Accordingly, all the sub-questions provide insight into the main question posed in this study: **How are intergenerational relationships influencing Chinese identity formation?**

The Chinese in the Netherlands

In this section, I explain why I will examine both the first and second generations as subjects of this research and the chosen field site. In the beginning, I considered doing research only about the second generation. However, before starting my fieldwork, I watched the film The Joy Luck Club, which made me reconsider. The movie The Joy Luck Club (Wang et al. 1994) is about the life histories of four Chinese women who migrated from mainland China to America, where their respective four daughters were born. The four daughters were born in another country that was, to some extent, still foreign to their mothers’. Because of this, they grew up with some cultural differences between these two generations. This difference in cultural backgrounds often leads to difficulties and incomprehension. The four young women search throughout their mothers' past to understand their complex family relationships better. In particular, their mother’s history and place of origin, including their Chinese cultural

background and how they were raised. While watching, I noticed that the first generation affects the second generation's behaviour and decision-making processes. Also, how the second generation deals with their mothers' cultural background comes back in a series of flashbacks and present-day scenes. Because of this film, I perceived how family relationships are continued to maintain close, despite the differences in the cultural background of both the first and second generation. Therefore, I decided to examine both generations concerning one another.

That being the case, I came into contact with Chinese Dutch from both the first and second generations through a snowball effect. In this research, I address my subjects as *Chinese Dutch*, meaning people of Chinese descent living in the Netherlands. They are either born- or have been living in the Netherlands for a more extended period. The first and second generations define this distinguishment. Since there is no universal consensus on using these terms, I describe how I will apply the terminology.

The first generation involves immigrants born in China and arrived in the Netherlands at a later stage in life. They are raised and reached young adulthood in their country of origin. Most Chinese immigrants that arrived in the Netherlands came from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. Chinese groups migrated to the Netherlands from other countries such as Dutch-Indie, Singapore, Malaysia, and Vietnam (Pieke 2021).

I will refer to the second generation when an individual is born in the Netherlands to two parents of Chinese descent born elsewhere, for example, in one of the countries previously mentioned. Finally, one of my interlocutors is considered '1.5-generation' or 'in-between generation' because she was born in China and immigrated to the Netherlands at the age of nine. Since spending her childhood in both countries, she adopted the Chinese cultural practices and elements as well as continued her socialization in the Netherlands.

According to Lamb (2015:855), it is also necessary to distinguish between generation and chronological age. In contrast with generation, age refers to a 'passage of time' in the individual's life trajectory. For example, three of my interlocutors are middle-aged women around the age of 40. However, each of them is assigned a different term regarding the designated generation, including first, second and 1.5-generation. The backgrounds and demographics of all my subjects will be described throughout the analysis of my research.

As to my chosen field site, I was bound to change it into doing online anthropology due to the COVID19 pandemic. Yet, I had read various traditional anthropological ethnographies during my pre-master, which intrigued me for the fieldwork period. Just like Malinowski illustrated his first initiation into fieldwork on the south coast of New Guinea (2007:46-57), I wanted to experience my first entry into the actual field, encounter the, for me, unknown, and

approach the natives. Unfortunately, the pandemic regulations resulted in another type of fieldwork, different than I imagined. I looked for a method and topic with subjects that could be studied within the rules applicable at that time. Online ethnography became the most suitable way to do qualitative research. Despite the change in approach, I was eager to find out how online ethnography can bring narratives into perspectives. What involves online ethnography? Which methods are included? And am I still able to build trust in relationships with my subjects? Below, I will elaborate on the methods used and restrictions faced while doing online fieldwork in times of a pandemic.

Methodology

The social world is qualitatively studied and interpreted from people's perspectives, associating with the emphasis on the process, which shows the interconnectedness and, therefore, understandings of social systems (Bryman 2016:393-395). These processes can be studied through participant observation, interviewing or examination of documents (Bryman 2016:396). Qualitative research is therefore used to understand the way interlocutors behave and what their experiences are. I mainly conducted online ethnography due to COVID19 restrictions by collecting documents and online interviews, resulting in a multi-method approach through social media, documentaries, films, interviews, academic literature, and informative books.

Starting with the interviews, qualitative interviewing is flexible and includes questions varied in order (Bryman 2016:466-467). On the one hand, having a set of topics that will be discussed but on the other hand allowing the interviewee to answer freely. I interviewed five people in-depth, some of which multiple times. Using a recording machine was highly convenient to both the interviewee and me, although only when given permission. As a consequence, I was able to keep track of the interview without focussing too much on taking notes, resulting in a flowing conversation.

Furthermore, the relationship between the interviewee and me remained significant. Hence I address Hiller and DiLuzio (2004), who explain that interviews are a collaborative method between interviewer and interviewee. Keeping this view in mind to ensure I made my interlocutors feel comfortable, sharing my own thoughts and experiences created an informal atmosphere. On that account, I emphasized on the "meaning-making experience" and the interpretive relationship, which is called a constructivist approach (Hiller & DiLuzio 2004:3). The interviewee's participation does not only provide new experiences and knowledge; it also includes a "narrative complexity" where an interviewee is a real person and not just an

informant (Hiller & DiLuzio 2004:3). The experiences of an individual himself can be ambiguous, or one can even contradict himself. So, what is shared can be experienced differently by someone else in the same situation. Therefore, the perceptions derived from the interviews cannot be generalized into one conclusion.

To start the data analysis of the interviews, I developed themes and created a coding scheme, which later resulted in an overview with relevant quotes linked to a specific theme. After transcribing each interview, I read through it to make notes about what I found most interesting and wrote down questions that popped up. Besides the transcriptions, I also wrote fieldnotes during my fieldwork. These include short diaries, situations that occurred, and pre- or post-feelings after interactions or interviews. So, as a next step, I read through these general fieldnotes and transcriptions again, using coloured markers to make remarks or add keywords. Some keywords resulted in a coding theme with a particular colour which produced a data index. Then I reviewed the codes to see whether I could combine some to the same theme or interrelated to one another. Such linkages became the basis of my research, and those themes were developed into an analysis overview. Eventually helping me to transfer transcriptions and fieldnotes into distinct findings to analyse them for this research.

Furthermore, document collection involves archived data, including structural and contextual information from social media (Rahm-Skågeby 2011). I followed several Instagram and Facebook pages related to Chinese in The Netherlands. Screenshots of helpful information are strengthening the data derived from the interviews. Besides, certain documentaries and films create illustrations to support the arguments made. I watched most documentaries and films after having conducted the first few interviews. Because of this, I could link particular scenes to what has been said during the interviews. Finally, throughout my thesis, academic literature and informative books also build upon the analysis and results.

Restrictions

Throughout the fieldwork, I have encountered some obstacles regarding restrictions, and this section will elaborate on these restrictions. Firstly, during the Chinese New Year celebrations in The Hague, I was planning on getting a complete impression of the view on Chinese traditions through participant observation. I intended to observe 'Chineseness' as a representation or symbolisation during such festivals. Unfortunately, during my fieldwork period of three months, we were in a full pandemic of COVID19, which affected everyday lives. Not only events were cancelled, museums, shops, restaurants, and theatres were also closed. These restrictions hindered me from visiting Space101, based in Rotterdam and founded by one

of my interlocutors. It is an art gallery and cultural centre where 'Chinese' or 'Asian culture' can be demonstrated, performed, and understood by anyone interested.

Secondly, besides field site restrictions, I conducted most interviews online, which resulted in some limitations. I faced the fact that opportunities to have small and informal talks were lacking, such as those while grabbing a coffee together or having lunch. These moments could have helped build relationships with my interlocutors and, therefore, were valuable in collecting in-depth data. For instance, I met one of my interlocutors at the Hotel he was working at, and he showed me around while chatting. After the interview, we had a walk through the park nearby. These talks built trust and provided me with interesting data that would otherwise not have been discussed. I believe that this would have been more interesting and would have improved the other interviews if meeting face-to-face was possible.

Personal positionality

This section will elaborate on my positionality within the field and among my subjects. My interest in the Chinese diaspora started with my bachelor of Oriental Languages and Communication, where I chose to focus on China as well as the Chinese language and 'culture'. During this study, I stayed in Beijing for two semesters, approximately one year. After graduating, I decided to go back to Beijing and lived there for two more years. In this period, I have gained many experiences in living in a different society from my own. Adapting to a different 'culture' and at the same time understanding and questioning my own. Living together with and among people of various backgrounds around the world broadened my perspectives. It created a sense of belonging while also distancing myself from certain aspects of both Chinese and Dutch identity. These experiences helped me to show my interest in the research topic towards my interlocutors. Sharing my own experiences also broke the ice for a more comfortable atmosphere and relationships.

During the interviews, I noticed that I took on different roles each time speaking to another interlocutor. I adjusted my position based on their personalities, age and atmosphere. For example, when speaking to the second generation, I started more informal than the first time I spoke with subjects of the first generation. When interviewing the same interlocutor for the second time, I noticed a difference in how I approached the conversation. Gaining trust and some confidence allowed me to develop a personal and comfortable atmosphere further. I aimed to have informal discussions rather than an interview with many sequential questions, as I mentioned before. I mainly prepared topics to avoid asking interrogative questions, creating

space to share any thoughts, stories or experiences. However, as explained in the previous section, using online modes of communication made it more challenging to build these comfortable atmospheres. The usual discomfort when meeting new people for the first time was enlarged because of these online modes. Not being able to use non-verbal communication as well as missing the casual initiation of the conversation resulted in experiencing some kind of awkwardness in the first few minutes of the interview. To mitigate this, I started with the topic of the Chinese New Year Festival to begin with a recognizable subject. Later I found that it was a valuable entry point to their background and family relationships.

Ethical considerations

When conducting ethnographic research, anthropologists have to deal with arising difficulties and struggles, such as misunderstandings or conflicts (Howell 2012). The essence, I believe, is to keep in mind the well-being and personal life of my interlocutors, respecting the individuals and communities. Honesty, transparency, and integrity of my research (Howell, 2012; Koster, M. et al. 2018) is of great importance, especially in building trustworthy relationships with my interlocutors. To achieve this, I shared my research goals, methods, topics, and expected outcomes as a means to grant consent. Although, I was confronted with the COVID19 regulations causing the impossibility to enter a physical field site or community.

After two weeks in the field, I decided to persevere with mainly online ethnography, including contacting the subjects by making use of online modes. This required patience and time by which I could later generate better and fundamental access to information. It was challenging to build online relationships to a certain level that would provide significant and in-depth data. Most of these relationships were made through solely online modes, by which I needed to anticipate online-related ethical considerations. Gatson (2012) illustrates that online ethnography as a new field is complicated and brings about certain ethical boundaries.[5] She questions whether one needs informed consent for the data to be read or gathered in the online subfield site because it is open to the public (2012:251-253). I consider information that is publicly accessible online to be read and observed by me as an online ethnographer—taking responsibility for my intentions to use this online data to demonstrate or build upon arguments found in interviews.

[5] This relates to the paragraph where she explains that reading and searching on the internet is in itself a form of participant observation, because 'we are already "in"' (Gatson 2012:251-2). The online content is to some extent observed 'in' a specific subfield site, where it is interpreted and gathered as data.

Each interlocutor was invited to propose an online mode of communication of their choice, and I followed up on their request. Most of them chose Zoom, others Skype or WhatsApp. Before the interview, I also asked for consent on taking notes and recording the interview, using an independent Tascam instead of the recording option of the online mode itself. With the use of a Tascam, only the audio would be recorded rather than the video too. Using only the Tascam resulted in a more anonymous, comfortable, and safer-feeling environment to share personal life stories. Besides, I changed all names to add another level of anonymity. In my view, providing pseudonymous names would not take out of context the experiences nor affect the narratives told.

Bourgeois (2007) mentions the advice to take notes after the fieldwork observation instead of in public. Even though honesty and transparency are fundamental, taking notes in the presence of the interlocutors may make them feel uncomfortable. During interviews, I only intermittently took notes when a particular question came to mind to ensure I would not forget later. I worried whether this would affect my interlocutor's attention, yet realising that I continuously expressed my interests and listening skills by responding to their stories while taking notes that could follow up on the shared experiences. Not to mention, I emphasized the remaining possibility to omit specific details from the collected data.

Moreover, the flow of the conversations was given by my interest and research topic. However, contextual issues such as politics or the current state of immigration policies were not discussed in the fieldwork. These topics were also not brought into discussion by the interlocutors themselves. Therefore I will not take into account political beliefs and public policy.

Finally, ethics can also be dependent on interpretations (Bourgois 2007:290), bearing in mind that disseminating my results should be carefully considered. Despite the anonymity, certain narratives explicitly share information that could be linked to certain interlocutors if one knows them personally. In my case, some are acquainted because of the snowball method I used to approach them. Therefore, I altered such narratives and information from the summary that will be shared with each interlocutor to protect their identity.

Above all, I aim to share my subject's narratives and perspectives without doing them any harm, keeping a friendly, informal relationship with the subjects of my research. I am individually responsible for the ethics within my research and the related decision-making processes. Therefore, I am concluding that ethical and moral questions need to be discussed in any case separately because there is no definite answer to it (Bourgois 2007:297).

Outline

Before I turn to the analysis of this thesis, the theoretical framework will be presented, including main concepts which inform the analytical chapters. These concepts are identity, 'Chineseness', trajectories, socialization, and intergenerational relationships. The first empirical chapter examines life trajectories about a feeling of belonging or identity. In this chapter, I elaborate on the migration process and consider the concept of time to achieve linking life trajectories to the formation of an identity. The second empirical chapter involves an individual's socialization process, taking into account stereotypes, upbringing, and intergenerational relationships in Dutch society. In the third chapter, I will discuss the concept of identity by analysing discussions held during my interviews and examining theoretical debates on this concept. The last chapter is the conclusion in which I state my main findings, combine themes, and use the analysis to answer the main research question.

2. Theoretical Framework

Many scholars have discussed the process of identity formation. In this section, I will discuss the various aspects that I use in my analysis of identity formation. In particular, I can establish a framework by which I can analyse Chinese identity formation, mainly regarding intergenerational relationships, because these remain a core value throughout this thesis. However, also considering other aspects that influence this formation process, such as life trajectories and socialization. I will start this section by stating various ideas about the concept of identity, which continue to be interesting debates in current anthropological research.

Identity

Brubaker and Cooper (2000) criticise the concept of 'identity' by arguing that it is not static and fluid; instead, it involves much "blunt, flat, undifferentiated" vocabulary. They focus on the analytical category of the concept since it does not fulfil the need for social analysis (Brubaker & Cooper 2000:2). In the mid-1970s, it was called the "identity-crisis", mainly implying the overflow of the concept's meaning, which continued to be so (Brubaker & Cooper 2000:3). Brubaker and Cooper divide principal vital terms in social science into "categories of practice" or "categories of analysis", while 'identity' belongs to both categories (2000:4-6).

Identity is closely related to the concept of belonging. Chow (2007) studies Hong Kong adolescent immigrants in Canada by examining their sense of belonging and life satisfaction, contributing to the adaptation of adolescent minority immigrants in Canadian society. Groenewold describes feelings of belonging as an indicator of identity, to what extent they belong to different groups and communities, both nation and ethnic, or other social and spatial entities (2008:108). In addition, temporal entities can also influence a feeling of belonging because they can be created in different stages throughout one's life trajectory. The feeling of belonging may be subject to changes over time. This dimension of time will be further elaborated within the theoretical framework on the concept of trajectories.

Where Chow focuses on adolescent's belonging, Blackman examines 'youth subculture' in postmodern theories, which implies belonging to a social group that is different from, but at the same time linked with the dominant 'culture' (2005:2). Drawing on the ideas of Max Weber that have influenced subculture theory and therefore provided a framework for its reconsideration (Blackman 2005:8). Bucholtz (2010)explains that 'youth cultures' are only recent topics within anthropology and thus are now expanding on examining youth cultural

practices. She describes the difficulties in defining youth since it depends on the context through which social relations are "reproduced and contested" (2010:528). Bucholtz (2010) focuses on white youth identities concerning language and race, constructed through social practices and social interaction.

In relation to youth studies, Louie (2006) argues that the children do not necessarily adopt the transnational orientations of their parents in their formation of identity. She discusses to what extent transnationalism affects these second generation immigrants regarding globalization. Race, class, and gender are factors in the ethnic and transnational orientations (Louie 2006:3). According to Yuval-Davis, these factors are also debated in social and economic locations. Besides the social difference in categorisation, they also have a "certain positionality along an axis of power" (Yuval-Davis 2006:199). Cui also uses race, class and gender by examining how they intersect in forming a Chinese youth identity (2013:6). For instance, experiences of racial discrimination contribute to the decreased sense of belonging (Cui 2013:16).

On the other hand, many scholars examine ethnic identities (Ek 2009; Marino 2020; Tong 2010), "focusing on individuals' sense of belonging to a group or culture" (Cui 2013:4). By moving beyond imagined boundaries, feeling belonged to multiple places can create, as Hass describes, "hybrid identities" (2020:27). Having interactions with both host and native 'culture' could be referred to as acculturation. For instance, learned attitudes and behaviour of cultural heritage are changed due to contact with other native 'cultures'.

Furthermore, the relation between 'us' and 'them' is also relevant. Boundaries separating the world population into 'us' and 'them' are the boundaries of the politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis 2006:204). She further describes the notion of belonging as identification of the self or by others and has different analytical levels: social locations, identifications and emotional attachments, ethical and political values (Yuval-Davis 2006:199). These analytical levels will be further explained in chapter five based on the analysis of my data. Twumasi-Ankrah also explains belonging as a dynamic process that constructs boundaries, dividing everyone in the world into 'us' and 'them' (Twumasi-Ankrah 2019:228). Language and religion are aspects that construct symbolic boundaries between 'us' and 'them' (Lamont & Molnár 2002:185). Also, when young people are not feeling welcome to the 'us' because of their ethnic background or appearance, they could feel the belonging to 'them' (Vroon 2014:19). In this study, the concept of 'Chineseness' is part of the ethnic background, influencing a feeling of belonging.

'Chineseness'

The study of Chinese diasporas and identity-formation is essential in understanding Chinese migration and Dutch and Chinese society (Li et al. 2016:4). Li et al. argue that degrees of 'Chineseness' is helpful in this identity-formation (Li et al. 2016:56). Chun explains that Chinese overseas use the concept of 'Chineseness' to represent their ethnicity and identity, even though they have been indigenized in another lifestyle (Chun 1996:123). Chinese Dutch may use this concept of 'Chineseness' if they relate to their ethnicity or identity. He also points out the term 'Chineseness' being understood as characterized for ethnic Chinese because "we are influenced by a homogeneous notion of culture that is essentially modern, if not national, in origin" (Chun 1996:113).

The assumption of the youth festival,[6] which Louie explained, was that it could create a "common thread of Chinese-ness" for the Chinese American participants to feel connected to their ancestral homeland (Louie 2000:661). This is about what Rao (2017) describes as Chinese-ness, which involves sharing the same language, experiences and cultural traditions that are developed through practices. Even though Rao examines overseas Chinese Christians by focussing on religious perspectives, I apply this definition of 'Chineseness' and the idea that the concept is ever-changing. Rao even continues arguing that the concept is a culture that continues to be created throughout history (2017:123) and that is being shaped during the present (2017:138).[7]

Individual trajectories: migration and time

As explained above, the meaning of concepts can change over time, yet this ever-changing-phenomena can be applied to various values in life. Throughout this thesis, life trajectories are an essential core value to understand Chinese identity formation. Accordingly, it is meaningful to construct a framework for trajectories related to the concept of migration and time. Many anthropologists, and other scholars, coped with both concepts inconsistently.

For a long time, social scientists remain interested in migration processes, though believing that immigrants' relations to their country of origin would eventually weaken (Levitt & Schiller 2004). However, scholars nowadays conduct findings that these relations remain intact as well as influence migrants and their future generations (Levitt & Schiller 2004:1002).

[6] A festival for young people of Chinese descent who are destinated in another country. This festival is held in Guangdong Province by Chinese governmental organizations to connect Chinese overseas with mainland China (Louie 2000).

[7] This is in relation to the concept of time explained further below.

I will continue on this argument throughout my analysis. As Zheng et al. (2019) explain, Chinese families, seem to hold on to their norms and values, even after migration. For example, Chinese fathers continue to pursue their paternal, traditional roles when starting businesses in the Netherlands to take care of the family (Geense et al. 2005).

After the revolution in the 20th century, Mao Zedong established the People's Republic of China. Economic reforms started, and China opened to the rest of the world. Since then, migration from China has increased, including the number of students that arrived in the Netherlands (CBS 2020a). The main reason for migration before 2000 was economic, to find work, which differs from post-millennium immigrants known as "knowledge immigrants" (Zheng et al. 2019). These "knowledge immigrants" came to the Netherlands to continue their studies and later become professionals (Zheng et al. 2019:224-225). According to Statline of the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics, Chinese immigrants in the Netherlands count 1,397 in 1996, which increased to 8,049 in 2019 (CBS 2020a). Besides the restaurant business, other reasons for migration were, looking for work in agriculture, construction, prostitution and personal care (Pieke 2021:6). Also, end of the 20th century, the number of Chinese students in the Netherlands increased among highly educated Chinese looking for a job after graduation (Pieke 2021:6).

Regarding second generation people with a migration background, meaning people born in the Netherlands and of whom both parents were born in the foreign country, are also increased over the years. In 1996, the Netherlands counted 6,084 second-generation Chinese Dutch, growing to 18,801 in 2020 (CBS 2020b). Both first and second generations are analysed in this study. But how are these generations adapting to Dutch society? What involves the process by which they are accepted into the new society? Which challenges are they facing?

Socialization: stereotypes, upbringing and migration

When an individual adopts a particular society's beliefs and behaviour, it is referred to as socialization (Barnard & Spencer 2010:646). Socialization involves a process for adults, young adults and children in which the individual learns all aspects of collective life. Pels and De Haan study child socialization practices of Moroccan migrants in the Netherlands and consider it a cultural practice by coping with both tradition and the orientation to a new environment (2007:73). They explain the comparative perspective of pre-and post-migration socialization and how these migrants struggle between the old and the new, which result in such socialization practices (Pels & De Haan 2007:75). Furthermore, Mayer (2013) describes that "social mobility

and major social changes such as urbanization or industrialization involve the resocialization of people of all ages". Neglecting to provide illustrations on migration processes as aspects that influence resocialization. Thus, I consider adopting beliefs and behaviour, migration, and cultural practices from both the 'old' and 'new' society as part of the socialization.

Moreover, parents play an important role in the development of adolescents and are therefore "influential agents of socialization" (Machowska-Kosciak, 2020:19). Children are provided with social norms, values and behaviour accepted by their parents (Machowska-Kosciak 2020:20)[8]. Referring to Wentworth (1980), socialization is where the individual is in the process of becoming a member of society (Machowska-Kosciak 2020:22). Nash states that socialization theories explain how people become part of or "members" of their culture, and their socialization practices are "basically observations that people do what they have been brought up to do" (Nash 2003:50). In this thesis, I will also use the role of the parents concerning upbringing in the context of socialization. Below I will discuss literature on the socialization process for first and second generation Chinese abroad in relation to stereotypes, upbringing and migration.

In several relevant studies, the stereotypes towards Chinese in foreign countries are explored. Firstly, Ladegaard (2012) describes an online debate on self-categorization and other-categorization between Hong Kong Chinese- and mainland Chinese students. These forms of social categorization can be referred to as stereotyping. Stereotypes are socially constructed because they can be created in everyday communication and influenced by "contextual and situational factors" (Ladegaard 2012:61). The categorization of 'the other' is analysed in chapter four on the socialization in Dutch society. Here, I will introduce the need to study stereotypes as part of the socialization process and, accordingly, the formation of an identity.

Regarding stereotyping in the Netherlands, Hoogervorst & Tarisa address a fundamental issue: Asian-Dutch people are racialized in similar ways even though they cannot be seen as a single community (2021:28). Activism against racism and stereotyping of Asians in the Netherlands has only recently received attention in Dutch media. In 2013 on an episode of the talent show *Holland's got talent*, Gordon expressed discriminating remarks to a Chinese participant (Hoogervorst & Tarisa 2021:29).[9] More recent is the carnivalesque song that was produced when the Covid-19 pandemic hit the Netherlands. The song *Voorkomen is beter dan*

[8] … also explain peers as being influential agents in socialization, however, these will not be considered in this study.

[9] A Dutch article on this discriminating situation can be retrieved from https://www.ad.nl/sterren/gordon-voorpaginanieuws-grote-chinese-krant-na-grap~af33c98c/. The English version from https://www.dutchnews.nl/news/2013/11/rtl_gets_official_complaints_a/.

Chinezen (Prevention is better than Chinese)[10] consisted of racialized phrases that resulted in an online petition against the radio station that broadcasted it as well as a hashtag trend *#ikbengeenvirus* (I am not a virus). Another hashtag trend followed #iklachniet (I am not laughing), which involves a campaign to end systematic racism (Asian Raisins n.d.). These features of racism and stereotyping manifested in the Netherlands are feasible factors in Chinese identity formation.

Furthermore, Levitt and Schiller (2004) argue that one must look beyond national boundaries to understand individuals in society because migrants are "embedded in multi-layered transnational social fields". For example, the daily activities are maintained in their nation-state and transnationally, meaning that the concept of society is not confined to national boundaries (Levitt & Schiller 2004:1004). Such transnational influences could be interpreted through upbringing values. In chapter four, I elaborate further on these upbringing values and stereotypes concerning the process of socialization.

Lastly, Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* cannot be overlooked regarding the framework for migrant families. The notion of *habitus* indicates an individual's "past and present circumstance and helps to shape one's present and future practice" (Nowicka 2015:12). Through family upbringing, educational experiences and the socialization process, an individual learns "how to act, feel, talk, hold one's body, etc." in society (Nowicka 2015:12). Bourdieu's thinking also provides analytical insights into the lives of migrants in combination with the "structural circumstances that are not of their choosing" (Kelly & Lusis 2006). The *habitus* in relation to migration involves the notion that immigrants take their personality with them to the destinated country and develop themselves throughout their lives in the destinated society (Nowicka 2015:11). In this thesis, I consider stereotypes, family upbringing, boundary-making, and intergenerational relationships within the socialization process as factors wherein an individual, first or second immigrant, creates one's presence and later forms an identity in the destinated society.

Intergenerational relationships as part of Socialization

When exploring the role and meaning of Chinese-ness in the business conduct of Chinese Indonesian entrepreneurs, Koning (2007) looks at generational differences among these entrepreneurs. Through Mannheim, Koning explains generations as a social phenomenon as individuals within a particular age group with similar experiences and beliefs (2007:146).

[10] As explained in the introduction

However, like Mannheim also argues, generation as a location phenomenon are experiences and patterns transmitted from one generation to another (Mannheim 1970:382), as an uninterrupted process (1970:392). I consider this perspective applicable for understanding intergenerational relationships hips and thus for Chinese identity formation. Intergenerational relationships remain a core value throughout this thesis. Mannheim also viewed that class position is an influence on people's lives. However, I do not focus on the class position within this research. Further research is necessary to examine this topic about Chinese identity formation.

Lamb (2015) presents both senses of the concept generation as in the first place a group of people sharing corresponding identities, practices and beliefs within the same period; as in the second place relationships between parents, children and their children, as well as forms of status and identity related to a kinship-system. She explains four topics within these senses that have been the focus for anthropologists.

Firstly, adopting generation to understand social change, or how Mannheim explains it as a "fresh contact" where each new generation experiences its social and cultural heritage (Mannheim 1970:383-384). His explanation is related to recent developments in youth studies occurring in the late 1970s because of economic, social, and cultural changes (Woodman & Bennett 2015), leading to the centre of attraction within anthropological studies of generational change (Lamb 2015).

Secondly, relationships between generations of kin have been examined since the beginnings of anthropology as a discipline (Lamb 2015). In one of her other studies, she found that intergenerational family relationships involve lifetime reciprocity of indebtedness among Bengalis (Lamb 2000). Not only does ageing shape these relationships, nonetheless, also economic, political or moral factors. For instance, regarding filial piety in China, the one-child policy, or the desire for independence and generational equality among younger generations influence kin-related intergenerational relationships (Ikels 2004). I will focus on these family-related intergenerational relationships because, as explained above, the Chinese are viewed as "family-oriented" where the family has been a "pivotal feature" within Chinese communities and societies (Göransson 2009:6).

Thirdly, anthropologists have also used genealogical generations as a principle to reflect on social relations beyond the family for structuring societies (Lamb 2015:855). As explained in the introduction, it is worth recalling that there is an essential distinction between age and generation as a principle when thinking about social relations.

Finally, the fourth topic explained by Lamb involves generation as a form of identity that can "intersect with other axes of difference such as class, race, gender, sexuality, ability, and age" (Lamb 2015:855). For example, Göransson describes conflicts that occurred between mothers- and daughters-in-law, which are associated with the changing positions of women in Singapore (Göransson 2009:135). Traditionally the woman was expected to live in the house of the man and tolerate her mother-in-law. However, nowadays, women prefer independence in housing as well as the desire to be the woman of the house instead of their mother-in-law (Göransson 2009:135). Besides, Teo et al. (2003) also examine the changing expectations about gender roles within intergenerational relationships in Singapore's Chinese-origin families. By way of illustration, they explain the ambivalence of gender preferences of children. It tensions intergenerational relationships since the grandparent generation favours sons. However, the parent generation shows a less clear view (Teo et al. 2003:337).

3. Trajectories: from there to here

> Hanna explained that her parents were one of the first of her family that started a restaurant business in the Netherlands. From a small village near Wenzhou in the province of Zhejiang, they came to the Netherlands to build a better life, make a living and later send money back to their family in China. This is also the reason for being so driven and successful. In the early 1980s, their Chinese-Indonesian restaurant was established, and the realization of the Dutch dream had begun. − Fieldnotes, 31 January 2021

In the Netherlands, Chinese immigrants have a history of more than a century and are one of the oldest ethnic minorities (Pieke & Benton 1998). Hanna (41) is born in the Netherlands shortly after her parents migrated to the Netherlands from a small village near Wenzhou in China. Apart from Zhejiang, the province where Hanna's parents are from, Chinese immigrants also originated from other parts of mainland China as well as Hong Kong and Taiwan. Not to mention Indonesia, where the Chinese colonized for trading, occurred even before the Dutch arrived (Pieke & Benton 1998:126) and another former Dutch colony: Surinam (Pieke, 2021:6). Also, Chinese students from Indonesia were making an educational journey to the Netherlands in terms of student exchange. In addition to the ones from Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China, among them Meili in the late twentieth century.

Chinese sailors were another group of migrants who arrived in the Netherlands and mainly replaced Dutch seamen because of the seamen strike (Pieke & Benton 1998:127). The Dutch seamen started the racist expression "yellow peril", considering the Chinese sailors as rivals (Pieke & Benton 1998:127). As a result of the settlement of these Chinese seamen, Chinatowns were established, based in Rotterdam and Amsterdam. Around 1930, the shipping industry changed, and many Chinese seamen lost their jobs, leading to the *pindakoekjes handel*[11] (peanut-cake trade) (Pieke & Benton 1998:128). After World War II and the independence of Indonesia, an increasing amount of Peranakans[12] came to the Netherlands. These flows of migration resulted in growing Chinese communities and the emergence of Chinese-Indonesian restaurants.

[11] a *pindakoekje* is a small cake made of peanuts and caramelized sugar. The trade started with one unemployed Chinese seaman who made the Dutch population curious for his *pindakoekjes*.

[12] Peranakans is a term used for ethnic Chinese from the Indonesia, Philippines and Malaysia. Originally the Indonesian Archipelago 'Nusantara'.

Many other Chinese migrated to the Netherlands, supported by either their relatives or friends who had already built a living in the Netherlands, where the Chinese-Indonesian restaurant business was booming (Pieke & Benton 1998:131). Daniel (32) is born in the Netherlands, and his parents immigrated to the Netherlands from Wenzhou in Zhejiang province (China). They were among these migrants that arrived in the post-war Netherlands. A few generations within his family had already migrated to the Netherlands before his parents came.

> "Their main goal was to go overseas because that was 'the world', 'the rich empire'. This is the place where one can make a good living. (…) My mother arrived when she was 14, so she was not highly educated. My father was about the same age. Together they established a Chinese-Indonesian restaurant which was a booming business in the 80s-90s."– Daniel, 19 February 2021

Having an overseas family was considered wealthy because when one's children had migrated to Europe, it signified that one is rich. For example, all children of Liling's grandparents left for Europe to make a better living; the majority migrated to Italy, others to the Netherlands or alternative countries. Liling (42) was born in a small fishing village close to Wenzhou in China. At the age of nine, she migrated to the Netherlands, where her parents had already settled. She has lived in the Netherlands ever since, and together with her husband, they have two children.

However, having multiple family members living overseas may affect intergenerational relationships, especially when parents leave their children behind in the country of origin. This happened to Liling:

> "My father left during my mother's pregnancy, and my mother followed him when I was two years old, but I did not fully experience that. Only when I turned nine I was reunited with them in the Netherlands. So basically, I was raised and cared for by my grandmother. (..) My sister is the most important family member in my life because I grew up with her, of course. It was a totally different environment as well as stage of life when my mom came into the picture. As if I was suddenly adopted at the age of nine." – 12 March 2021

The excerpt above illustrates the fundamental relation between intergenerational relationships and upbringing. Liling experienced a kind of 'double culture shock' by

dealing with both a 'new' society and a 'new' family at the same time. I elaborate further on these intergenerational relationships regarding upbringing in chapter four.

Moreover, not just the environment of a new society and family changed. It was her stage of life as well that had an impact on her well-being. She was nine, meaning she was just a child that had to adapt to a completely different way of living. After being raised by her grandmother, she is suddenly living under the roof of her parents, following their rules. This moment in her life trajectory may have played a key role in creating a feeling of belonging or shaping a particular identity. When Yuval-Davis discusses the notion of belonging, he points out that stages in one's life cycle, among other divisions[13], are a social division that tends to shape most people globally (2006:201). Life trajectories are therefore essential in this study, which I continue to develop throughout the chapters. Specifically, the following section provides more details about the concept of time.

Time will tell

> "I notice that in this stage of life since I became a mother, my own traditions and culture became more important. More and more, I feel like I am getting closer to my heritage. There were times when I just arrived in the Netherlands, I was still young, and it [my own culture] was not really that important. The other culture was. The world. New things." – Meili, 31 January 2021

In 2002, Meili (40) came to the Netherlands as a student, and after graduation, she received two job offers. She disliked the idea of returning to China, so she decided to stay and take the opportunity to see more of the world. For almost 20 years now, she has lived in the Netherlands. She was a wife to her Dutch husband and a mother to their seven-year-old daughter and four-year-old son. Just after her daughter turned six, Meili started passing on the Chinese cultural traditions to her children. Through Chinese New Year celebrations, she creates awareness of Chinese practices and traditions.

Before becoming a mother, Meili never reflected on how her mother raised her. Returning to her roots was not only valuable in finding the essence within upbringing principles and expectations. It also contributed to a changing view of her parents' upbringing values. Thus, life-course transitions are significant within the development of intergenerational relationships, especially concerning caregiving. Yarris (2017) illustrates this temporal dimension of

[13] Such as gender, ethnicity and class. Out of these, I focus on life trajectories and gender in this thesis.

caregiving and signifies how intergenerational perspectives are essential to the lives of transnational families. She portrays experiences of one transnational family regarding migration which needs to be perceived across time and generations since the present incorporates senses of the past (Yarris 2017:115). Reflecting on her past, Meili is grateful for her parents' childrearing by not taking it for granted and pertaining it to their daughter and son. Furthermore, searching for her roots also helped her to form an identity:

> "Looking back at your Chinese roots actually is looking back inside. Rather than opening your eyes to the outside world, you open your eyes and look inside. Looking for who you are." −13 February 2021

Generally, *time* continues to be an underlying value within anthropological discourses of any kind (Munn 1992). Jedrej describes the concept of time as "a linear flow", indicating the life trajectory from birth to death, and as "repetitive", meaning the experience and representation of cycles (2010:691). I examine time as a linear flow since experiences from birth to death shape who one is throughout one's life. Not just singular experiences, however, especially the meaning assigned to these experiences. In addition, people are considered ambivalent, and for that reason, time can also be a back- and forth matter. By this, I contradict the linear flow to a considerable extent. Also, I argue that experiences in one's life trajectory can go in one direction but then alternate, especially regarding space[14], where people repeatedly go from one place to another. These alternate places can influence their way of thinking. Therefore, time is an instrumental concept in creating a feeling of belonging or identity.

> "When being young, one is curious and interested in cultural exchanges. Except now, I have also noticed that I turn more towards myself. Who am I? What do I want to pass on to my children? What kind of people would I like them to become?" − Meili, 31 January 2021

Moment of awareness of 'Chineseness'

The previous section ended with a quote from Meili, who reviewed her own identity and fundamentals in life. This reflectional process occurred at the time when she became a mother. The other was more interesting when she was young, though now she was aware of her

[14] The relation between space and identity will be further discussed in chapter 5.

‘Chineseness’. In this section, I indicate how certain moments in one’s life trajectory can create awareness of one ‘Chineseness’.

> “In China, with my grandmother, we celebrated Chinese New Year very differently. At the time, we were poor and living in a small village. Then it was just like I am going to fire firecrackers, and I got a nice envelope and something to eat. We had never heard of fondue. Later [in the Netherlands], when we had the restaurant, my father cooked special dishes because he was a chef. But these special dishes were only made for the western new year. Chinese New Year was not really celebrated anymore because where we lived, there was not a Chinese community that organised it.” – Liling, 12 March 2021

Not being part of or surrounded by a Chinese community can lead to a lessening sense of ‘Chineseness’, including Chinese traditions and celebrations. Perhaps this was also the case for the cashier I encountered while doing groceries in the Oriental supermarket. When I was paying, I received a stuffed animal: an ox in a Chinese suit, because this year is the year of the ox. I asked if I received this because of the Chinese New Year that was going to be celebrated the next day. He answered: “yes, tomorrow, but we do not celebrate it, as usual, we are open. We just celebrate the new year on January 1st”. Honestly, I was surprised by his answer, although he could have had many reasons for it. Only when analysing Liling’s comment, I thought of the reason that he might not have been part of a Chinese community. Similar to what Liling said that if it is not organised, it is less celebrated. However, I am not ruling out other reasons.

The life trajectory is vital in forming an identity within or between two ‘cultures’. Someone’s life trajectory consists of different phases where each phase fulfils a different role. According to May, “time itself is a source of belonging” because belonging is always constructed somewhere in time, whether it is the present or past (May 2017:406). Memory is also used to create a sense of belonging, which she explains as “belonging from afar”, meaning that memories from the past can create a sense of belonging in the present (May 2017:407). Liling explained her memories of the Chinese New Year celebrations when she lived in China with her grandmother. Later, her memories turned into ideas for bringing the Chinese ‘culture’ to a broader audience. She joined the organisation China Festival Rotterdam and assisted in organising activities and festivities.

Intergenerational relationships are likely to change over time, not just because of changing circumstances[15]but also an individual's development can be a key factor (Silverstein 2005). At a later stage in life, Daniel became interested in learning the Chinese language, mainly to communicate with his parents. Their level of Dutch was not adequate, so they only spoke the Wenzhou dialect, however, never being concerned with teaching Daniel and his siblings. His Chinese language development is thus valuable for strengthening the relationship with other family members. Bo also emphasized the impact of language skills regarding intergenerational relationships:

> "There is one thing that my mother finds very important, that is our ability to speak Chinese so we can communicate with them. Besides, my mother finds culture important too." − 19 March 2021

Bo (23) is born in the Netherlands and, therefore, second generation Chinese Dutch. Her parents of both Chinese descents are from Hong Kong. For a couple of years, she increasingly has been interested in her Chinese background. She was visiting Hong Kong to go in search of her roots. The relationship with other family members regarding language and roots will be further explained in the next chapter on socialization.

Conclusion

As an ethnic minority, the Chinese have a long history in the Netherlands and immigrated from various parts of the world. The rise of Chinese seamen led to emerging Chinese-Indonesian restaurants, which later resulted in the restaurant booming. Many Chinese families that are currently living in the Netherlands are or have been in this booming business. This migration process based on wealth affected intergenerational relationships when family members were left behind. These moments can not only create awareness of 'Chineseness', just as different roles and stages in life, they also shape a feeling of belonging. Both past and present time are sources for the formation process, of which memory, changing circumstances, and individual development are factors. But how does the process after migration look like when entering a new society? What are the obstacles both the first and second generation are facing in the 'new' society? This socialization process, as well as the obstacles, are explored in the next section.

[15] Exemplified in the previous section where Liling's process of migration is described.

Moreover, intergenerational relationships within families adapt to transitions in the life course, especially regarding support (Swartz 2009:199). For instance, families support their children until they built their careers. These relationships between young adults and parents may change over time. Accordingly, upbringing values are an essential factor in the formation of an identity. These will also be further elaborated in the following chapter regarding Dutch society.

4. Socialization: the process of adapting

In the previous chapter, I discussed the migration process and life trajectories as intergenerational relations and identity formation factors. This chapter will analyse how an individual learns aspects of collective life, family and the destinated society—discussing the socialization process in relation to stereotypes, upbringing and intergenerational relations in Dutch society.

> "We Chinese, if you live in China or somewhere else on earth, we are raised with pressure to achieve and with a sense of duty. That is very important within the Chinese culture. You are alone but live within a group. So the group can be small, your own family. However, the group can also be pretty big, including family and friends. Thus, everything you do has an effect on the other one you know. This makes it difficult for young people (young Chinese) to decide for themselves what they are willing to do. The first thing one's parents will say is: 'first go to university and study, study accountancy, and as a hobby, you can participate in an acting group, not as a serious job'. Because, if you ask Chinese parents what they most want their child to be, or become later, is doctor, lawyer, dentist, banker or manager." − Liling, 12 March 2021

Liling aspires to show non-Chinese, elderly Chinese, and the next generation that one should not think in boxes but perceive diversity within the Chinese community. She is eager to teach others, especially the next generation, how to deal with being Chinese. She illustrates it as follows:

> "I wish to show that people like me exist and that there are many people that do something else than what your parents want you to do. When I was young, Chinese people like that existed. But I did not know them; I did not have a role model. However, I do not want my children to grow up wondering where they can find such answers: 'I am Chinese, but I do not know how to deal with that.'" − 12 March 2021

Parents have certain expectations and ways of thinking that may differ from that of their children, the next generation. Because of the Chinese cultural norm of respecting the elderly, young adults are afraid to make individual decisions. They mainly have the "fear of collective dishonour" (Rozman 2014:30) or are worried when their views contract the view of the ones who raised them. These Chinese cultural norms will be further explained in the section on upbringing since it is part of the "family-centred patterns" Rozman indicates (2014:31). Liling adds the importance of passing on the view that money is not the essential purpose, but finding something that makes one happy, is.

Not only their parents may have different views, but also others in the 'new' society have specific thoughts that influence Chinese Dutch feelings of belonging. These stereotypes are obstacles faced in Dutch society, which I will further discuss in the next section.

Stereotypes as obstacles

> "And then I always say: one outlines the origin of things in their view. It is their story. But one cannot change other's opinions, nor deform. Thus, the best thing to do is tell our own story." − Meili, 13 February 2021

During the interview with Meili, we discussed how the 'new generation'[16] Chinese Dutch make themselves heard, mainly about the obstacles they face in Dutch society as well as the problematic stereotypes. Omroep PAC[17] and Stichting Meer dan Babi Pangang[18] are examples of online platforms that draw attention to these controversial matters. Telling their own story about who they are, how they are seen, and how they want to be seen—also sharing historical perspectives and authentic narratives to create awareness. Additionally, Asian Raisins is another platform that raises voices for Asian Dutch racism and discrimination by improving the representation of Asians in Dutch media and films (Asian Raisins, n.d.), striving for freedom

[16] Meili describes this generation as the group that is raised in the Netherlands who oppose controversial matters and use different modes of media to have their voices heard. Actually, the Chinese community are compliant to existing social norms rather than confrontational. "More modest and down to earth. Their main goal is to make a good living and take care of the family, particularly avoiding conflicts."

[17] Omroep PAC, Pan-Asian Connections, is a broadcast with narratives from an Asian-Dutch perspective who link Asia and the Netherlands. Going beyond stereotyping in media to create a better understanding of 'Asian cultures' and diversity in Dutch society. Their mission is to increase visibility of Asian Dutch people in the Netherlands and more diversity in mainstream media while striving for a balanced society with multicultural perspectives. https://omroeppac.nl/

[18] The Asian community is central in their mission to show diversity within the Chinese Indonesian community in the Netherlands. Sharing narratives from the past, but also experiences in the present. https://www.meerdanbabipangang.nl/wie-zijn-wij/

and equality of each individual. They started the campaign #iklachniet (I am not laughing) as a series of illustrations and narratives of East- and Southeast Asian Dutch. One example is the story of Yiuloon Lee titled "Schelden Doet Pijn" (bullying hurts)[19]:

"I would like to illustrate how I stand in regard to the racism against Asians, how it feels like being a dad and having to answer to my young children what has been going on for generations, how painful it is, what a fight it is. Let my children be Dutch, let my children be themselves…."

Yiuloon Lee has illustrated himself together with his two children. On his back are all the racist and discriminative comments written that he has heard. Words that he got thrown at his head, as well as hurtful comments. By joining this campaign, he hopes that this amount of racism finally stops. He wants that his side of the story is being told clearly and listened to. Thus, platforms and campaigns like these mentioned above respond to the ongoing racism and striving for a more inclusive Dutch society free of racism, xenophobia and racist stereotypes (Asian Raisins, n.d.). Yiuloon Lee is one of the many illustrations and narratives broadcasted on Social media and such platforms.

In addition, individuals also find ways to make an impact and share matters of discrimination. The petition "I am not a virus"[20] is an example of the recent racial statements about COVID19 against people with a Chinese background. In the documentary *De Wereld van de Chinezen* (The World of the Chinese)[21], a Chinese student studying at Groningen University

[19] Retrieved from: https://asianraisins.nl/iklachniet/

[20] As explained in the introduction

[21] In this documentary is Ruben Terlou, a China-expert and documentary maker, searching for Chinese outside mainland China. Finding out who they are, what they want to achieve and their impact on the locals. Watched on: https://www.npostart.nl/de-wereld-van-de-chinezen/VPWON_1296257

and living in a small village near Groningen describes such racial statements happening to him on the street:

"When I walk down the street, children often point at me and call me 'Corona'.

They are coughing at me on purpose.

It is always young children who do this to me.

I met an older woman on the street. She said something, but I did not understand her.

Then she told me in English that I must keep 1.5 meters away from her. Not vice versa.

So she said: 'You should be away from me 1.5 meters', and not like 'I should be away from you'.

I thought: please, do not think like that."

As mentioned in the introduction, the Dutch broadcast *Radio 10* produced and released a highly discriminatory song because it links the severity of the virus with Chinese people and their 'culture'. The role of the media is essential in such controversial matters. It must be aware as well as create awareness of stereotyping and misleading information that is spread through broadcasting or social media. Meili also expresses that the media has a responsible role and should consider information critically before broadcasting. She, among other interlocutors, signed the petition because hearing the song felt humiliating. An activist, who is also an artist, states that discrimination concerning the coronavirus affirms the problem itself, "if we are silent, we normalize it".[22] Aside from the media, such problematic matters are also experienced in other spheres of society. For example, discriminating jokes start from childhood onwards. Hanna filled me in on a situation that occurred at her daughter's primary school:

> "Children can quite bully others. My daughter recently came home with such a situation. She was called 'Chinese' and 'ching chang chong'. I am concerned with this." − 6 February 2021

In the past, Hanna herself also encountered such words and phrases, which gave her a feeling of being the 'other'. Hanna was not the only interlocutor that shared similar experiences. These are racist terms that are embedded throughout Dutch society, including the Dutch language. It

[22] Retrieved from: https://nos.nl/artikel/2321252-nageroepen-vanwege-het-coronavirus-dit-is-geen-excuus-om-racistisch-te-zijn

raises questions on where these words and phrases are originated. One must consider the literal meaning and consequences.

"The Asian Umbrella"

> "Recently, there was this incident on the television show 'Wie is de Mol?' (Who is the Mole Rat?). So it can clearly be seen that those stereotypical perceptions are deeply rooted in the media. One cannot escape from these matters anymore. However, it is a good thing that it is recognized today. Besides, Japanese, Korean, and Chinese are often lumped and generalized. When that became the perception, that same perception was used to laugh at me. But if that happens now, it really would not be possible. So I think that, right now, there is a kind of awareness of mainstream media in the Netherlands. That now 'Wie is de Mol' also acknowledges this as problematic, and that it is also published as problematic and racist." − Bo, 19 March 2021

> "Chinese are heavily discriminated against. Not just the Chinese, but the Asian community too. I did get my dose of 'poepchinees' (shitty Chinese), 'spleetoog' (slant-eye), or 'tjaptjoi' (chop choy, a Chinese recipe of mixed vegetables). Definitely. It harms me, but what can I do? Every now and then, I want to scream. But all I can do is keep myself sane. For many, it is harmful, so it is a good thing that awareness is created." − Daniel, 19 February 2021

Given the history of stereotyping in the Netherlands against the Chinese, it may be reassuring that, now, it is finally acknowledged. The 'Wie is de Mol?' (Who is the Mole Rat?) -incident[23] immediately received considerable attention, resulting in adjusting the episode. This incident is an example that shows the importance of creating awareness of stereotypes in Dutch media and Dutch society in general.

Furthermore, as both Bo and Daniel explained, the Asian community is often generalized. The word *Asians* is often used as an umbrella term, however, it includes varying degrees of diversity (Ee 2019). These are also the principles that are foundational for Omroep

[23] *Who is the Mole Rat* is a Dutch reality-game show. During a game one of the participants did the 'slant-eye' imitation to portray a singer of Asian descent. This resulted in a big fuss and a discussion on racist comments in Dutch media. https://nos.nl/artikel/2368662-deelneemster-wie-is-de-mol-context-spleetogen-sneuvelde-in-de-montage.

Pac and Stichting Babi Pangang. Lastly, Bo mentions the changes over time; in her view, people are more aware of such problematic matters now than before.

Liling's view on stereotypes started with the song 'Hanky Panky Shanghai'. She thought it was too standardized. Her goal, therefore, was to introduce the 'Chinese culture' and move away from stereotypes: "Me, as a Dutch woman with Chinese roots, as someone with certain standards and values can pass it[24] on."

Positive stereotypes

On the other hand, stereotypes can contain positive attributes towards the Chinese or Asian community in Dutch society. They are often seen as quieter and a hardworking community (Chow 2009). Similar to what Hanna describes, "Chinese are portrayed as hard-working, very accommodating [people]". This hard-working mentality is passed onto the next generation, particularly onto men within Chinese families. Relating to the essential gender dimension:

> "Especially for Chinese men, there is more pressure because they have to take care of the family. Many people, therefore, look for a job based on salary and income. As a woman, one has a little more freedom in this respect. And that is why you see more Chinese women who are being creative in the cultural sector. (…) My mother was the one who provided care, and my father was the sole bread earner, just like many Chinese families." − Liling, 12 March 2021

However, not to mention, such positive stereotypes inevitably contribute to pressures of actually complying with these stereotypes (Wu 2019). So, when someone says 'Chinese are smart and work hard', one feels the need to confirm this by becoming intelligent and working hard. On the other hand, statistically, Dutch Chinese are successful and highly educated, writes Wu (2019), by which he continues with the following:

> "Is that why people are still laughing about discrimination against the Chinese? Ridiculous, of course: as if words and actions hurt less when one is doing well." − Wu 2019:189

[24] Referring to 'it' as growing up within two 'cultures' by dealing with the social pressures and obstacles faced in Dutch society.

Upbringing in Chinese families

The previous chapter ended with a fieldnote transcription of Wu, who wrote a book on the double life of second generation Dutch Chinese. He discusses stereotypes towards Chinese in the Netherlands and going in-depth on the gender and sexuality obstacles he faced as a Chinese queer man in Dutch society, raised by first generation Chinese parents. The excerpt below is from a chapter where Wu explains the relationship with his father, particularly about the period of coming out. He discusses how his father's traditional expectations oppose Wu's identity and sexuality-based feeling of belonging. A silent week after Wu shared his sexuality with his father, he told Wu to apologize to his late grandfather for not giving him great-grandchildren (2019:48).

> "The culture in which my father grew up, one gets children to pass on the family name and to secure that someone will take care of you in a respectful way when being old. I often disagree with his ideas, yet I know his reactions like no other. But, I wonder, does he understand me, who I am, how I feel?" – Wu, 2019:49

Liling also described, in the previous section, the gender obstacles within Chinese families. However, before further analysing the concept of gender and sexuality in relation to upbringing, it is essential to mention that "gender is not a property of individuals", but it is "a socially prescribed relationship, a process and a social construction" (Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 2001:101). How we relate to each other, as masculine and feminine, is based on social formations, which are at the same time interconnected with power relations (Teo et al. 2003:330). Life trajectories play a role in this too. For example, when structural conditions change or when individuals make their transitions, perceptions about men and women's roles as well as identities also change (Teo et al. 2003:330-331).

This section will not only focus on gender obstacles. Instead, it gives an overview of the upbringing values within Chinese families as an expression of socialization in Dutch society. Upbringing in the 'Chinese culture' involves certain dimensions of life expectancies such as making money, filial piety, learning the language, and respecting the elderly. These dimensions are all part of the socialization process. I will discuss gender and sexuality, intergenerational relations, life trajectories and language, and respect concerning upbringing.

Gender and sexuality

Within recent anthropology, 'gender' is described as a "culturally specific symbolic articulation and elaboration" of the differences between female and male bodies, whereas "anatomical, biological and physiological characteristics" are used to refer to 'sex' regarding females and males (Pine 2010:319).

> "At home, we are with five, and I am the oldest of the siblings. In Chinese respect, that means that my parents put the most pressure on me. I am the son—the oldest. So I must take care of the family. But, lately, the pressure is less. It is not as intense as it used to be." − Daniel, 19 February 2021

Daniel described his position within the family as the first son that is expected to be successful and later takes care of the whole family. He explains the expectations that occur within Chinese migrant families regarding his gender role, similar to Pete Wu. Besides gender, these expectations can also be determined by the ordering of the children where the oldest feels the most pressure and less freedom. But apart from men, to what extent do women challenge social norms concerning 'Chineseness'?

As explained above, because of the changing structural conditions, women received more advantages due to employment opportunities (Teo et al. 2003:334). Because of this, they did not entirely rely on the husband anymore. Women joining the labour force as well as returning to college also influenced intergenerational relations (Pillemer et al. 1992). Besides, the attitude towards working women today has positively changed. Before, it was not accepted that one, as a woman, chose a career rather than raising a family (Teo et al. 2003:335). This changing attitude towards women also resulted in a change among intergenerational relationships. Liling mentioned such change in an excerpt above, where she stated that as a woman, one has more freedom. Women are not expected to take care of the family, so they feel the opportunity to be more creative. Besides, Liling also notices a gender difference regarding love relationships:

> "Chinese women are often seen with Dutchmen, as opposed to Chinese men with Dutch women. That concerns upbringing, pressure from home, duty, and in fact, what the parents want. (…) But there is now a sort of tilt. More and more parents are accepting mixed marriages." − 12 March 2021

Considering the topics Wu discusses on sexuality, Liling also argues the essence of discussing what is on one's mind and being open about one's identity, especially in relation to sexuality.

> "Now, there are more young Asians who are homosexual who also come out, for example. Not because there are suddenly many more, but because there are more who dare to come out. It is important that all of this is negotiable and that one does not have to be afraid to speak out." − Liling, 12 March 2021

Furthermore, women are often the link within a family, such as Meili described the role of her mother-in-law: "She was the one in our family who reminded us of Chinese festivals and family events. I think that, in cherishing and maintaining such things, women play a key role. It is often the woman who takes the initiative." However, this could be a gender difference that is expressed in multiple cultural groups. I will further discuss these different roles regarding expectations and responsibilities among intergenerational relationships.

Intergenerational relationships

One mother within my subject group understands her parental upbringing of how they have taught certain things, passed on from grandmother to mother and mother to daughter. Sometimes, these norms, values and habits are transmitted directly from grandmother to her granddaughter. Liling, who her grandmother raised until the age of nine, learned the 'Chinese culture' from her grandmother. Their strong relationship was built due to her parents' early migration process and because she remained interested in her Chinese background. According to Bertogg, "norms pertaining to family relations are often at the heart of the culture that characterizes a society" (2020:161).

In Singapore, for example, parents put energy and time into the upbringing of their children while simultaneously expecting elderly care from them (Göransson 2009). According to Cheung et al. (2020), this form of elderly care relates to "the cultural heritage of the Confucian concept of filial piety in which one has the responsibility of providing care for one's parents when necessary and possible". However, changes are visible within the Chinese diaspora, where the westernization of family bonds results in limited filial support (Cheung et al. 2020:2403). In addition, second generation Chinese Dutch find alternative ways of providing care to their parents, such as building a bridge between their parents and the destinated society (Cheung et al. 2020:2404). For example, the second generation helps the first generation with their language barrier to feeling less isolated.

Life trajectories and language

Family relations are not only affected by present circumstances, yet past circumstances and an individual's history are of influence (Teo et al. 2003:328). So, changing intergenerational relationships are depending on the life trajectories till old age (Hareven 1996). For instance, before becoming a mother, Meili never thought about her upbringing. After giving birth to her daughter, she started to look back at her roots. Now, she reconnected with her parents in a different way. Reminding herself of being grateful and not taking matters for granted. When we talked about the fundamentals in her current life trajectory, she enunciated:

> "In this stage of life, I want to include tradition, respect for the elderly and each other, humility, and gratitude in the upbringing of my children. That is something I really like about my heritage." − Meili, 31 January 2021

In different stages of life, Meili changed her views on her Chinese heritage, which is also why Chinese New Year is more important to her now. Since taking the role of a mother, she became more aware of her own 'culture'. She decided to raise her children bilingual (Dutch and Mandarin-Chinese) because language is a sort of commitment, especially in building a relationship with the grandparents overseas. Meili's parents were thrilled about the fact that their grandchildren were raised bilingually. Portes and Hao (2002) also address how linguistic adaptation influences family relations and that fluent bilingualism enhance acknowledgement and understanding of the family's culture. In terms of these family relations, especially among the second generation, it is preferable to be bilingual instead of monolingual in the English language so as to understand their parent's culture (Portes & Hao 2002:907). This benefit in bilingualism is also valuable in the case of in-laws:

"We would prefer to find her a Chinese who grew up here."

"If he speaks Chinese, we would be able to communicate better with each other."

"Then we can also talk to the in-laws."

"But it is her choice."

The mother in this documentary, De Wereld van de Chinezen (The World of the Chinese), mentioned in the previous section, explains the importance of language for her and her family. Preferring to find a Chinese boyfriend for her daughter, so they can all speak Chinese and communicate with other family members and in-laws. Therefore, intergenerational communication goes sometimes beyond the family to strengthen the relationship with the family-in-law.

Respecting the elderly

As described above, Meili also wants to include the norm of respecting the elderly in her children's upbringing. At first, I speculated that her choice to transmit these cultural norms is because she is a first generation immigrant. In the first 20 years of her life, she was raised as well as developed her young adulthood in China. This period within her life trajectory remains significant in adopting cultural norms and values. However, after analysing the interview with Bo, a second generation Chinese Dutch, I found that this norm can also be transmitted to the next generations within immigrant families. The fact that she is raised in Dutch society is, in this case, somewhat disregarded.

> "I think it is really important to be respectful to your parents, regardless of whether you like them or not. That is why they are central to my life, my parents, and I think that is something typical of the Chinese culture: respecting your parents and grandparents. And when I have children, I will teach them the same. Just a little bit of gratitude." – Bo, 19 March 2021

Bo describes the 'Chinese' as family-oriented, including norms and values such as respecting one's parents as well as being grateful for their support and care. Her description builds on the argument of Göransson (2009), mentioned in the theoretical framework and the previous section on intergenerational relationships in relation to upbringing. Accordingly, it can be affirmed that certain values within a 'culture' remain and are transmitted from one generation to the other. The fundamental value will continue to play a role in the upbringing and life trajectories of future generations.

On the other hand, sometimes specific values change over time. Continuing, Bo believes that she had a different kind of upbringing than Chinese parents, who have more traditional habits. Providing an example of appointing names to family members:

> "My friend calls her brother just brother, and not by name. But I call my sister both, depending on the situation. We do not command respect. My brother also just calls me Faye and not my sister. Unless he needs something, ha-ha. We are just a very close family." – Bo, 19 March 2021

Whereas Meili explained that one would never call the older generation by name in China, "that is not done". This hierarchal form of respecting the elderly is essential in the 'Chinese culture', as one lowers oneself, as it were, to show respect. "I could not get my mother-in-law's name out of my mouth because it is impossible for me to call her by her name", Meili modestly said. Fortunately, her mother-in-law suggested she should call her 'mother of Sam[25]'. In contrast with the previously mentioned similarity between the first and second generations regarding fundamental values in upbringing. This example, however, displays that certain aspects are the opposite. Does this mean a difference between the first and second generations concerning upbringing values? Or else, is this a result of differences among families themselves rather than within the families? These questions emerged from my analysis, though further research is necessary to delve deeper into such differences and their causes.

"Dragged into western society"

As explained in the theoretical framework, socialization involves adapting beliefs and behaviour in a particular society. Within migration families, the socialization process after migration is of the essence in creating a feeling of belonging. In the previous sections, I

[25] Sam is the pseudonym name of Meili's husband.

examined upbringing and stereotypes in relation to socialization. This section focuses on socialization, specifically in Dutch society. The process of socialization can induce obstacles or even conflicts against traditional expectations. Starting with Hanna, who explains the change in cultural belonging:

> "You see that families now try to hold on to the cultural heritage by letting their children take Chinese lessons. I find that important. As a child, I also had Chinese lessons, but that has faded a bit over the years. That is because one gets so dragged into western society." − 6 February 2021

Growing up and living in Dutch society makes it harder to hold on to the Chinese cultural heritage because of the entanglement happening regarding the beliefs and behaviour throughout one's life trajectory in the same society. Hanna is born in the Netherlands, meaning that she is categorized as the second generation. It was important for her parents, the first generation, to remain connected with the 'Chinese culture'. Several events were held during the Chinese New Year Festival, such as a Chinese opera show in MECC Maastricht.[26] This opera show was a retrospect to their home country and maintained the feeling of belonging to their home 'culture'. To substantiate, Bo also describes the importance of Chinese lessons for second generation migrants: "we also went to a Chinese school. Not that it is a custom, but it is really something for the Chinese diaspora."

Obstacles faced in the Netherlands

This Chinese diaspora can also induce obstacles while being in the process of socialization. The fact of growing up in Dutch society by Chinese parents can bring difficulties. Language barriers are one of those aspects that often occur in immigrant families. Two interlocutors of the second generation both mentioned the challenging language barrier they faced in Dutch society.

> "At primary school, I did not master the language, nor the logical way of thinking and understanding. Reading comprehension was quite difficult for me." −Daniel, 19 February 2021

[26] A congress and exhibition centre in the city of Maastricht. Here a variety of events is held, such as congresses, exhibitions, and cultural or sport events.

In order to acquire reading comprehension in a particular language, it is inevitable to obtain vocabulary and decoding skills. Understanding the meaning of a text cannot be managed by only interpreting a few sentences. Other scholars who researched Chinese migration families have also debated on such problematic matters regarding language obstacles (van Mensel & Yao 2017; Zhang 2005). Zhang states that for many second generation Chinese children learning the destinated languages occurred outside the home, struggling with the new language in the school setting (Zhang 2005:79-86). This language obstacle was the case when the first generation continued speaking the native language at home. However, for second generation children, the language norm was sometimes set:

> "The Dutch language itself was an obstacle. My high school teacher said: 'You really should not speak Chinese at home anymore, because your Dutch will only go downhill'. They implicitly had given me the message which language is important." − Bo, 19 March 2021

Bo believed that this message of her teacher was problematic because she got the impression that he had decided for her which language was the essential one. For a long time, she was insecure about her Dutch language level. She criticized herself, which led to others perceiving her as quiet and modest. These are all factors and moments in time that have influenced her identity formation. Similarly, traditional expectations of one's parents can also be a factor within identity formation that may affect intergenerational relationships.

Traditional expectations

> "The pressure that was put on education was too much for me. It was not enough. The minimum acceptable level to get a decent job was HBO.[27] 'It is purely for your own future', they [his parents] said. But they express it in a way that puts pressure. That is just what they have learned at home." − Daniel, 19 February 2021

[27] The Dutch education system consist of binary levels: university education (WO) and higher professional education (HBO). The first one is a combination of academic research and teaching. The latter involves applied sciences, providing theoretical and practical trainings. A WO bachelor's degree programme takes three years, while a HBO bachelor's takes four years.

Daniel's view differs from that of his parents. For him, the practical discipline is more important than the independent pursuit of theoretical scholarship. He experiences this as an obstacle in his daily life, especially while he was a student. Also, specific ways of thinking are in conflict with his parents. For example, "the oldest is still in charge, so if one has an expressing opinion it is immediately a disgrace on the family". He often argued with his father, yet he now has accepted such disagreements: "this is what Chinese cultural heritage is".

In addition, Liling pointed out that after high school, she chose creativity instead of following her parents' expectations to become a doctor, lawyer, or dentist.

> "When my parents-in-law heard that I completed VWO[28], they thought it was a shame that I have now turned to the creative side in occupation. They say, 'you have the same intelligence, but you only do this...'. As if what I do is so little." – Liling, 12 March 2021

Liling's parents-in-law were ashamed of her because she was not employed at a big company. Her parents-in-law not only expected their children to become successful in Chinese traditional expected ways but also expected that from their son's wife. So, this is another level of expectation that goes beyond close family members by extending it to in-laws. Furthermore, certain expectations can differ between families themselves, of which one is more rigorous than the other. Yet, they also vary between generations, where mainly the second generation has a different view. For example, most of the second generation is less restrictive on the traditional Chinese expectations. Following their ideas on Chinese traditions, and at the same time moving away from certain expectations.

Daniel's and Liling's explanations are examples of an expectation concerning the 'intergenerational contract' that Göransson uses as a metaphor, which means the connection of generations by expectations and obligations, to understand Chinese intergenerational relationships (2009:9). She uses this metaphor of a 'contract' to refer to the relationship between parent and child. Relating to the explanation of the filial piety explained above, as well as similar to Ikels (2004:106-127), Göransson's findings portray that children repay their debt of being raised and cared for until young adulthood by taking care of their elderly parents (2009:10). This filial piety is a traditional expectation that occurs within Chinese families. Liling describes Chinese expectations as follows: "at the age of 18, one quits school, works in

[28] It is the highest level in the Dutch high school system

the family business to one day take over and drive in a BMW".[29] Her mother believed that her children should take care of her when their father passed away.[30] However, Liling thought otherwise, preferring to follow her path. Relating to what one Chinese father said in the documentary *De Wereld van de Chinezen* (The world of the Chinese) about caring for his children:

"Chinese parents live for their children."

"They work hard their whole lives so that their children can build a better life."

"But children who grow up here…

…like our children, we call them 'bananenkind'. We call them bananas."

This father came to the Netherlands to build a better living for their children born in the Netherlands. They have worked hard their entire lives for their children to have a good life and become successful too. A *bananenkind* (banana-child) looks Chinese but thinks like a westerner, as he explained afterwards, "they do not think as we do". Wu (2019) also illustrates

[29] Bavarian Engine Works Company is a German multinational corporation that produces vehicles.
[30] See previous section on filial piety

this view that Chinese parents want to build a better living for their children by referring to several people he interviewed who all shared the same thoughts. Wu states: "upward mobility is the dream of every Chinese immigrant parent: for your child to do better than you and receive a better education, so as not to work twelve hours a day just like you did" (2019:51).

The second generation that grew up in Dutch society sometimes face challenges regarding their parents' expectations. I continue building on this argument by writing dialogue from the same documentary, which occurred after the conversation about a Chinese boyfriend explained in a previous section.[31]

> Mother: Do you feel oppressed by me?
> Father: I think a little.
> Daughter: Yes, definitely.
> Mother: Yes? I thought I have given you as much freedom as possible.
> Daughter: There is some pressure.
> Mother: At least that is how you feel.
> Daughter: You don't command me to get married and have children, but you do ask about it.
> Father: Your mother is in a hurry.
> [They all start laughing]

The daughter faces challenges by not fully supporting her parents' views on her future boyfriend. She prefers to meet and choose him herself. However, when her parents suggest a particular male, she is open to give that a chance. This example also relates to gender differences, where Chinese females can feel pressure in the context of the future, including marriage and children. Finally, much pressure is exerted from the 'Chinese culture' to increase status.

> "For my parents' generation, the reason they left China is to make money elsewhere. So for them, the financial situation is the most important goal. It is therefore extraordinary for them that their child thinks otherwise." − Liling, 12 March 2021

Liling's explanation supports what Daniel describes having a certain status in the family:

[31] The section on *Life trajectories and language in relation to upbringing*.

> "In the case of obtaining a diploma, it is simply resulting in status. If you do not get the diploma, you just do not have any discipline nor status. This is from the point of view of my parents, but not mine." − 19 February 2021

These two quotes give an illustration of the differences between the first and second generations. Building on the argument of Cheung et al. (2020), who examine the changing shapes of care, clarified above. Pillemer et al. (1992)also argue the essence of values and expectations in establishing the dynamics within intergenerational relationships, such as family solidarity and conflict and parent-child relations.

Conclusion

The data derived from the interviews indicate that the socialization process for first and second generation Chinese immigrants is affected by several factors, such as stereotypes, upbringing and intergenerational relationships. And not to mention various stages in a life trajectory because particular phases lead to different roles affecting the process. Furthermore, problematic matters are visible in other spheres of society, where the media plays a crucial role in creating awareness of stereotypes and misleading information. Yet, as explained in the theoretical framework, the Chinese are thought of worldwide as having strong family norms (Göransson 2009). By illustrating several field situations, she states: "filial piety is embedded in people's perceptions and practices of intergenerational obligation, and therefore represents what I would call a lived tradition" (Göransson 2009:97). In the Chinese community, filial piety is related to gender differences. For example, Daniel described the gender-based challenges faced in Dutch society and within his family.

Besides, growing up in Dutch society but at the same time dealing with one's Chinese cultural heritage can bring difficulties. Conflicts against traditional expectations of one's parents arise and may influence intergenerational relationships. The second generation adapts to it, which results in different views of values and expectations. They are affecting the relationships between parent-child and grandparent-grandchild. Finally, the views on upbringing values and traditional expectations may change over time as well as between generations. Some values are considered similar for both the first and second generations, whereas others are altered to a certain extent. In the next chapter, I examine how all these factors influence Chinese identity formation, by which the concept of identity will also be further discussed.

5. Chinese identity formation

> "When I returned from living in Hong Kong for half a year, I told people that I am Hong Kong-Chinese-Dutch. Due to my 6-months in Hong Kong and association with the country, it became part of my identity. That was the moment I saw the distinction between Hong Kong and mainland China, so that is why I used that specification in naming my cultural identity. However, now two years later, I feel different again. And this is important because one must know that identity fluctuates. It is about what you have experienced and what you acquire. Now, it is two years later, and I say that my cultural identity is Chinese-Dutch, which also results from my experiences. There are people who use a slash between their cultural identities, but I use a hyphen because, for me, I think it is linked. It is not one or the other." − Bo, 19 March 2021

In this fragment, Bo explains the way she identifies herself. Both the 'Chinese' and 'Dutch culture' are part of her identity. She uses a hyphen because both 'cultures' are connected in a way that forms her identity. Besides, she mentions that her identity changes over time and that different stages in a life trajectory influence the formation of an identity. At the end of each interview with my interlocutors, I started a discussion on the concept of identity. Although it is a complex concept, results derived from these discussions contribute to debates on identity and belonging. In this chapter, I elaborate further on these concepts and the discussions that follow. I examine theoretical debates along with empirical data conducted from my interviews. So, what is debated on the concept of identity?

Past + present = belonging?

> "In third grade, being 'Chinese' suddenly became so crucial. Before that, everyone knew that I was Chinese, but the associations made about me were not yet profound. I have the feeling it is more present among children who are in the process of growing up. I did not find out that I was Chinese until I went to school. Because at home I was not Chinese per se." − Bo, 19 March 2021

This quote of Bo illustrates how identity among second generation youth develops and changes in Dutch society. The stage in Bo's life trajectory in high school made her aware of her 'Chineseness'. Youth identity is more frequently a debate by itself. Cui (2013) contributes to the debate on youth identity and belonging. He researches the first and second generation Chinese Canadian youth in Alberta—demonstrating the racial discrimination they face, leading to a lessening sense of belonging to Canada. Cui argues that ethnicity and the ongoing racial discrimination are essential factors within the formation of identification (2013:171). More specifically, he uses a multi-layered analysis including factors that influence youth identity and belonging: state structures, social institutions, and interpersonal factors.[32] For example, in their social life, they are still seen as 'Chinese' rather than belonging to the "imagined community" (Anderson 1983).

Cui (2013) focuses on family, school, and media within these social institutions and describes factors that affect the sense of belonging and youth's identification of the younger generation by constructing a model. Meaning, factors within the family (i.e. parents' attitudes towards maintaining ethnic heritage, language, cultural values, travel and impression of China, and intergenerational relations), factors of social institutions (i.e. school and program choice, peer relations, relationship with teachers, and school knowledge regarding school), and factors of media (i.e. underrepresentation, racialized identity, gendered identity, classed identity, identity of being a 'threat') (Cui 2013). In this research, I also look at factors within the family, mainly intergenerational relationships, and a factor of media such as stereotypes. However, I neglect the factors of social institutions, as well as some family and media ones.

> "When I was at the Chinese school, my Chinese identity no longer mattered. While at the Dutch school, I was seen as that Chinese girl. Yes, I am Chinese, but also much more. Although that no longer matters. I am funny, but it does not matter because I am just that Chinese girl. Or I am noisy, but it does not matter because I am that Chinese girl. And in a Chinese school, I am not that Chinese girl because everyone is Chinese. So one has their characteristics which makes an individual, and which is suddenly seen and recognized." – Bo, 19 March 2021

[32] I will not take these factors into account, however, I focus on life trajectories, intergenerational relationships, and socialization including upbringing and stereotypes.

Bo continues explaining the differences in feeling a belonging at school in the Netherlands, so her identity and image changed according to the environment. Space is, therefore, an influential factor within identity formation. As Barnard and Spencer (2010:338) addressed: “space itself becomes a kind of neutral grid on which cultural difference, historical memory, and societal organization are inscribed”. Their debate on the dimension of space links to May’s argument that memories can create a sense of belonging (May 2017:407); hence they are involved in the formation of an identity. Below I will share my personal fieldnote that builds on this memory of belonging.

> **想中国 [missing China]**
>
> When I watched the movie *Crazy Rich Asians,* I thought of my experiences and life abroad in China. Even though it was based and filmed in Singapore, I associated it with my time in Beijing. The skyscrapers, modern neighbourhoods, old traditional areas, street food places, surrounded by people from all parts of the world. It made me miss that period of my life, that stage in my life trajectory. It made me miss the city, the place where I made so many memories. As a young adult, I was in a foreign environment, interested in the ‘other’, the ‘new’ society. I start to feel sad. Where does this missing feeling come from? Is it because I miss the place, my experiences, the memories that I made, or all the people I have met. What is it that I miss? Did I miss the person who I was there? Or am I still the same person? All the perspectives that I learned there, and all the views that I have formed, play a big part in who I am today. So how will I refer to that part? I believe it is part of my identity. But when thinking about it, I do not know how to categorise it. How do I include this in my identity?
>
> − Fieldwork diary, 8 April 2021.

While rereading this fieldnote after a few weeks, I realised that one could feel belonged to a specific space even if not being there anymore. I could argue that I still feel belonged to Beijing as a space, but also to that stage in my life trajectory as a moment in time. Within my own experiences, both space and time are factors that influence the creation of a belonging. Even though these experiences happened in the past, I still feel an association with them. I was determining the fact that it becomes part of my identity. Can we conclude that feelings of belonging in both the past and present combined are significant in the process of identity formation?

Regardless, each individual includes different factors in forming an identity, and each has its practical and valuable reasons. What I explained above is my personal experience and view on factors related to identity formation. Liling, for instance, feels like she does not belong anywhere in relation to space:

> "People used to ask me: 'Liling do you feel Dutch or Chinese?' Then I was a bit contradictory, like 'I am just Liling'. I still think that, regarding space, I do not belong anywhere. In China, I am an overseas Chinese, so a foreigner. In the Netherlands, I am Chinese because I look Chinese. (…) I am a mother, artist, housewife, wife, chef, cleaner. That is a lot that makes me who I am. The main role now is simply that of a mother. I see this more as personal identity and emotional identity". − 12 March 2021

Others' perceptions

In the latter part of this excerpt, it is clear that the role of identity for Liling is more connected to the concept of time. Mentioning the various roles she plays in different life stages. For example, the essential role for her today is that of being a mother. Besides, what I further remark from the excerpt is the fact that other's perceptions could be another factor related to identity. How others see one, or how one thinks other's see them, can become part of their identity. As Tong (2010) argues, "self-perception and others' perception are juxtaposed and mediated". Because of her appearance, people categorise and have certain prejudices about her.

> "For a long time, I hated to speak Dutch. This has made me quieter because I then censor myself. First of all, I did not want people to find out that I am inadequate at speaking Dutch. Secondly, I am imposed that as a Chinese, one is quiet, submissive, and modest. That is one of the biggest obstacles I had to overcome to be who I want to be." − Bo, 19 March 2021

Bo's description of the obstacles she faced in Dutch society relates to the concept of performance explained by Goffman (1959), who argues that there is a difference between the "back region" and the "front region". In other words, there is a stage where the performer prepares and where he performs. For example, her Dutch language skills influenced Bo's performance because she was insecure about speaking Dutch compared to her classmates' abilities. The back region, in this case, involves her insecurity about her Dutch language level,

where her quietness shows the performance in the front region due to vulnerability. Furthermore, other's perceptions also made it more challenging to perform the way she wanted to:

> "I really liked it, and suddenly I was not bullied about being Chinese because everyone was Chinese. At the Chinese school, I was the norm. It was nice not to be alone and the only stranger. At one point, I became very subdued because others impose things onto me, such as 'Chinese are always quiet'. − Bo, 19 March 2021

Since others perceive 'Chinese' as quiet or modest, it can make the individual feel somewhat neglected. Also, when others impose things onto an individual, it may result in a lower feeling of belonging. Because constructing such belonging concerns a performative dimension (Bell 1999; Butler 1999), where "specific repetitive practices, relating to specific social and cultural spaces" are essential in identity formation (Yuval-Davis 2006:203). Hence, performance is a useful concept for analysing how one acts and whether it is contingent.[33]

Perception of the self

In addition to others' perceptions, belonging also involves a particular perception of the self. Constructing a self can be forced on people, but it is an important dimension of people's social locations and positionings (Yuval-Davis 2006:203). On the one hand, they can be seen as one, but on the other hand, their feelings of belonging are dependent on the social locations. The meaning of social locations is used when talking about "people belonging to a particular gender, or race, or class or nation, they belong to a particular age-group, kinship group or a certain profession"(Yuval-Davis 2006:199).

The perception of the self also involves the emotional attachment that Yuval-Davis explains, where people feel less secure and more threatened when their constructed identities become a central feature (Yuval-Davis 2006:202)—connecting the individual behaviour to the collective. For example, when it is said that someone is categorised as 'Chinese', it is discussed as the level of social locations. By that, it is sort of forced on someone that one belongs to that particular 'group'. In the previous section, Bo noticed the social location of her race in school. Although she added that her perception of self was to some extent forced onto her:

[33] Unfortunately, due to a limited fieldwork period I decided not to focus on this concept nor actively analyse it. Although, I believe it is still essential to mention.

> "When everyone imposes something onto you, you also project that identity and show it to the outside world." – Bo, 19 March 2021

Furthermore, this shows that emotional attachment is also situational. Certain moments in one's life trajectory can bring up certain feelings of belonging, or not belonging, to various collectivises and groupings. In addition, attitudes towards emotional attachments and social locations may differ between generations. By way of illustration, second generation Chinese Dutch are born in the Netherlands, so they might feel more offended when they are put into the 'Chinese' categorisation of social locations instead of the 'Dutch'. Looking at the differences between generations is another way to look at the concept of time.

Additionally, space is another dimension that influences the perception of self. As Bo mentioned before, feeling more like 'herself' when being in the Chinese school because there she was the norm. No one imposed things on her by means of social locations. Relating to Lamont and Molnár, who study the concept of boundaries by marking symbolic and social boundaries and describing various dimensions, among which also spatial boundaries (2002). They further explain that individuals and communities construct symbolic boundaries to a nation, from physical borders to its social experiences (2002:183). Some studies have focussed on borders concerning processes of decolonization, globalization, and trans nationalization (Lamont & Molnár 2002:184).

Regarding migrants, Bauböck explains that they deal with territorial borders, political boundaries of citizenship, and cultural boundaries of national communities (2018), in which the meaning is unclear (Lamont & Molnár 2002:185). Finally, they reviewed the literature of Jenkins (2014) and Ridgeway (1997), stating that processes of stereotyping, self-identification, and categorization are fundamental in making boundaries (2002:187). These mechanisms will be mentioned throughout the following sections on the discussion of identity formation.

"Who am I?"

Near the end of the previous section, Liling tries to answer the question "Who am I?" which is one of the main questions when forming an identity. When brainstorming on the topics to discuss during the interviews, I struggled with the concept of identity. It is an ambiguous (Brubaker & Cooper 2000:6) and complex concept, which entails multiple meanings and views. Everyone has their own unique experiences and personal ideas about their identity. These

experiences and ideas can both vary and change according to the current circumstances. A few scholars who are debating this concept have been discussed throughout this thesis.

However, I was curious how my interlocutors think of identity, its meaning and their associations with it. Contemplating how to ask or bring up this topic, I reckoned that the question *What is your identity?* was too broad and vague. Accordingly, I decided to announce it as a discussion point at the end of the interview, giving them space to share their thoughts, experiences and views. This part at the end of each interview generated exciting discussions. Some interesting issues have been analysed in previous chapters and sections. To better understand where I wanted to go with this discussion, I shared my view on the concept and experiences of my identity formation process. Yet, in this section, I continue elaborating on this topic and delve deeper into my subjects' experiences and narratives. Besides, basing my empirical research on phenomena and observations derived from other methods used in the online field. I will partly move away from theory towards analysing the knowledge gained through the fieldwork period.

> "I usually let others define me. I am who I am, so identify me whatever you want. I'll behave the way I am. I am not going to pretend to be anything else. I think I am mixed. Sometimes I feel more Chinese, and other times I feel more Dutch."
> − Daniel, 19 February 2021

Hybrid identity

We shared thoughts on identity during an interview with one of my subjects, and I was surprised to hear his answer. I noticed that I had not thought of this possibility or feeling before starting the discussion. As Daniel explains, his image is perceived differently by others, resulting in diverse categorisations. This explanation responds to what Yuval-Davis described: "belonging can be an act of self-identification or identification by others, in a stable, contested or transient way" (2006:199). However, it is clear that he has formed his views by stating that he identifies himself as being mixed, sometimes feeling more Chinese and other times more Dutch. In academic terms, this is called hybrid identity, meaning the feeling of belonging to multiple places, as explained in the theoretical framework. Therefore, it is always a dynamic process and not fixed (Yuval-Davis 2006:199). When the Chinese settled outside mainland China and came into contact with local cultural and social spheres, it developed hybrid 'Chinese cultures' (Hau, 2014:289), leading to the formation of hybrid identities.

Daniel's view is in contrast with the idea of another second generation interlocutor, Bo. She does not let others define her but reclaims her identity as being Chinese Dutch instead of allowing others to impose it on her.

> "At the same time, when one takes on an identity, people also have a certain association with it. When I say that I am Chinese Dutch, they already have a specific image about it. On the other hand, I believe that, now, I am the one who reclaims. I think this is similar for the third generation, that they also want to reclaim. Like: 'the other said to me "*don't be proud of the identity your parents gave you*"', or 'integrate yourself'—things like that. But, now we say: 'no, I am Dutch, but guess what, I am also Chinese Dutch'. Thus reclaiming it.[34] – Bo, 19 March 2021

By reclaiming an identity, one presents oneself according to their own beliefs, feelings, norms, and values. Sharing inner feelings and thoughts are preliminary steps to open up about one's identity. Moreover, identity can also be forced on people in specific contexts where people's social locations[35] and identifications are associated (Yuval-Davis 2006:203).

Parental pressures: gender and sexuality

Sexuality and gender[36] play a role in discussing identity, specifically regarding parental pressures and opening up. The theoretical framework explains that sex is a biological and physiological categorization of the human body, whereas gender is socially and culturally constructed. As I explained multiple times in previous sections, the oldest son within a Chinese family feels much pressure to succeed in education and occupation. Daniel has provided particular empirical views in this respect. Throughout his life, he has experienced tension and parental pressures. However, this has changed and lessened over time.

Wu also described the parental pressures he coped with. Not just expectations about his career or future, but also about his choice of love partner. He sometimes wonders to what extent his parents, with their Chinese descent, play a role in the struggles he faces regarding his love

[34] When I was writing this contradiction, I was wondering whether these differences in attitudes towards one's identity could relate to gender differences. For future research it could be interesting to consider and delve into these differences.

[35] Belonging to a particular gender, race, class, nation, age-group, kinship group or certain profession. See Nira Yuval-Davis 'Belonging and the politics of belonging', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 40:3, 197-214.

[36] These themes have been discussed in the section *Gender in relation to upbringing* in chapter 4.

life. He states: “until my thirties, I led a double life and never introduced any of my (all non-Chinese) lovers to my parents” (Wu 2019:82). This fear was because of the parental pressures and expectations to continue the family name. Maybe it was a “fear of collective dishonour”, that Rozman (2014:30) explained. However, Wu mentioned that it was such a relief to never had to lie anymore after his coming-out.

Family relationships

> “I am actually Chinese in the sense of Chinese norms, values and the culture that have shaped me who I am. As a person, I haven’t changed much, which mostly has to do with upbringing, things that are learned from family members. From the moment one is born. Upbringing has shaped most of my character and personality beyond what I have learned. And that part is central to my identity. Who am I? Someone who loves oneself, who is independent and strong. One’s opinions may change, but one’s identity cannot. Where you come from, your family, that is really your roots”. − Meili, 13 February 2021

Meili explains that upbringing is an essential factor that influences who you are. Her Chinese background, with its norms and values, has shaped her. However, in contrast with Bo, she argues that identity is not something that can change. In comparison, Bo believes in the fluctuation of identity.[37] Not to mention, Bo feels the need for a balance between belonging to a collective and individual society: “I do not think that one is better than the other, but that each has its value”. As Daniel said, the collective in ‘Chinese culture’ is essential: “basically it is just the family, the collective, in China”. But what is the difference between collective and individual in the case of identity?

Brubaker and Cooper (2000) describe a few critical uses of the term identity, of which *collective* is one phenomenon. It involves ‘sameness’ between members of a group or category and can be understood objectively or subjectively (Brubaker & Cooper 2000:7). They further explain that collective identities imply belonging to a distinctive group, which include both “commonality” (sharing common attributes) and “connectedness” (relational ties) (2000:19-20). Sometimes there is no clear distinction between someone’s attitude towards collective identity and individual identity, leading to the possibility of forming a hybrid identity.

[37] First excerpt in chapter 5.

Furthermore, language is another factor that connects and makes family relationships stronger. Even though one is raised and born in the Netherlands, acquiring another language can improve family relationships overseas. Communicating in the parents' language creates self-esteem, especially within the formation of an identity.

> "It brings a kind of pride towards my own identity. When I went to Hong Kong and just interacted with the people there, I felt less dissociated from them. It is different anyway because I did not grow up there. But the fact that I could communicate created a kind of bond." − Bo, 19 March 2021

Besides, language can also contribute to a feeling of belonging. In a previous section, Bo explained that she was adequately embarrassed by her Dutch language level. Being quieter because speaking Dutch was an obstacle for her. Later on in the interview, Bo mentioned the fact that she could speak another language with one of her friends, which gave a feeling of acceptance:

> "I was bullied, but when I was with her, I felt that it was ok to be Chinese because I could communicate with her in Cantonese." − Bo, 19 March 2021

Feeling belonged to the space and time with her friend while at the same time feeling disassociated from other peers. Thus, language can be an obstacle and a factor in finding a way to belong somewhere else or connect with someone else.

'Here' and 'there'

Bo gained perspectives by going to Hong Kong and getting to know a part of her parent's past, getting a sense of her roots and parent's early trajectory. Liling, now almost 20 years older than Bo, also connected with her roots through learning the language. In her teenage years, she grew towards western society. She started searching for her roots from her twenties onwards, finding an individual identity within two 'cultures'. Growing up within two 'cultures' can bring difficulties or obstacles. If one 'culture is based on the society one lives in, and the other is based on the 'culture' within a family home, one likely deals with hybridity.

> "What you learn is that you grow up between two different cultures. I used to find that difficult and inconvenient, of course. But now I learn to appreciate that

> different perspectives or other practices can enrich *the whole*." − de Vries-Chang[38], 16 February 2021

De Vries-Chang brings up a key aspect that different perspectives can cultivate knowledge and awareness. Learning practices from both 'here' and 'there' influence identity formation and gain multiple perspectives. Daniel explains that his roots are in the Netherlands but also China. In other words, the 'here' and 'there':

> "I am a full-blooded Chinese when looking at appearance and blood. But I was born and raised here. I taught myself, here, the Dutch norms and values as well as the Chinese norms and values." − Daniel, 19 February 2021

The 'here' and 'there' is similar to the relation between 'us' and 'them'. For example, as Vroon argues, when young people are not feeling welcome to the 'us' because of their ethnic background or appearance, they could feel the belonging to 'them' (2014:19). Similar to what Yuval-Davis explains about the concept of belonging, it is "not a reified fixity" (2006:199). Furthermore, regarding the concept of identity, the above two quotes from both second generation Chinese Dutch also support Bauman's (2011) argument that identity is corresponding 'never fixed' or 'never final', especially in modern society. Where borderlines are obscured and spatial distances manageable, so people have the ability to cross any borders, movements overland and overseas (Bauman 2011:428). Almost every country deals with both immigrants and emigrants, and consequently, the human traffic is going both ways resulting in a 'collection of diasporas' (Bauman 2011:428-429). Nowadays, immigrants are no longer expected to assimilate in the destinated country (Bauman 2011:428), meaning that they may continue to hold on to their original norms, values and beliefs. So, identities are created instead of inherited due to the integration into another society (Chafai 2020:10).

In addition, since immigrants face difficulties regarding integration in the new society, the feeling of belonging is affected. However, this can change over time when certain factors contribute to forming an - perhaps even a hybrid - identity. These integration difficulties are also one of the reasons why Liling started the project *Golden Pages*[39], giving the opportunity

[38] An online talk with Ojanne de Vries-Chang, party member of D66, on the Instagram of Omroep Pac. Retrieved on 19 February, 2021: https://www.instagram.com/tv/CLfKZPUDFs3/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

[39] An archive of publications that are made in the Netherlands by or about the Chinese community. https://www.belvedererotterdam.nl/space-101/

to learn about the history of Chinese in the Netherlands. It could be helpful for all generations of Chinese Dutch people interested in the Chinese community in the Netherlands or those searching for their roots.

> "I hope my children's generation can just do and say what they want and do not have to feel like they are left out." − Liling, 22 January 2021

Conclusion

The concept of identity is complex and ambiguous, so I started discussing this topic during my interviews to find how Chinese identity is formed. Past belonging and present belonging combined form the overall feeling of belonging and contribute to forming an identity. The process of forming an identity relates to both time and space, however, each individual includes their own choice of factors. Besides, others' perceptions can be another factor that influences personal ideas about one's identity where some reclaim it, and some let others impose it on them. Stereotypes, on the other hand, mainly have a negative effect on how someone feels in society. Daniel states something important:

> "Everyone is formed by their family, education and own experiences. But those stitches can get to me sometimes, but it is irrelevant to who I am." − 19 February 2021

The belonging to multiple places, forming mixed identities, are termed hybrid identities. Thereby aiming for a society where first and second generation Chinese immigrants have the opportunity to search for their roots and not feel excluded.

6. Conclusions

> "I have accepted it, and I will continue to do so. It is what it is. I think the worst thing is that despite being in the year 2021, we still have things like this happening. All my friends who are Chinese Dutch have all experienced this too, and all dealt with it. But why does it have to be much more difficult for us? We feel just as much Dutch because we were also born here." − Bo, 19 March 2021

In this thesis, I have presented findings on Chinese Dutch and their relationships between generations and discussed the formation of an identity. To answer my research question: How are intergenerational relationships influencing Chinese identity formation? I first focussed on the migration process and how life trajectories have shaped an individual's identity. Second, I examined the socialization process after migration and its influence on identity formation. Finally, I discussed the complex concept of identity and how the Chinese Dutch form this identity in Dutch society. Thus, I believe that my thesis contributes to debates on identity formation, especially regarding migration families in Dutch society. Because of my ethnographic research approach, I have provided everyday perspectives and gained insights into the lives of Chinese Dutch in the Netherlands.

Time of my life

The concepts of migration and time are interrelated in various ways. I argue that not only the migration process is a stage in life that influences intergenerational relationships. Also, the process after migration affects trajectories within families and, therefore, impacts the formation of an identity. Since the early 19th century, Chinese immigrants have arrived in the Netherlands for numerous reasons. Mainly for economic reasons to find a better living, but also for education. To some extent, this changed intergenerational relationships when family members were left behind and reuniting with them in a later stage in life in the 'new' society.

Furthermore, Chinese families hold on to their norms and values after migration (Zheng et al. 2019), thus, perhaps even feeling belonged to their Chinese cultural heritage. In different moments and stages of one's life trajectory, individuals create awareness of their 'Chineseness'. The Chinese New Year is such an event that involves Chinese practices and traditions. It also embraces family relationships since it is a tradition to visit family during this time of the year.

When these family relationships are managed, it results in a feeling of belonging to a specific group, which can be their family or the Chinese community in the surrounding area.

Memories of such events, for instance, can also create a feeling of belonging. The reason is that past experiences can be felt and identified with in the present. Since these experiences in the past and present shape who we are, time can therefore be "linear". Besides, when an individual develops in a later stage in life, it can strengthen intergenerational relationships. An example of this is the development of Chinese language skills for second generation Chinese Dutch to communicate with family members. This development happens throughout one's life trajectory. For example, when taking on new roles such as that of a mother, intergenerational relationships alter—mainly altering in a positive way considering the ability to step into the older generation's shoes for when they were in that role. Time can, therefore, also be a back-and forth matter, wherein experiences can alternate frequently. Finally, searching for roots is another time-related aspect in finding that feeling of belonging. Different stages in life can alternate the urge to become interested in one's roots.

Relationships that matter

The 'things' Bo described in the excerpt above are the stereotypes that still occur against the Chinese in Dutch society. Since the Chinese arrived in the Netherlands in the early 19th century, the stereotypes towards them started. Now, there has been little to no change regarding the racial stereotypes in the Netherlands. Even though some feel Dutch, they are perceived otherwise. Specific platforms state these problematic stereotypes and go beyond them to show the diversity in the Netherlands. Media platforms such as Omroep Pac, Meer dan Babi Pangang, or Asian Raisins raise their voices.

Recently, I read an article about the increasing number of reports of discrimination at organisations and hotlines in 2020 in the Netherlands.[40] One of the comments made is that COVID19 is a visible cause, also due to Asian Dutch people, as I mentioned before, who were insulted on the street and discriminated by the Radio10 song "Prevention is better than Chinese". Shortly after the start of the pandemic and the release of this song, the ADV's (anti-discrimination provisions) received over 3000 reports before May 2021 (Fiere & Bon, van 2020). I was shocked by reading several reports, of which the following was one of them:

[40] Retrieved from https://nos.nl/artikel/2386425-meer-meldingen-van-discriminatie-in-corona-en-black-lives-matter-jaar-2020

> "A woman with Chinese appearance is abused by several boys at a train station and yelled at 'Coronavirus'. She is spat on, chased, and one of the boys tries to kick her. Thereby, money falls out of her bag, which the boy then takes."
> − Fiere & Bon, van 2020

Fiere and van Bon end the report by stating that not being discriminated against is a human right, even in times of a pandemic crisis (2020). This report shows that such problematic racial discrimination and stereotypes are still a significant problem in Dutch society. Not just for the Chinese community but the Asian umbrella in general. The role of the media is essential in such controversial matters. Hence, such issues influence the socialization process of Chinese Dutch first and second generation.

On the contrary, positive stereotypes portray the Chinese community as hard-working. This mentality is passed onto the next generation, particularly onto men within Chinese families. Such relates to gender obstacles where the oldest son feels pressure to be successful in order to take care of the family, whereas daughters have a little more freedom in that respect. Since the late 20th century, employment opportunities for women have increased. This influenced intergenerational relationships and positively changed the attitudes towards working women. While some families continue having more traditional views on gender, other families' traditional expectations change over time. The reason for this could be the adaptation to the 'new' society or the differences in beliefs between the first, second, or even third generation. Considering that the 1.5- and second generation seems to become more enlightened of these views on gender-related traditional expectations. However, reasons such as shifting towards modernity and a more globalized world should not be left out of consideration.

According to Bertogg, "norms pertaining to family relations are often at the heart of the culture that characterizes a society" (2020:161). By restating Bertogg, I want to argue that upbringing plays a key role within intergenerational relationships. Chinese parents spend much time and energy in the upbringing of their children, and in return, they expect the children to take care of them when becoming older. When returning to one's roots, one can look back at their upbringing and learn from past experiences as well as reconnect with family members. Besides, language is another factor influencing family relations because it enhances understanding of the family culture (Portes & Hao 2002) and eases communication between generations.

Moreover, certain Chinese norms and values are transmitted from one generation to the next. The examples of respecting the elderly and being grateful for their support are essential

in the ‘Chinese culture’, which many interlocutors brought up. Both the first and second generations perceive these as continuing values. However, some aspects may change over time or are distinguished between generations, such as interest in learning the family’s language or gender-based challenges, for example. Also, views on sexuality-based challenges differ between generations:

> “I learned from my Chinese father that queer men, like the ones on television, are ‘dirty’; he literally said it like that once. (…) I also wanted to be someone like that, who did not care about what his parents said. I did not want it to mould me, but just like a patch of ice, my father’s message took root in my head: queer men are ‘dirty’.” − Wu, 2019:158

At first, Wu (2019) identified homosexuality as a problem and prayed to God, days in a row, for not being ‘different’. But later, from his first love onwards, he knew that he would disappoint his father. Sexuality was, therefore, a challenging obstacle in the process of forming a Chinese identity in Dutch society.

More aspects have not been intensely studied in this research, so further research is necessary to write a more comprehensive analysis.

“Where do I belong?”

> “Identities are narratives, stories people tell themselves and others about who they are (and who they are not).”
> − Yuval Davis (2006:202) referring to Denis-Constant Martin (Martin 1995)

These narratives can either be individual or collective, can be reproduced and passed on between generations, as well as change over time (Yuval-Davis 2006:202). Therefore, the concept of identity is closely related to the concept of belonging, just as well involving much “blunt, flat, undifferentiated” vocabulary (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000). I conclude that feelings of belonging in both the past and the present combined are essential in forming an identity. For a few interlocutors and myself, space and time are factors that influence creating a feeling of belonging. By looking back at experiences as well as making new ones, we could associate both factors with the past and present. I agree with Yuval-Davis, who explains that identity narratives relate to the past and present, with the addition of primarily projecting the future (2006:202).

Regardless, some interlocutors mentioned the fact of not feeling belonged to a particular place. I further argue that each individual includes their valuable factors in forming an identity. For example, Liling does not associate space with her feeling of belonging, whereas other interlocutors, including myself, link space to belonging.

Another element that has an impact on the process of forming an identity is other's perceptions. What others think of one is conceivably perceived differently. Some, therefore, reclaim their identity by presenting themselves according to their own beliefs, feelings, and norms and values. The first generation came from a self-reliance strategy, where they had a favourable image, made money, and rarely complained to authorities (Pieke & Benton 1998:157). It seems that the second generation now is opening up about their identity and behaving along these lines. This difference between generations can also be a result of the collective versus individual mentality. Collective relations are significant, and decisions are made by involving family members (Pieke & Benton 1998: 331). The individual does not want to embarrass other family members. Yet, nowadays, the second generation starts to believe and reflect otherwise, by which the collective gets another meaning. For example, as explained above, mainly the second generation collectively raises voices about stereotypes against Chinese Dutch.

Moreover, most second generation Dutch Chinese are willing to acquire the Chinese language, next to their Dutch language skills, contributing to improving family relations overseas and being able to communicate with one's parents. This ability creates self-esteem, especially within the formation of an identity.

Finally, growing up within or between two 'cultures' can bring difficulties because Chinese Dutch first and second generations are to a certain extent caught somewhere in the middle of multiple identities, reaffirming De Vries-Chang that different perspectives cultivate knowledge and awareness. I argue that learning practices from both 'here' and 'there' influence identity formation and, at the same time, provide multiple perspectives. Identity is, therefore, "never fixed" or "never final" (Bauman 2011), but rather a collection of norms, values and beliefs learned from both the destinated 'culture' and society as well as the cultural heritage. For most interlocutors, it is therefore not just a Chinese identity, rather a hybrid identity. Experiences cause this change in identity formation throughout one's life trajectory and socialization, including upbringing, stereotypes, and intergenerational relationships. I am assured that additional alternative factors are possibly part of the socialization process that can influence identity formation. However, these have not been taken into account in this research. Further research is necessary to get a better comprehension of more factors.

Me, not as the anthropologist

I remember the first time moving to China; I was ready for gaining new experiences and learning about another country, its 'culture', and its people. Though, not aware of the fact that I would learn a great deal about my own identity. Since I was outside my comfort zone and outside the space where I was raised, I could review from a distance. Being able to look back inside and questioning who I was, but at the same time unconsciously dealing with these challenges. This process continued each time I went abroad for a more extended period. But now, being back in the Netherlands, I am still coping with such challenges. It is a process that continues to develop throughout my life trajectory.

Moreover, before moving 'outside', I was not aware of how I was raised. It was embodied, and therefore I did not create any awareness for it. While in the field, I also started wondering how Dutch people form an identity in Dutch society. Do we take it for granted because we are not pushed into categories? Do we feel Dutch just because we are born and raised here? Or can we also create a hybrid identity? Can experiences outside Dutch society contribute to this hybrid identity? What sort of identity will I form? The answers to these questions are beyond my knowledge. However, I learned that forming an identity is a process that every human being deals with in life. It is universal but at the same time unique to anyone.

For a better tomorrow

So, to understand Chinese Dutch, "the study of them must have a significance beyond a classification and labelling of their internal diversity" (Pieke & Benton 1998:60). Therefore, it is essential to gain perspectives and bring about the views of their socialization process, including the obstacles they face. These perceptions can also contribute to creating a feeling of belonging in the 'new' society. Although, it cannot be forgotten that belonging is not always as important to people in the same way and the same extent (Yuval-Davis 2006:202). After all, I am curious what the future brings for the subsequent generations of Chinese Dutch in the Netherlands. Will the problematic stereotypes be gone? Will they feel more accepted in Dutch society? Will they be able to tell their stories freely? Would they feel comfortable forming a hybrid identity? Or how will their Chinese cultural background influence this? It remains to be seen…

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