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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE CHINESE?:

AMERICAN SOJOURNERS' EXPERIENCES OF BEING THE OTHER IN CHINA

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE CHINESE?:
AMERICAN SOJOURNERS' EXPERIENCES OF BEING THE OTHER IN CHINA


A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION




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This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Yibo (Andy) Wang, for his continuous love and support.

social network theory have guided me past the oversimplification and dualism I had when I arrived, and motivated me to put what I learned from books into practice. And, finally, thank you Dr. Jiening Ruan, for your investment in this project, the committee meetings, and our discussions about culture that have provided me with richer understanding of both the bigger picture and the specific nuance.

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**ABSTRACT**

This study is an examination of American sojourners' intercultural experiences in China, and an exploration of their identity of being the *Other*, emerging from intercultural encounters. Through participants' self-descriptions, this study provides a new conceptual understanding of sojourners' *Otherness* and how American sojourners' *Other*-identity, as a socio-cultural construct, is ascribed during social interactions with the Chinese, embedded in a particular asymmetric power distribution. The mixed methods design used for this study included data collected through questionnaires and subsequent in-depth interviews. Quantified value changes experienced by each American sojourner during their intercultural experience in China were measured first. These results informed the subsequent in-depth interviews, aimed to better capture the ways in which social interactions with the Chinese impact sojourners' *Other*-identity. Grounded theory guided data collection and data analysis. A total of 35 American sojourners were recruited for this study. All first came to China as international students and at the time of the interviews were studying or living in China. Through comparative analysis, this study reveals that American sojourners were exoticized, stereotyped, and ostracized *Others* in China, based almost exclusively on their phenotypical and cultural distinctiveness, as interpreted by the Chinese. Unlike sojourners and immigrants flowing from less advanced countries to developed ones, American sojourners, for whom relocation is reversed, are placed in the position of socially superior minority in China as a result of the socially superior standing extended to United States citizens, based on their standing in the world, and the global White supremacy. Analogous to sojourners and immigrants in many other countries, American sojourners are treated as

powerless outsiders in the host country. They are categorized as members of the out-group by the Chinese through the use of objectification, generalization, alienation, and stereotyping in both verbal and nonverbal channels. When the Chinese perceive threats from American sojourners, the latter are further ostracized as disrespectful, untrustworthy, and threatening *Other*, and are segregated and even rejected by the Chinese national in-group. American sojourners declare that it is impossible for them to be fully accepted by Chinese society and, therefore, they are permanently viewed as the *Other* or outsiders in China. Unchangeable cultural markers, such as skin color, along with deeply held cultural values combine to produce this perception of insurmountable differences in the view of the sojourners. However, the Americans admit they still can carve their own niches in Chinese society by using their *Other*-identity to pursue opportunities exclusive to Westerners and/or untapped markets in China. As cultural fusion theory describes, sojourners and immigrants fuse their original *Self*-identity with their newly acquired *Other*-identity, which enables them to expand their horizons of understanding the world, increase their tolerance for people who are different from them, and gain new perspectives on how they see the world, others, and themselves. Specific ideas about orientation and training are offered, designed to make transitions into a new culture less difficult, and to improve the perceptions and knowledge of host country individuals who work directly with sojourners and immigrants.

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

My background as an international student in the United States sparked my interest in exploring American sojourning students' experiences of being the *Other* in China. In the beginning, I still carried the rosy view that I could be part of American society as long as I worked hard to improve my English and expand my knowledge of American culture. However, I found that my American friends did not understand the desperation, stress, and frustration I was experiencing as an international student in the United States. Similarly, I found it very difficult to develop enthusiasm for American football, the political system, or movies and music. Even when I tried to participate in a conversation, I was not able to fully express myself in English, my second language. My limited linguistic competence is a continual reminder that I am an outsider in this environment. Based on this lack of linguistic ability and knowledge of popular culture, I have maintained my Chinese identity while distinguishing myself from Americans around me. This produced a new, distinct identity–the *Other* in the United States.

To be clear, these two identities are not positioned dualistic, rather they are fused together to generate an integral thinking, producing multiple perspectives for examining the life world. For example, after living in the United States for four years, I no longer hold the view that China should model itself after the United States; it is not reasonable to think that a culture can be molded to conform to the consciousness of another culture. I have abandoned the one-dimensional image of the United States I held before arriving, realizing over time that the United States has benefits and problems, and typical features found in most other countries.

Perhaps of more significance, the integral thinking that develops from

recognizing similarities and distinctiveness connects individuals with similar experiences, while at the same time, this thinking sets individuals apart from those with single-dimension consciousness structures. As a result, individuals can further understand who they are through discerning their uniqueness during interaction with people who are different from them. This uniqueness enriches the layers of their identities

This dissertation is an exploration of sojourners' experiences of being the *Other* in an intercultural communication context. Previous research which focused on sojourners' intercultural experiences suggested that their *Other*-identity did not receive adequate attention compared to their acquired cultural identity in the host country. Additionally, these scholarly studies mainly attended to intercultural experiences of sojourners in the United States. Against this backdrop, I became curious about American students' experiences of being the *Other* in other countries, specifically in Asian countries. An increasing number of American students are choosing universities in China for their education. China was the fifth largest destination for American students studying abroad, and has gained more and more attention from American students (Institute of International Education, 2016). This fact adds to the timeliness of this study. For this examination, the intercultural experiences of Americans in China provide the data with an emphasis on their *Other*-identity emerged from their social interactions with the Chinese people.

**American Students' Study Abroad: The Time Has Come**

*Overview of Study Abroad Studies*

As one approach to internationalization, study abroad can produce high quality

students who develop international mindsets (Selltiz, Christ, Havel, & Cook, 1963).

According to the Institute of International Education (2016), international U.S.

education programs can be divided into three broad groups: study abroad for academic

credit, full degrees abroad, and non-credit work, including internships and volunteering.

A typology of education abroad arrangements developed by Belyavina (2013) includes

ten categories:

> Dual and joint-degree programs between U.S. and Chinese institutions, involving study in China; full degree study in China (i.e., enrollment in a BA, MA, or Ph.D program); Chinese language courses taken in China by U.S. students, U.S. student participation in exchanges between U.S. and China (such as the Fulbright fellowships); study tours (faculty-led or facilitated by outside organizations); internships or work in China; volunteer or service-learning projects in China (such as the Peace Corps); stand-alone teaching abroad programs in China; research projects supported by institution or independent research by students; other types of educational activities in China (such as independent study abroad, educational travel abroad, etc.). (p. 11).

Research on study abroad has identified several factors that hinder students'

participation (ADMIT Project Team, 2002; Commission of the European Communities,

1996; Mclnnis, Coates, Hooper, Jensz, & Vu, 2004; Otero & McCoshan, 2006;

Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2009; Szarka, 2003; Van Der Meid, 2003).

First, limited language abilities and knowledge of other cultures are identified obstacles

to students' global mobility (ADMIT Project Team, 2002; Commission of the European

Communities, 1996; Mclnnis et al., 2004; Otero & McCoshan, 2006; Van Der Meid,

2003). These students' lack of foreign language skills and narrow views of potential

destinations restricts their opportunities to study in countries in which English is not the

first language (Mclnnis et al., 2004; Otero & McCoshan, 2006; Salisbury et al., 2009).

The privilege brought by speaking English in many contexts has seduced students

whose first language is English into thinking there is no need to foster foreign language

proficiency, which reduces the importance of education abroad in their view (Salisbury et al., 2009; Szarka, 2003). Second, funding is a major obstacle to students' participation in study abroad programs (Mclnnis et al., 2004; Otero & McCoshan, 2006). Third, the lack of sufficient institutional and policy support for study abroad programs produces obstacles. Currently, study abroad is optional rather than being presented as a significant part of the students' degree. Study abroad often extends the time to complete a degree (Mclnnis et al., 2004; Otero & McCoshan, 2006; Van Der Meid, 2003). Moreover, most current undergraduate programs are not flexible enough to accommodate coursework overseas (Mclnnis et al., 2004; Otero & McCoshan, 2006). Academic faculty lack incentive to promote and support study abroad (Mclnnis et al., 2004; Otero & McCoshan, 2006) and there is not sufficient information about study abroad options available to students (Salisbury et al., 2009). Fourth, sufficient social support is absent overseas (Salisbury et al., 2009; Van Der Meid, 2003). As they are away from family and friends, students often have greater difficulty coping with the strange environment and dealing with psychological stress, such as homesickness (Doyle et al., 2010; Salisbury et al., 2009).

*American Students' Study Abroad*

The growing recognition of the significance of international experiences on the campuses of colleges and universities in the United States has motivated American students to study abroad in record numbers (Institute of International Education, 2005). The number of American students going abroad for education in the 2014-2015 academic year was 381,846, with 313,415 students studying abroad for academic credit, 46,000 for full degrees abroad, and 22,431 for non-credit work, internships and

volunteering (Institute of International Education, 2016). China was the fifth largest

destination for American students studying abroad, and has gained more and more

attention from American students (Institute of International Education, 2016). In 1995,

China issued the Education Law, which stimulates academic cooperation between China

and the world, and encourages development of joint-education programs among

Chinese universities and foreign institutions (Belyavina, 2013), including academic

exchanges between China and the United States, which have surged during the last

decade. There have been 12, 790 American students going to China for study abroad

programs as of 2015 (Institute of International Education, 2016), and 122 joint higher

education programs have been established by China and the United States as of 2012

(Belyavina, 2013). The ever-increasing number of American students studying in China

made them the second largest group (comprising 8 percent) of international students in

China in 2011, following only South Koreans students (Belyavina, 2013).

In addition to higher education academic institutions, the American government

has also fully realized the significance of establishing a bilateral partnership with China

in the 21$^{st}$ century (Belyavina, 2013). By 2000, the U.S. Secretary of Education Richard

Riley signed an agreement with the Chinese government aimed at expanding U.S.-

China exchanges across academic areas (X. Yang, 2008). Seven years later, the U.S.

Secretary of Education, Margaret Spelling, visited China with twelve presidents of

American universities and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with China. The

memorandum was praised by China's previous Premier Wen Jiabao who said that

educational exchange was "an important force to promote healthy and stable

development of U.S.-China relations" (X. Yang, 2008, p. 45). Across agencies of the

American government, the importance and value of education exchange with China was promoted. During his visit to China in 2009, former President Obama made an explicit and public commitment to increasing the number of Americans studying in China. In recognition of China's role in the world, the former President stated that, "[P]ower in the 21st century is no longer a zero-sum game; one country's success need not come at the expense of another…[W]e welcome China as a strong and prosperous and successful member of the community of nations" (Office of the Press Secretary at the White House, 2009, n.p.). Former President Obama emphasized that "future cooperation would largely be rooted in interpersonal exchange between the two nations–in the studies we share, the business that we do, the knowledge that we gain, and even in the sports that we play" (Office of the Press Secretary at the White House, 2009, n.p.). The promise made by former President Obama became the 100, 000 Strong Initiative, introduced by former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in May 2010. According to the China Scholarship Council (CSC), 23, 292 American students were studying in China in 2011, an increase of 18% when compared to 2010, and 13% in terms of annual growth since 2007 (Belyavina, 2013).

**Significance of the Study**

Chinese sojourners and students in the United States can be traced to the late 19th century, but American students studying in China is a relatively new phenomenon. There remains a dramatic imbalance between the number of Chinese students studying in the United States and the number of American students studying in China (Belyavina, 2013). Additionally, American students prefer to go to Western countries, such as the United Kingdom and France rather than Asian countries (Institute of International

Education, 2016). The majority of American students who participate in study abroad, spend only a few weeks or one semester at most, and frequently for course credit.

Scholarly studies focusing on American sojourning students' intercultural experiences in China are quite limited in both quantity and quality. Most of these studies are written either as dissertations or Mandarin articles, published in Chinese academic journals. These articles mainly attend to adaptation problems encountered by American sojourning students in China, including adaptation to the Chinese pace of life, participating in religious worship, buying their favorite foods, finding accommodation, shopping, making friends with Chinese people, and accepting the Chinese teaching style (Lei & Gan, 2004; Tian & Lowe, 2014). These American sojourners perceive China as a place with cultural values alien to them. Tian and Lowe (2014) revealed that American sojourning students in their study expressed ignorance, curiosity, apprehension, and fear of China, and provided a one-dimension portrait of China.

Another focus of study abroad research centers on identity issues. D. Chen (2007) reported these American students changed their attitudes toward Chinese people through daily interaction with them or through special events while in China. In terms of identity change, Tian and Lowe (2014) applied Kim's cross-cultural adaptation theory to examine American sojourning students' identity in China. They reported:

> The journey of participants from cultural naivety to an emergent intercultural awareness and cultural critical capacity. Despite considerable ignorance and misunderstanding about China's an exotic *Other* at the beginning of the program, all participants underwent some degree of cultural identity shift toward more open-ended…self-other orientation of Kim's intercultural identity. (Tian & Lowe, 2014, p. 281).

Adaptation-orientation intercultural communication studies are firmly grounded in positivism, which argues for the idea of linear growth toward uniform cultural identity

as the successful conclusion of acculturation. Consequently, many studies in intercultural communication attend to communicative strategies that inherently promote the identity norms dominant in the host culture.

However, scholars working from critical approaches have revealed that the sense of being the *Other* is the main theme of sojourners and immigrants, echoing continually through their lives (Hegde, 1998). Grounded in differences, sojourners and immigrants are otherized by host nationals on two levels: phenotype and culture (Modood, 1997, 2005a, 2011). Both physical dissimilarity and divergent cultural values work as important markers to distinguish one racial or ethnic group from another. Compared to individuals who relocate from the East to the West, sojourners migrating in the reverse direction face more *Otherness* in Asian countries, which have fewer experiences of interacting with people from different countries and operate in a highly collectivistic culture, an important difference when considering American culture defines the near opposite end of the continuum, the highly individualistic culture.

Specific to American sojourning students in China, it is not easy for them to live in China, which did not open its doors to the rest of the world until the late 1970s. The long-time isolation makes many Chinese people both curious and ignorant about people who are physically and culturally different. Moreover, oppression from the West many years ago still lives in the collective memory of the Chinese people. When tension exists between China and Western countries, a nationalistic feeling comes to play, and sojourners, especially those from the West, are frequently blamed for the tension. Therefore, Americans are more otherized in China than the Chinese are in the United States, which is more accepting of differences, as a country of immigrants. According to

the literature, only a few studies conducted by graduate students and scholars in China have explored Western sojourners and their intercultural experiences in China. Few of these studies paid attention to sojourners' experience of being the *Other* in China. Given this circumstance, as an intercultural communication scholar, I feel obligated to describe the range of emotions and behaviors, the happiness and bitterness, the good and bad, of American sojourners' intercultural experiences in China, to illuminate the ways they are otherized in Chinese society, and to explore the ways being the *Other* in China affects intercultural experiences. With detailed illustrations of these American sojourning students' experiences of being outsiders in China, this study makes a contribution to intercultural communication research in two ways. First, the majority of intercultural communication studies focus on sojourners and immigrants' experiences in Western countries. This study offers a balance by focusing on how individuals from Western countries in general, and the United States in particular, make sense of their intercultural experiences in Eastern countries. Second, this study focuses more attention on the emergence of sojourners' *Other*-identity, which constitutes their fused cultural identities during intercultural encounters.

**Purpose of the Study**

Identity change has been examined and discussed intensively in intercultural communication studies. However, sojourners' identity of being the *Other* in different cultures is seldom explored, in part because differences are not celebrated by the linear thinking about one-way acculturation toward the host cultural identity. Departing from this ideology, this study adopts an emic angle to depict a much more comprehensive picture of American sojourning students' intercultural experiences in China. As emic

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research, this study explores the ways local people think, how they perceive and categorize the world, how they imagine and explain things, from their eyes (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 2002; Kottak, 2006). There can be no wrong answer for emic study participants. What the actors think and how they behave from within a culture's system are salient is more important than what really happened, even if they may expose blind spots and be deluded on some issues, because their actions are based on what they believe is salient and important for them (Berry et al., 2002). To put it differently, it is what we *believe* is true rather than what is in some objective or absolute way "true" that dictates action in our daily lives.

The focus in this dissertation is on ways American sojourning students' identity of being the *Other* in China emerges from their social interactions with the Chinese. Living as sojourners in China, American students gradually discern the differences between them and local Chinese people by virtue of such communicative activities as making friends with Chinese people, going to Chinese supermarkets, and dealing with various authorities. During this process, their American identity becomes salient, and the sense of being the *Other* is generated. This study specifically explores how these American sojourners' *Otherness* is ascribed during their social interactions with the Chinese people, embedded in the particular context of the Chinese culture. Theoretical approaches used herein include post-colonialism, hermeneutics, and post-modernism.

In summary, this study examines the development of American sojourning students' identity of being the *Other* arising from their intercultural experiences in China. These intercultural experiences are considered an additive process of the integration between the old and the new (E. Kramer, 2000). With more perspectives

integrated into the sojourners' cognitive system, these American sojourning students stand out as globalized citizens with more balanced perceptions of both host and home countries and with integral abilities to operate across cultures.

# CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review is divided into three sections that correspond to the research questions. The first section reviews the acculturation process of sojourning international students by demonstrating factors that can hinder or facilitate their intercultural communication in host countries. The second section elaborates the concept of identity, embedded in intercultural communication, by examining its origins on both individual and social levels, and scrutinizing identity construction by viewing culture as a significant social category. The third section conceptualizes the *Other-*identity in intercultural interaction by presenting three theoretical approaches to explaining *Otherness* and discussing how the *Other* is formulated in three ways by virtue of communicative practices. In reviewing the literature, this study is an attempt to enlarge perspectives and deepen understanding of sojourners' experiences of being the *Other* in intercultural communication. It also draws attention to the importance of studying the phenomenon of *Otherness* in the contemporary context of global migration that has produced an ever-increasing number of conflicts among orthodox majorities and alienated minorities.

## Sojourners' Acculturation: The Case of International Students

Acculturation refers to "the process of cultural and psychological change that results following meetings between cultures" (Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 472). Acculturation, at the core of intercultural communication studies, has been extensively explored in terms of its impact on sojourners' cultural identity. Literature focusing on the acculturation of such sojourners as international students has identified common factors that hinder or facilitate their identification with host cultures.

First, international students' individual characteristics are linked to their acculturation. Five relevant characteristics found in the literature are: (1) Historic roots of studies of sojourning students start with research focusing on ways international students' previous experiences outside their own country, as well as contact with other cultures influence their acculturation in the host country (Selltiz et al., 1963; Sewell & Davidsen, 1961). If international students have been abroad or have been in contact with people from other cultures before, they are more likely to associate extensively with members of the host country and enter the host culture more easily (Selltiz et al., 1963). This finding is echoed by Sewell and Davidsen (1961), who reported that "among Scandinavian students at an American university, the greater a student's previous contact with other cultures, the more he was likely to enter into American life" (as quoted in Selltiz et al., 1963, p. 248).

(2) International students' linguistic competence is of great importance to their acculturation. Kim (1977, 2001) and Berry (2003) advocated for the role played by language acquisition in sojourners' adjustment and adaptation (as cited in Pedersena, Neighborsb, Larimerc, & Lee, 2011). Language proficiency is positively correlated with international students' academic performance and their interpersonal relationships with local people, and negatively correlated with overall adjustment strain (Barratt & Huba, 1994; Poyrazli, Arbona, Bullington, & Pisecco, 2001; Poyrazli & Kavanaugh, 2006; Smith & Khawaja, 2011; Stoynoff, 1997; Z. Zhang & Brunton, 2007). In terms of international students in the United States, lower English proficiency functions as a predictor of these students' acculturative stress and/or depression (Dao, Lee, & Chang, 2007; Duru & Poyrazli, 2007; Poyrazli, Kavanaugh, Baker, & Al-Timimi, 2004; Smith

& Khawaja, 2011; Sumer, Poyrazli, & Grahame, 2008; Yeh & Inose, 2003). In addition to international students' host language fluency, Selltiz et al. (1963) showed that these students' confidence in their ability to speak English had more impact on the development of social relations than their actual mastery of the language did.

(3) Such affective difficulties as homesickness and loneliness limit international students' social interaction with local people, and are, therefore, seen as negative sojourner adjustment factors–those that prohibit sojourning students from adjusting to the host culture (Hull, 1978). Some researchers further argue that international students' loneliness is linked to their poor adjustment (Klineberg & Hull, 1979; Stone Feinstein & Ward, 1990; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 2000).

(4) International students' motivation is shown to be a factor that positively influences their social interaction with host nationals (Selltiz et al., 1963). In their studies on international students' attitudes toward the United States, Selltiz et al. (1963) stated:

> At least among Scandinavians, those who come to the United States for specific research purposes are likely to be less sensitive to other aspects of the life of the country and therefore less likely to make observations or undergo experiences that might change their view, than are students whose goals include, in addition to getting training, becoming familiar with a different way of life. (p. 267).

(5) Finally, international students' personalities affect their acculturation. Such personality variables as attachment style, trait anxiety, and extroversion may influence international students' ability to adapt socio-culturally and psychologically (Brisset, Safdar, Lewis, & Sabatier, 2010; Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006; Ying & Han, 2006). Second, characteristics of the host country have been shown to affect international students' acculturation. These traits are included here: (1) Receptivity of host

society is a determinant of international student acculturation. This involves not only the attitudes held by the immigrants and sojourners toward their acculturation in the host country, but also the attitudes favored by the host society toward their intercultural experiences influence the degree to which these sojourning students adapt. For example, the interactive acculturation model developed by Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, and Senecal (1997) accentuates that government immigration policies of the host country can strongly influence immigrants and sojourners' acculturation attitudes toward the host society. Taft (1977) and Liu (2007) argued that rejection by the host culture contributed to difficult adjustment. Forms of rejection include discrimination–recognized as an important factor influencing acculturation. International students from Asia, Africa, India, Latin America, and the Middle East conduct less social interaction with Americans than European students, in part because the former often report more significant perceived discrimination than the latter (Hanassab, 2006; J. J. Lee & Rice, 2007; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007).

     (2) Accommodations provided by the host country also affect international students' acculturation. International students are found to deal more effectively with emotional distress which is typically found in intercultural experiences in universities and colleges that provide sufficient health and counseling services (D. Cheng, Leong, & Geist, 1993; Mori, 2000; Russell, Thomson, & Rosenthal, 2008). These sojourning students also associate more intensively with Americans based on where they live and the extent to which they have the opportunity to be in contact and get to know Americans (Smith & Khawaja, 2011).

     (3) The education environment in the host country impacts international students'

acculturation. Academic stress is identified as a significant predictor of international students' life stress (Rasmi, Safdar, & Lewis, 2009). The gap between international students' expectations of education institutions and services in the host country and the reality they encounter contributes to their acculturative stress (C. Chen, 1999; Khawaja & Dempsey, 2008; Mori, 2000; Pedersen, 1991; Sherry, Bhat, Beaver, & Ling, 2004).

(4) Cultural differences are associated with international students' adaptation in the host country (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). International students report that differences in cultural norms and the nature of interpersonal communication contribute to difficulties in making friends with local people in the beginning months of their stay (Sawir, Marginson, Deumert, Nyland, & Ramia, 2008; Townsend & Poh, 2008).

(5) Availability of social support, especially support involving local people, is a factor commonly identified as a buffer that functions to reduce international students' acculturative stress and depression, and aids their adaptation (Arends-Toth & van de Vijver, 2006; Berry, 1997, 2006; Safdar, Lay, & Struthers, 2003; Sumer et al., 2008; Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001; J. Zhang & Goodson, 2011). For example, the quantity of interaction with host nationals is a necessity for achieving positive adjustments to the host environment (Brein & David, 1971; Church, 1982; Klineberg & Hull, 1979).

Third, international students' acculturation in host countries is impacted by their relationship with their home culture. (1) Social interaction with other sojourners affects acculturation in the host country. Some researchers argue that interacting with co-nationals in particular can provide international students familiarity and social support within the host environment (Berry & Sam, 1997; Furnham & Alibhai, 1985; Pedersena

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et al., 2011; Ward & Kennedy, 1993; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 2000). For example, researchers argue that friendships with co-nationals or fellow international students are positively correlated with international students' adjustment (Kashima & Loh, 2006; Ward et al., 2001). This argument is disputed by other researchers, who argue that social interaction with co-nationals is a negative component of sojourning students' adjustment in that it contributes to separation from the host culture (Berry, 1980, 2003). For instance, Citron (1996) stated that American students, who spend the majority of time with their co-nationals when studying abroad, engaged less with members of the host culture. Pitts (2009) described this phenomenon as the by-product of these American students' failure to communicate or connect with the host country nationals. Kitsantas (2004) reported that the social gathering with co-nationals does not correlate with sojourning students' enhanced cultural competence.

(2) International students' national background influences their acculturation in the host culture (Selltiz et al., 1963). Selltiz et al. (1963) contended that international students from European countries were more likely to associate extensively with members of the host country and to experience less difficulty in adjusting to certain aspects of life in the United States. They further argued that differences in experiences were associated with the national status held by international students. For example, Indian students socialized less with Americans because they saw their home country, India, as a low-status country (Lambert & Bressler, 1954). On the contrary, French and Scandinavian students provided more objective responses; they had attributed this "in part to the fact that these students feel secure about the position of their home countries, both in their own eyes and in those of Americans" (Selltiz et al., 1963, p. 273). Morris

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(1960) observed a similar phenomenon, stating that, "students who had lost national status were less favorable in their evaluations of the United States than those who had not, and that this was especially true of students highly involved with their home countries" (Selltiz et al., 1963, p. 273).

**International Student Identity: Two Aspects of Intercultural Communication**

*Identity in Individual-Society Relationships*

Identity, as a sense of *Self*, is examined on both personal and social levels (Spreckels & Kotthoff, 2007). Personal identity, centered in the field of psychology, attends to the uniqueness of the individual that makes the person who he/she is (Spreckels & Kotthoff, 2007). Such notions as self-image, self-esteem, and individuality and the ways they are internalized to form the *Self* are the purview of psychologists; this includes identity research on the personal level (Phinney, 1990, 1992, 1997). Identity on the social level is often used to describe the collection of group memberships that defines the individual (Shin & Jackson, 2003). Tajfel (1981) defined social identity as "part of the individuals' self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (p. 2). In this research, the focus is on social identity, specifically the identity emerging from the social interactions between American sojourning students and local Chinese people.

*Social identity within the society-individual structure.*

Individuals acquire and develop their identities through interactions with others (Ting-Toomey, 2005). In this sense, identity is constructed through social interactions (Collier, 1998; Hecht, Warren, Jung, & Krieger, 2005; Ting-Toomey, 2005). The view of

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social construction is deeply rooted in symbolism interactionism, which can be traced back to works written by Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934). Cooley (1902) offered the social psychological concept "looking-glass self," which proposed that an individual's *Self* grew out of his or her interpersonal interactions and was manufactured by his or her understanding of how other people in the society perceived him or her. Based on Cooley's illustration of the looking-glass self, Mead (1934) conceptualized the notion of *Self* in relation to the *Generalized Other*, which was defined as the organized community or social groups that gave individuals their unity of *Self* (Aboulafia, 2012). According to Mead (1934), individuals can only develop the *Self* during interaction with *Generalized Others* through assuming certain roles. Consistent with the view of Mead (1934), Aboulafia (2012) refered to roles as "constellations of behaviors that are responses to sets of behaviors of other human beings" (p. 7). During social interaction with others, such functional social units or subgroups as political parties, clubs, and corporations ascribe various characteristics to roles, resulting in multiple *Generalized Others*.

Role-taking as a dynamic process is also elaborated by Goffman (1959) in his theater metaphor: social interaction in daily life is viewed as a theatrical performance. Individuals present their performances on the front stage, where they have control over roles they wish to perform in front of audiences (Goffman, 1959). Although various personal and social constraints exist for appropriate presentation of *Self*, individuals do have flexibility in highlighting roles they intend to present on the front stage (Goffman, 1959). In line with Mead (1934), Goffman (1959) recognized that individuals took on many different roles as social actors to meet the expectations of the pre-existing front

stages and specific audiences. Consequently, identity is described "as a product of social

interaction in which the *Self*, influenced by the norms and mores of Western society, is

constituted by and usually adheres to the expectations of others" (Hecht et al., 2005, p.

260).

*Social identity as a social-cultural construct.*

In addition to the individual aspects that conceptualize identity within the

society-individual structure (Hecht et al., 2005), social aspects are also utilized to

explore identity as a social-cultural construct (Collier & Thomas, 1988; Tajfel & Turner,

1986a), manifested through communication in social interaction (Hecht, 1993). Social

identity theory, developed by Henri Tajfel (1978, 1982) and John Turner (1975, 1982,

1985; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) in the 1970s and the 1980s, puts more weight on the social

aspects of identity formation. Social identity theory is designed to predict intergroup

behaviors based on perceived group status differences and the perceived possibility of

moving across groups through examining intergroup relations and social conflict (Tajfel

& Turner, 1979; Turner, 1999; Turner & Penny, 1986). Social identity theory views the

formation of identity as "a product of social categorization" (Hecht et al., 2005, p. 259).

In other words, an individual's identity derives from his or her perceived membership in

a relevant social group (Turner & Penny, 1986). With emphasis on social categorization,

Turner (1985) and his colleagues establish self-categorization theory, a cousin to social

identity theory. Self-categorization theory focuses on the functioning of categorization

processes in social interaction and perception, and views issues of individual identity

from a group perspective (Penny, Haslam, & Turner, 1994). According to self-

categorization theory, such in-group/out-group markers as class, race, ethnicity,

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nationality, gender, political affiliation, and occupation are among the social categories

used in identity formation processes (Hecht et al., 2005; Turner & Penny, 1986). By

identifying with membership in specific social categories, society is:

> Internalized by individuals in the form of social identities on the basis of social
> categories. Social identities, in turn, connect individuals to society through
> group memberships influencing individuals' beliefs, attitudes, and behavior in
> their relationships with members of other social groups. (Hecht et al., 2005, p.
> 259).

*Sojourning Students' Identity: Culture as A Social Category*

*Intercultural elaboration about identity in interpretive and social scientific approaches.*

Culture is one of the most important social categories and variables that

influence identity formation (Ting-Toomey, 2005; Turner, 1982). As Geertz (1977)

argues, the process of self-identification, and the worldview, logic, and meaning

attached to the process are culturally bound. In the field of intercultural communication,

which views culture as a significant social category, the interpretive approach is a

popular method used to probe the processes of identity formation (Mendoza, Halualani,

& Drzewiecka, 2002). Cultural identity developed through shared meanings and values

is the focus of interpretive intercultural communication research (Carbaugh, 1990;

Collier & Thomas, 1988; Hecht, Ribeau, & Alberts, 1989). In the interpretive approach,

cultural identity is viewed as "a cultural construction in which core symbols, labels, and

norms are expressed and communicated among a group of people" (Shin & Jackson,

2003, p. 219; see also Collier, 1997, 1998; Collier & Thomas, 1988; Jackson, 1999a).

For example, Collier and Thomas (1988) first defined cultural identity as "identification

with and perceived acceptance into a group that has shared systems of symbols and

meanings as well as norms/rules for conduct" (p. 113). Later, Collier (1997) refined the

definition by describing cultural identity as "the particular character of the group communication system that emerges in the particular situation" (p. 39).

From the interpretive perspective, cultural identity is formed during the process of cultural identification by means of the *Ascribed Self* (e.g. who I am) and the *Avowed Self* (one's self perception) (Collier, 1997). Holding to Goffman's idea of performing the culture, interpretive intercultural communication scholars reason that enacted communicative behaviors and their performed meanings, embedded in researchers' cultural immersion by means of ethnography and participant observation, should be used to reflect about cultural identity (Carbaugh, 1990; Mendoza et al., 2002; Philipsen, 1975).

The culture-as-social category construction of identity is also contemplated in depth from the social science perspective (Mendoza et al., 2002). Two models have guided intercultural communication scholars in the social scientific approach: one is a linear bipolar model and the other a two-dimensional model (Gui, Berry, & Zheng, 2012). The linear bipolar model places the ethnic ties of sojourners and immigrants to their home countries on one end of a continuum, and their ties with the host culture on the opposite extreme. The assumption underlying this model is that the negotiation between two ethnic or cultural identities is a zero-sum game (E. Kramer, 2000). To put it differently, "the strengthening of one identity requires the weakening of the other" (Gui et al., 2012, p. 600). In her cross-cultural adaptation theory, Kim (1988, 2001, 2006) postulated that any individual stranger who stepped into a different culture should refrain from intra-ethnic communication and participate in inter-ethnic interaction along a linear path of stress-adaptation-growth toward a universal end that targeted the

formation of intercultural personhood, improvement of individuals' psychological health, and increases in their functional fitness in the host environment. In contrast with the linear bipolar model, the two-dimensional model indicates that both ethnic ties and ties with the host or dominant culture "should be considered separately and that these two relationships may be independent" (Gui et al., 2012, p. 600).

The acculturation model originally proposed by Berry (1980) delineates four possible results of intercultural contact: assimilation (identification with the host culture), integration (identification with both the heritage culture and the host culture), separation (identification with the heritage culture) and marginalization (identification with neither culture). Giles and his colleagues suggested two linguistic strategies along the two dimensions (Gallois, Ogay, & Giles, 2005; Giles & Clair, 1979; Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991; Giles & Ogay, 2007) . One is *convergence*, described as people from different cultural and ethnic background who use both verbal and nonverbal communicative strategies to adapt to each other by reducing social differences between them (Gallois et al., 2005; Giles & Clair, 1979; Giles et al., 1991; Giles & Ogay, 2007). The other linguistic strategy is *divergence*, regarded as a useful tactic for strengthening one's social identity by highlighting a valued group's distinctiveness (Howard Giles & Ogay, 2007).

In addition to the above-mentioned binary thinking, identity studies in the social science realm argue that differences among cultures should be managed because differences are viewed as "a problematic source of misunderstanding and conflict" (Xu, 2013, p. 379). Therefore, sojourners and immigrants should attempt to adapt to the host society in order to reduce misunderstanding and conflict (Xu, 2013). For instance, Kim

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(1988, 2001) suggested that sojourners and immigrants should adapt to the dominant cultural pattern by virtue of inter-ethnic communication. Kincaid (1988) stated that a stage of greater cultural uniformity could be achieved through convergence over time through unrestricted communication among members in a relatively closed social system. In this context, issues with anxiety, uncertainty, and identity inconsistency arising from intercultural encounters are considered to be problems that should be solved through adaptation, which is viewed as the ideal way for sojourners and immigrants to be successfully accepted by members of the host society. Gudykunst (1985, 1988, 1993, 1995, 2005) stressed that an individual's interaction with people from different cultural groups often resulted in anxiety and uncertainty, that should be managed through effective communication to ultimately achieve successful intercultural communication. In addition, Ting-Toomey (1993, 2005) contended that individuals had a tendency to change and transform their identities when situated in unfamiliar cultural environments, with the hope of attaining identity consistency and feeling included through exposure to repeated cultural routines in a familiar cultural environment. The identity negotiation process is described as "competent with the emphasis on the importance of integrating the necessary intercultural identity-based knowledge, mindfulness, and interaction skills to communicate appropriately and effectively with culturally dissimilar others" (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p. 218).

*Existing problems of intercultural elaboration of identity.*

Preceding elaborations about identity in the intercultural communication literature have been criticized by scholars from the critical approach in three areas. First, racial identity is examined less in macro contexts. Although interpretative intercultural

communication scholars "highlight the importance of historical, contextual, and power-laden aspects of identity" by virtue of the ascribed *Self* and the avowed *Self*, the dilemma lies in the fact that context "is conceptualized as a stable, community space that fully determines subjective meaning" without "adequate connotative linkage" to "wider social-political formations and historical influences" (Mendoza et al., 2002, p. 314). Additionally, communication scholars' deliberate avoidance of using racial identity makes it more difficult to examine identity from a macro view in terms of historical, social, and political contexts, for example (Shin & Jackson, 2003). As a result, ethnicity and race are used interchangeably in the literature, and ethnic identity is at the core of identity research in many intercultural communication studies (Kim, 2007). However, ethnic identity and racial identity have different theoretical connotations. The former refers to the "subjective sense of belonging to or membership in an ethnic culture" (Hecht, Collier, & Ribeau, 1993, p. 30), and the latter as a biological term, labeling "people on the basis of physical characteristics such as skin color or salience of physiology" (Shi & Jackson, 2003, p. 213; see also Jackson, 1999; Yetman, 1991). In the context of intercultural encounters, both ethnic and racial identities can use discourse to influence identity construction of sojourners and immigrants by virtue of discrimination, stereotypes, prejudice, and cultural discrepancies (Bhatia, 2007; Modood & Salt, 2011; Schiefer, Mollering, & Daniel, 2012). Under these circumstances, some scholars "have studied identity as the dialogic site of both structural constraints and racial categorizations and identity remaking on the part of marginalized groups" (Mendoza et al., 2002, p. 314).

The second criticism is that biculturalism is over-emphasized. Since the 1980s,

the notion of biculturalism, which advocates for identification with both host and home

cultures, has prevailed in intercultural communication (Liu, 2015). Influenced by

biculturalism, researchers explore the impact of cultural identity on intercultural

contacts in a binary structure, consisting of ethnic ties at one pole and ties with the host

culture at the other. As a result, the ethnic identity of sojourners and immigrants and the

host cultural identity are negotiated in dichotomous categories such as either/or and

us/them (Liu, 2015). From these negotiations, sojourners and immigrants acquire and

develop a bicultural identity, which is regarded as the optimal and ultimate goal of

acculturation (Berry, 1997, 2003, 2005; Gudykunst, 1985, 1995; Kim, 1988, 1991, 2001;

Ting-Toomey, 2005). Nonetheless, the increasing complexity of global migration in the

past two decades has challenged biculturalism with "diversity in intercultural relations

which are influenced by race, ethnicity, culture, gender, generation, class, geographical

locale, political affiliations and sexual orientations, among other factors" (Liu, 2015, p.

85). Against this backdrop, cultural studies scholars have shifted their attention to

multiculturalism, characterized by mixed-up differences and hybridity (Bhatia, 2007;

Geertz, 1977; E. Kramer, 2000; Liu, 2015). To put it differently, intercultural encounters

can result in a fused identity in the form of hybridity, which is neither the original ethnic

identity nor the host cultural identity; it is something substantially different and new

(Bhabha, 1990; E. Kramer, 2000; Liu, 2015).

The final criticism included here is the viewpoint of difference-as-problem that

has been widely adopted. Intercultural communication scholars assume that differences

among cultures in terms of values and behaviors should be managed in order to reduce

uncertainty and barriers to effective communication (Gudykunst, 1985, 1988, 1995;

Ting-Toomey, 2005). Underlain by this assumption, identity research in the social science approach prioritizes sojourners' and immigrants' identification with the host culture, believed to benefit the psychological well-being by facilitating successful intercultural adaptation (Berry, 1997; Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Berry & Sabatier, 2011; Berry & Sam, 1997; Gudykunst, 1985, 1988, 1995; Kim, 1988, 2001, 2006; Ting-Toomey, 2005). Therefore, effective communicative strategies are developed to foster intercultural competence–viewed as the marker of sojourners' and immigrants' identification with the host culture. During this process, the gap between sojourners' and immigrants' ethnic identity and host cultural identity is neglected. Differences between these individuals' heritage culture and the dominant culture are seen as reducible and even eliminable (Xu, 2013). Consequently, various ethnic identities of sojourners and immigrants in the West are simplistically reduced to a general non-white identity, which is "often defined and validated using whiteness as the standard rather than by using themselves as the standard for social approval and validation" ( Shin & Jackson, 2003, p. 213; see also Dyer, 1997).

With this background, scholars following the critical approach note that culture "is not just a variable, nor benignly socially constructed but a site of struggle where various communication meanings are constructed" (Martin & Nakayama, 1999, p. 8). Cultural identity is viewed by critical scholars as a location of oppression in which race, gender, and class intersect with the politics of inequality (Hall, 1990, 1992, 1996; Hook, 1992, 1994). Therefore, the construction of identity as discourse should be analyzed "in the specific historical contexts and power relations between different cultural groups" (Xu, 2013, p. 380). Focusing on the cultural identity of such marginal groups as Asians,

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Nakayama (1994, 1996) and Chen (1992, 1994) demonstrated that the Asian identity was constructed in a structurally oppressive environment, and imposed as a form of discourse by power and ideology (as cited in Shin & Jackson, 2003). Not only must historical context and sociopolitical relationships be taken into account, but also self-reflexivity should be included when analyzing culture (Asante, 1980). Therefore, whiteness has grown to be a research topic with the core theme of demystifying the power and dominance afforded to white individuals in the United States (Shin & Jackson, 2003). Scholars in the whiteness approach argue that "being white symbolizes pre-established privilege and power constructed in a discursive space" (Shin & Jackson, 2003, p. 223; see also Crenshaw, 1997; Jackson, 1999b; Martin, 1997; Martin, Krizek, & Nakayama, 1996; Nakayama & Martin, 1999).

### Conceptualizing the Cultural Other: A Theoretical Framework

Identity is considered to be the product of the dialectics of the *Self* and the *Other* (Hecht, 1993). However, existing problems include forcing the *Self* and the *Other* into a dichotomous structure, with *Self* and *Other* viewed as confronting rather than complementing each other (Xu, 2013). As a result, studies in intercultural communication maintain a primary focus on the formation of the *Self* as defined by the dominant host culture, meaning Western cultures in most situations (Xu, 2013). Accordingly, the prevailing cultural identity in many intercultural communication studies refers to the Western identity from the Euro-American perspective, and other ethnic and cultural identities of sojourners and immigrants are distinguished as the non-Western *Other*. As Jackson (1999a) argues, being white in the West is seen as a normative identity, in spite of contextual constraints. Consequently, sojourners and

immigrants' identity of being the *Other* is discursively located as abnormal, deviant, uncivilized, alien, marginal, and incompetent (Hegde, 1998; Shin & Jackson, 2003; Xu, 2013). The unitary view of the *Self* and its underlying existential philosophy have been rejected by dialogic theorists, who confirm "the very possibility and capacity to have consciousness is based on the understanding of *Otherness*" (Xu, 2013, p. 384). Without the *Other*, the *Self* is incomplete because the two are interdependent (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984, 1986). The *Self* "becomes itself only in reference to the *Other*" (Xu, 2013, p. 385), and in any case, "talking about the *Other* is an obverse way of talking about the *Self*" (Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005, p. 62).

### *Theoretical Approaches to Explore the Other*

Hegde (1998) reported, "the theme of being the *Other* continually echoes in the lives of immigrants, displacing and deferring their sense of coherence about *Self*" (as cited in Shin & Jackson, 2003, p. 221). Perceived *Others* "are always outcomes of communicative practices situated in specific social-historical circumstances" (Deetz & Simpson, 2004, p. 144). Among approaches used to explore the experiences of sojourners and immigrants in being the *Other* in intercultural encounters, the following three theoretical lenses provide the framework for this study, the purpose of which is to reveal American sojourning students' *Otherness* in China.

*The postcolonial approach to the Other.*

The postcolonial approach to the *Other* has its roots in the decolonization of *Self*, initiated by Du Bois (1903, 1915) and further elaborated by Fanon (1967). The basic assumption of this approach is that "the *Other*-identity is imposed and ascribed by power structures (or colonizers) in a hegemonic way that needs to be described toward

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reconstruction of a *Self*" (Shin & Jackson, 2003, p. 224). Hall (1992) described the

process of *Othering* as the way "a power works to construct particular subject positions

for us by designating a certain category of people as them (the *Other*)" (as cited in

Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005, p. 62). The classic analysis of the us-and-them binary social

relationships is presented in *Orientalism*, the seminal book by Edward Said (1979), who

critiqued colonialism in general, and European colonialism in particular. At the core of

Said's (1978) elaboration of *Orientalism* is the binary opposition between Occidental

(us) and Oriental (them). Particular types of discourse are applied to *Other* in the non-

Western world as the homogeneous cultural entity known as the East (Said, 1979).

During the process of *Othering*, Europeans express and represent themselves and

European cultures as discrete, superior, progressive, rational, and civil, and the Orient as

inferior, backward, irrational, and wild (Said, 1979). Said (1979) conceived *Orientalism*

as a system of knowledge about the Orient, possessing the intellectual power to generate

knowledge. Such cultural knowledge allows Europeans to control people, places, and

things in the Orient, forming imperial colonies by re-naming and re-defining them

(Sharp, 2008).

From the postcolonial perspective, some identities are erased and denied by

colonial powers and cultural imperialism (Bhabha, 1983, 1984, 1985; Spivak, 1987).

Discourses of truth-and-normalcy are embedded in certain power relations and

ideologies, and are created to oppress diverse aspects of *Self*-identity and reject

differences as deviant or abnormal identities (Shin & Jackson, 2003; Xu, 2013).

Consequently, the *Other* represents the discursive oppression formulated by colonial

power through a fixed signification (Bhabha, 1983, 1985), and its formation is the

"product of various forms of oppression and the symbol of colonial productivity" (Shin & Jackson, 2003, p. 226). As a result, scholars in this approach insist on problematizing identity and representation of cultural differences in specific historical and sociopolitical contexts with the purpose of examining the politics of differences (Tiffin & Lawson, 1994; Xu, 2013). Counter-discourses or alternative narratives are suggested to "reconstruct *Self*-identity through cultural practices while rejecting the ambivalence and hybridity of *the other* self" (as cited in Shin & Jackson, 2013, p. 226; see also Bhabha, 1983, 1984, 1985). For example, van Dijk (1993) described methods of colonizing the racial *Other*. Pristine bodies of language are invented to reject objectified or ascribed identities (Asante, 1980; C. Kramer, 1974; Lakoff, 1973; West, 1993). All of these efforts aim to "resist the cultural imperialism of the white European-male-centered worldview" (Shin & Jackson, 2003, p. 227).

*The hermeneutical perspective of the Other.*

Gadamer (1991) considered identity as historically-effected consciousness grounded in an awareness of the hermeneutic situation, described as *horizon*, or "the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point" (p. 301). As socialized human beings, individuals have been endowed with certain horizons by their historically-determined situatedness that comprises their cultures and traditions. From these horizons, understandings and interpretations occur. Although the horizon of understanding is subject to the effect of history, it is dynamic rather than static–new horizons are gained through future acts of communication, such as dialogue (Gadamer, 1991). Gadamer (1991) claimed that people were fundamentally linguistic, therefore dialogue played an essential role in shaping understanding–understanding that

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emerged from negotiation with communicative partners in dialogue. Therefore, one can discover a partner's standpoint and horizon through conversation without being in agreement with the partner (Gadamer, 1991). Rooted in and committed to furthering one's common bond with another, dialogue affirms the finite nature of their knowing and invites them to remain open to one another. It is their openness to dialogue with others that is seen by Gadamer (1991) as the basis for a deeper solidarity. Dialogue manufacturers understanding and interpretation, and understanding and interpretation are constituted by a fusion of horizons. Horizons enable people to see, but, simultaneously, they also limit what can be seen.

Applying Gadamer's fusion of horizons theory to intercultural communication, E. Kramer (2000) proposed cultural fusion theory that viewed acculturation as an additive and integrative process of combining elements of two or more cultures in an unpredictable way to generate something new. The goal of acculturation, from the perspective of cultural fusion theory, is to make life meaningful through negotiating and celebrating the niches and differences, and moving toward, ultimately, different meanings unique to the individual (Callahan, 2004; E. Kramer, 2000, 2011). To put it differently, these niches and differences are keys to building a meaningfulness that constantly changes. Sojourners' and immigrants' original cultures are not unlearned, nor is original cultural identity abandoned during the process of learning new cultures. Therefore, the identity of being the *Other*, based on niches and differences, should be embraced rather than eliminated; recognized rather than marginalized. In Kramer's (2000, 2011) view, simply, nuanced niches and differences are not problems. On the contrary, with more new consciousnesses brought in, sojourners and immigrants

develop integral identities with a variety of dimensions by fusing past horizons with contemporary ones in an additive, integrative, and unique way. When exposed to the *Other*-identity continually generated by differences, sojourners and immigrants expand their horizons and gain more perspectives for seeing the world. Such a growth is described by E. Kramer (2013) as an accrual and integral process rather than a zero-sum game. For sojourners and immigrants, the *integral identity* defines who they are and connects them to those who have similar consciousness structures. At the same time, integral identity also separates them from those who do not share similar consciousness structures, whether co-nationals in their home country or local individuals they meet in the host country. So sojourners and immigrants can be the *Other* among their co-nationals while establishing connections with people from other cultures based on similar experiences. The *Other*, from a hermeneutic perspective, is situated in the similar experiences and consciousness structures, rather than dualistic structures such as heritage-host culture and co-ethnic-different-ethnic groups.

*The post-modern lens to Other.*

The framework proposed by Hecht et al. (2005) in their elaboration of the communication theory of identity (CTI) sheds light on the exploration of the *Other*. Integrating communication into identity studies, CTI argues that identity "is formed, maintained, and modified in a communicative process and thus reflects communication" and in turn, "is acted out and exchanged in communication" (Hecht et al., 2005, p. 262). Borrowing ideas from identity theory, proponents of CTI argue that individuals' sense of *Self*, based on roles they assumed in relation to others during social interaction, is defined and re-defined through social interaction (Hecht et al., 1993). From social

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identity theory, CTI draws on the idea that identity is formed through individuals'

confirmation or validation of social categories made relevant to them through social

interaction (Hecht et al., 1993). Additionally, CTI introduces the postmodern approach

in elaborations about identity formation by viewing identity as a multi-layered

phenomenon (Hecht et al., 2005).

Building on these traditions, CTI provides a synthetic view of identity that

integrates *Self*-concept, communication, social relationships, and community, and

further locates identity on four layers: the personal, enacted, relational, and communal

(Hecht et al., 2005; Jung & Hecht, 2004). The personal layer "refers to the individual as

a locus of identity" (Hecht et al., 2005, p. 263). Identity, as a personal layer, provides

"understanding [about ways] … individuals define themselves in general as well as in a

particular situation" (Hecht et al., 1993, pp. 166-167). In the enactment layer, identity is

"enacted in communication through messages" (Hecht et al., 2005, p. 263), and

consistent with Goffman (1959), as described above, seen as expressed performances

(Hecht et al., 2005). In the relational layer, relationship as a unit of identity is at the

center (Hecht et al., 2005). An individual's identity is mutually formed by him or her

and his or her interaction partners through communication (Hecht et al., 2005). Finally,

the communal layer, which places the group as the locus of identity, provides a platform

on which "the common group characteristics function to form the contents of the

group's identities" (Hecht et al., 2005, p. 263). These four layers, working in pairs or in

any combination, "are considered to be interpenetrating; that is, they are infused into

each other" (Hecht & Faulkner, 2000, p. 372). The feeling of being the *Other* emerges

when individuals interact with groups that are different from them on various identity

layers.

<center>*Otherness Formulated by Communication*</center>

Identity is shaped by social actors by means of linguistic and other cultural resources in ongoing social interaction (Hecht et al., 2005; Liu, 2015). From social identity theory, social identity emerges from social categorization, in which "distinctions are made between the individual's own group and the out-groups which are compared or contrasted with it" (Tajfel, 1981, p. 254). As a result of social comparison processes, individuals' psychological group distinctiveness is activated to generate social divisions between insiders/in-group members (us) and outsiders/out-group members (them) (Tajfel, 1981). This intergroup differentiation contributes to the identity of being the *Other* when individuals are exposed to differences between them and the majority society (Modood, 2011). In addition to the self-awareness of being the *Other*, these individuals, whose differences are considered to be negative, sometimes by both the sojourning individual and members of the host society, are otherized by majority groups through linguistic labels and other discursive actions in binary structures including normal-alien, insider-outsider, us-them, and superior-inferior. As Modood (2011) argued:

> The differences at issue are those perceived both by outsiders or group members—from the outside in and from the inside out—to constitute not just some form of distinctness but a form of alienness or inferiority that diminishes or makes difficult equal membership in the wider society or policy. (p. 44).

Specific to intercultural communication scholars who conceive of culture as an important social group marker, sojourners and immigrants become self-aware of their *Otherness* when interacting with people from the host culture, and will be otherized by these host nationals at the same time. Race, ethnicity, and nationality are intermingled in

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shaping sojourners and immigrants' *Otherness* by virtue of differences on both

phenotypical and cultural levels.

*Otherness based on difference.*

Phenotype, together with its cultural (e.g., ways of dressing) and linguistic (e.g.,

accents, dialects, vocabulary) features, is used as an important marker to distinguish

racial and ethnic groups from each other. Consequently, racial and ethnic labels are

created to denote group identities. One of the most salient issues in racial and ethnic

identity literature is ethnic labeling, which "focuses on group membership (e. g., which

overall group a person identifies or associates with) and is typically measured utilizing a

checklist of ethnic terms or labels. These lists resemble those employed by the census,

placing people in broad, ethnic categories" (Hecht et al., 2005, p. 264). In doing the

ethnic labeling, the variation within racial and ethnic groups on such factors as

education and family structure is ignored, and people are placed in overly broad ethnic

categories, such as African Americans or Asian Americans, in an oversimplified and

unsophisticated way (Hecht et al., 2005). As a result, homogenous ethnic group labels

are used to explain the complex relationships among ethnicity and behaviors, frequently

ignoring the potency of myriad other factors that affect individuals' behaviors (Collins,

1995; Longshore, 1998; Phinney, 1996; Trimble 1995). Hecht et al. (2005) reasoned that,

"failure to identity these proximal factors can reinforce ethnic prejudices and perpetuate

racist stereotypes" (p. 265), which otherize sojourners and immigrants by portraying

them as the alien, inferior, threatening, unwelcome and even unwanted *Other* (Liu,

2007). Racism enacted through biological features is termed by Modood (1997, 2005)

*color/phenotype racism*, encompassing a view of the world in which skin color is used

to distinguish groups from one another. Following color/phenotype racism, some physical attributes, as part of the identification process, function as the basis of hostility based on "a set of antagonistic or demeaning stereotypes based on alleged or real cultural traits" (Modood, 2011, p. 45). Racism fostered on this level is labeled *cultural racism*, which is also built on skin color (Modood, 2005a).

In addition to physical dissimilarity, cultural values are important social group markers. At the core of cultures, cultural values generate differences as "as an explicit or implicit conception, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, which influence the choice and evaluation of behaviors" (Liu, 2015, p. 104). With relocation to a different country, sojourners and immigrants perceive the similarities and differences between their heritage cultural values and those normatively shared by the members of the host country. These similarities and differences are described in such terms as *cultural value fit* (Chirkova, Lynchb, & Niwaa, 2005; L. Lu, 2006; W. Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Change, 1997; R. Yang, Noels, & Saumure, 2006), *cultural consonance* (Dressler, Balieiro, Ribeiro, & Santos, 2007) and *cultural congruence* (Stromberg & Boehnke, 2001). Schiefer et al. (2012) point out that individuals with *separation acculturation orientation* display the lowest cultural value fit, following those with *marginalization orientation*. To put it differently, sojourners and immigrants who do not identify with the host country's cultural values tend to perceive the largest cultural value discrepancies between their heritage culture and the host country's culture. The acquisition of new values among sojourners' and immigrants' ethnic groups and members of the host country is "the general processes of socialization" (Tajfel, 1981, p. 255), from which the *Other* is generated.

*Types of Otherness.*

The first type of Otherness is *Exoticized Other*. Due to the different physicality, sojourners and immigrants encounter general inquiries from host nationals about their nationality, origins, belongings, beliefs, habits, and many cultural features. For example, Indian immigrants in the United States are often politely asked by their American peers about India, their life abroad, and similar questions (Bhatia, 2007). Such inquiries from Americans, triggered by Indians' skin color and unique way of dressing, exemplify the general ascription of Indian immigrants' *Otherness* through visual differences, hence placing them in the category of the *Exoticized Other* exclusively due to their dress and skin color (Bhatia, 2007). Consequently, Indian immigrants' sense of being the *Other* in the United States is made salient and they feel their racial and ethnic identities precede their other identities (Bhatia, 2007). The *Exoticized Otherness*, which is appropriately acknowledged by phenotype and cultural features, is termed *Generic Otherness* by Bhatia (2007), referring to "the voices appropriated by the participants and points to an undifferentiated and general notion of cultural difference" (p. 113). Due to the exotic features, minorities are welcomed, admired, and accepted under some circumstances.

Another type of *Otherness* is *Stereotyped Other*. Although phenotype is tied to certain cultural traits, it is mainly alleged to explain negative differences by differentiating minority groups from the majority society through stereotyping (Miles, 1989; Modood, 2011). Stereotypes are a form of categorization used to simplify and systematize information (Tajfel, 1981), and are derived by simplifying complexity, rendering over-simplifications that are subsequently over-generalized to label all members of a given group (Mackie, Hamilton, Susskind, & Rosselli, 1996; Ottati & Lee,

1995). Hence, the simplifications and over-generalizations result in one-dimensional, incomplete, and, therefore, inaccurate descriptions of groups (Lippmann, 1922). Stereotypes work both negatively and positively. Scholars argue that ethnic stereotypes are uniformly negative, because stereotypes of out-groups reflect uniform antipathy (Cuddy & Fiske, 2002; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Katz & Braly, 1933; Kurylo, 2013). For example, Indian immigrants' accent is treated as a form of cultural incompetence in American society, and hence accent-reduction courses are provided to erase the accent, which not only "symbolizes foreignness but also may be interpreted as a mark of incompetence and inefficiency" (Bhatia, 2007, p. 134). Bhatia (2007) termed this *Otherness* as *Marked Otherness*, which was frequently seen as abnormal and involved "these voices [describing sojourners and immigrants as] … different [and] are intended to make them feel awkward, marginalized, and unwanted" (p. 130). In spite of its association with negative labels, stereotypes sometimes help out-groups become admired rather than disliked, respected rather than rebuked (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2010). Sojourners and immigrants benefit by playing with stereotypes assigned to them. For example, some Indian immigrants during the 1960s and 1970s in the United States found deeper acceptance among hippies who simplistically equated Mahatma Gandhi with Hinduism. *Otherness* marked by such specific identifying markers as accent, language, and mannerisms is co-constructed through interaction between "the person assigning the differences and the person receiving their assigned meanings" (Bhatia, 2007, p. 130).

The third category is *Ostracized Other*. Not only are individuals stereotyped, minority groups are also excluded and rejected as *Ostracized Others* on phenotypical

and cultural levels. Discriminative acts from the majority group, including racism, ethnic bias, and gender discrimination, can push minority groups away. *Otherness* generated in this way is seen as disruptive by Bhatia (2007), who argued that such an *Otherness* could create for immigrants "disturbing and alienating feelings" toward the host society (p. 140). For instance, second-generation Indian immigrants in the United States "experience feelings of *Otherness* through racial discrimination, ethnic prejudice, and rejection by their peers" (Bhatia, 2007, p. 142). These experiences of being racialized as the *Other* push the parents, the first generation of Indian immigrants, to confront issues of race and ethnicity in daily life and hence accentuate their pain of displacement and dislocation as non-Western immigrants in the West (Bhatia, 2007). In some extreme cases, Indian immigrants are considered unappealing and unwanted due to racial and ethnic discrimination; they are rejected for promotion in companies and even excluded from living in certain areas (Bhatia, 2007). As Bhatia (2007) described, "although they [Indian immigrants] knew that their race, accent, nationality, and brownness would prevent them from being fully accepted in American society, they did not realize that these differences would bring so much pain and misery" (p. 147). Consequently, these Indian immigrants learn they are not immune to racism in the United States even if they have previously achieved successes both financially and professionally in their home country or even in the host country, including the United States (Bhatia, 2007). In addition to the exclusion initiated by the majority group, minority groups self-claim themselves as the *Other* when they have limited linguistic and cultural competence, and their own distinctive cultural values. When stepping outside their own cultures, sojourners and immigrants experience the inability to fully

express themselves in a second language, and the lack of understanding of explicit and implicit cultural rules (Suarez, 2002). Moreover, the aforementioned value discrepancies enable sojourners and immigrants to re-orient themselves in the host culture by contrasting their cultural values with those shared by host nationals on various cultural dimensions. Through experiencing the divergence of two cultural value systems, sojourners and immigrants re-affirm their identities of being the *Other*, and hence psychologically separate themselves from host nationals, regardless of the diverse accommodation strategies they adopt.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHOD

This study primarily relies on the qualitative approach for two reasons. First, research on culture should take contexts into consideration. As Rabinow (1986) argued, "conversation, between individuals or cultures, is only possible within contexts shaped and constrained by historical, cultural, and political relations and the only partially discursive social practices than constitute them" (p. 239). Specific to cultural identity, context is of great significance because the process of self-identification, and the worldview, logic, and meaning attached to the process are culturally bound (Geertz, 1977). Second, research focused on global sojourners and their intercultural experiences against the backdrop of globalization primarily illuminate migration to the West. As a result, studies of migration in the opposite direction are underrepresented. Under these circumstances, the lack in number and depth of published studies about American sojourners' intercultural experiences in Asian countries in general, and China in particular, will be best addressed by taking the qualitative methodological approach. Unlike the quantitative approach, qualitative research methods place emphasis on inductively seeing the world through the participants' eyes (Bryman, 1984), rather than verifying a priori hypotheses of observed phenomena in a deductive way (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Therefore, qualitative research methods allow the examination of complex issues, including the interests here: identity change and intercultural consequences. For these reasons, this study mainly employs *grounded theory* as the methodology to approach American sojourning students' experiences of being the *Other* in China. The research questions for the study are:

1.  How is the *Other*-identity ascribed to American sojourners during their
    social interactions with the Chinese people in China?

2.  How do American sojourners perceive their *Other*-identity?

3.  What strategies do American sojourners adopt to cope with their *Other*-
    identity?

## Grounded Theory

Glaser and Strauss (1967) argued that grounded theory provided a framework
for the systematic analysis of theoretical exploration of a phenomenon with the goal of
discovering a theory that can explain the phenomenon and that can align with empirical
data. Since the 1960s when it was first proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1967),
grounded theory has evolved into three major variations. The Glaserian version of
grounded theory supports the idea of an objective reality existing out there; holds that
researchers must be as objective and neutral as possible; explains that researchers must
rely on systematic analysis to explore the reality; and theory must fit the substantive
empirical data (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Furthermore, Glaser (1978)
argued that a grounded theory should explain, predict, and interpret what was happening
in a specific area of interest. Taken together, the requirements that a grounded theory
should both "fit" and "work" constitute the notion of relevance, which is defined as a
theorist's ability to capture the core problems and processes of the subject under
systematic investigation (Age, 2011).These core problems and processes emphasized by
Glaser (1978) have two properties: (1) the theory can continue over time regardless of
the continual variation in places; and (2) the theory can be found in different places in
different times (as cited in Age, 2011). The emphasis on "objective reality out there,"

neutral observation, and transcendence of theory links the Glaserian version to positivism, which believes that objective and true knowledge is derived from empirical falsification, and states the kinds of statements that correspond to facts and which statements can be considered to be facts (Popper, 1972). A later version developed by Strauss and Corbin (1990), also places emphasis on an external objective reality, unbiased data rendering, and theory verification. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), human beings are active agents, linking this Straussian version to post-positivism (Charmaz, 2006).

Finally, constructivist grounded theory proposed by Charmaz (2006) places the emphasis on studying people in their natural settings. This constructive approach redirects grounded theory away from positivism and post-positivism. Charmaz (2006) posited that grounded theory must focus on meaning and interpretive understanding, as this version holds that multiple realities exist rather than a single objective reality. Because these qualitative researchers enter the participants' world, data reflect the mutual construction of reality by the researcher and research participants. Therefore, Charmaz's (2006) view of grounded theory is an inductive, comparative, and interactive process of constructing reality. This study adopts the constructivist grounded theory proposed by Charmaz (2006), who states that such questions starting with "what" and "how" bridge the data collection and data analysis. More importantly, this approach enhances the researcher's ability to link events. The "when" question, according to Charmaz (2006), moves data collection toward specific conditions and phenomena, better illuminating them.

Grounded theory has two features: constant comparative analysis and theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Constant comparative analysis entails an iterative process of concurrent data collection and analysis, which involves the systematic choice and study of several comparison groups (Cho & Lee, 2014). To put it differently, data analysis and data collection occur simultaneously, and the analyzed data guides subsequent data collection. During the data analysis process, an incident is compared and contrasted with other incidents; empirical data with concept, concept with categories, and categories with categories, in order to reach higher levels of abstraction and advance conceptualizations (Cho & Lee, 2014). Strauss and Corbin (1990) provided detailed explanations about constant comparative analysis. The first step is *open coding*, which identifies and names the phenomenon from the text. Researchers should be as open as possible to capture as many aspects as possible. Following opening coding, *axial coding* is conducted, defined as a set of procedures whereby data are put back together in new ways, by making connections among categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). A coding paradigm is proposed that involves condition, context, action/interaction strategies, and consequences (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The goal of axial coding is to discover concepts or categories through considerable reduction and clustering (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The third step is *selective coding*, in which one category is selected as the core category and other categories are related to it (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The goal of selective coding is to generate a storyline along which everything else is draped (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Once the core categories are developed, the theory can be integrated. Unlike Strauss and Corbin (1990), Charmaz (2006) proposed that the first two steps of coding are *initial coding* and *focused coding*.

The initial coding described by Charmaz (2006) is similar to the open coding category offered by Strauss and Corbin (1990). In both approaches, the researcher must attempt to be open to all possible theoretical directions that may emerge from the data. But Charmaz (2006) concluded her version of grounded theory with what she labeled focused coding, and described as a selective phase, using the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes to go through large amounts of data. Charmaz (2006) claimed that the aim of focused coding was to build and clarify a category by examining all the data it covered and the variations from it. New threads for analysis become apparent through focused coding, she argues.

Theoretical sampling is the process of collecting data for comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). It involves the recruitment of participants with differing experiences so as to explore multiple dimensions of the social process under study (Cho & Lee, 2014). Intertwined with constant comparative analysis, theoretical sampling is conducted in terms of the *dimensions* of people's experiences rather than their quantity (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In the process of constant comparative analysis, researchers encounter many dimensions and conduct subsequent data collection in light of these dimensions. When no new dimensions emerge, the data collection reaches saturation point and sampling can stop. Constant comparative analysis can be used to validate, verify, and check existing categories, concepts, and dimensions. By doing so, researchers can reach many dimensions of a given phenomenon. Guided by theoretical sampling, the data gathered for this study was collected in stages and in four Chinese cities: Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Nanjing. Each stage of theoretical sampling was guided by earlier stages of data collection and analysis, as described below.

## Research Procedure

The focus of this study, American sojourning students' experiences of being the *Other* in China, was developed in large part because of my personal connections in China. Relying on snowball sampling to recruit qualified participants in China is appropriate; this technique is well-suited to studying people who have certain attributes in common, and can work as the best way to "reach an elusive, hard-to-recruit population" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 114).

### *Participants*

*Sojourner* refers to an individual who temporarily relocates to another country or region for a specific reason (Ady, 1995). Unlike immigrants, sojourners do not plan to stay in host countries forever; rather they are described as "relatively short-term visitors to a new culture whose permanent settlement is not the purpose of the sojourn" (Ady, 1995, p. 93). International students, diplomats, international business people, visiting scholars, and volunteers are classified as sojourners, who usually start to stabilize their re-organized cognition, perception, and affection after spending four to six months in their destination countries (Lysgaard, 1955). Therefore, American sojourning students recruited for this study meet the following criteria: (1) they were United States citizens; (2) they were currently studying or had recently finished study in China but were living or working in China at the time of interview; (3) they had spent at least six months in China when the interviews were conducted.

Consistent with grounded theory, each stage of data collection and analysis guided subsequent stages of recruiting participants and conducting interviews. Therefore, American participants in China were recruited in four stages from three first-

tier cities (Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou) and one second-tier city (Nanjing). Data

collection began in Beijing with four participants in October of 2015. Data gathering

continued with nine interviews in Nanjing, one in Shanghai, one in Guangzhou, and 16

in Beijing, conducted during November and December of 2015. The final stage of

interviews was completed between March and April of 2016. The investigator worked

to recruit people who studied in different academic programs in China, including

language programs without credit hours, study abroad programs with credit hours,

undergraduate programs, and graduate programs. By doing so, the investigator hoped to

expand the profile of interviewees to cover different groups of American sojourners

who first came to China as international students. Consequently, 35 American

sojourners qualified for this study were recruited. Their age ranged from 19 to 36 years,

with an average age of 26 years. They had lived in China from six months to ten years,

with the average sojourning length of three years. Among these participants, nine were

female and 26 were male; five were taking Chinese language courses, seven were

enrolled in dual and joint-degree programs between American and Chinese institutions,

16 were in full-degree programs in Chinese universities, and five were in other types of

programs in Chinese universities. Twenty-six participants held a Bachelor's degree and

nine had a Master's degree. All participants self-reported that they spoke Mandarin with

varying levels of proficiency. More detailed information about these participants is

included in Table 1.

**Table 1. Characteristics of Participants**

|  | Participants | Age | Gender | Months of sojourn | Location | Nature of study abroad |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Susan | 22 | Female | 24 | Beijing | Other |
| 2 | Luke | 27 | Male | 24 | Beijing | Full-degree study |

| 3 | June | 27 | Female | 36 | Beijing | Full-degree study |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Sarah | 27 | Female | 60 | Beijing | Dual and joint-degree programs between American and Chinese institutions |
| 5 | Steven | 26 | Male | 60 | Nanjing | Full-degree study |
| 6 | Mochamochi | 23 | Female | 15 | Nanjing | Other |
| 7 | Mike | 23 | Male | 12 | Nanjing | Full-degree study |
| 8 | Ryan | 25 | Male | 9 | Nanjing | Participation in exchanges between US and China |
| 9 | Frank | 34 | Male | 54 | Nanjing | Full-degree study |
| 10 | Sima | 29 | Male | 72 | Shanghai | Dual and joint-degree programs between American and Chinese institutions |
| 11 | Bobby | 25 | Male | 36 | Nanjing | Full-degree study |
| 12 | Geter | 24 | Male | 96 | Nanjing | Full-degree study |
| 13 | Llama | 23 | Female | 8 | Nanjing | Dual and joint-degree programs between American and Chinese institutions |
| 14 | Peter | 27 | Male | 24 | Shanghai | Dual and joint-degree programs between American and Chinese institutions |
| 15 | Berry | 32 | Male | 97 | Beijing | Dual and joint-degree programs between American and Chinese institutions |
| 16 | Dylan | 28 | Male | 24 | Nanjing | Full-degree study |
| 17 | Kevin | 27 | Male | 60 | Beijing | Dual and joint-degree programs between American and Chinese institutions |
| 18 | Alex | 23 | Male | 10 | Beijing | Chinese language courses taken in China |
| 19 | Mark | 23 | Male | 6 | Beijing | Other |

| 20 | Kane | 24 | Male | 12 | Nanjing | Dual and joint-degree programs between American and Chinese institutions |
|----|------|----|----|----|---------|------|
| 21 | Nick | 20 | Male | 24 | Beijing | Full-degree study |
| 22 | Stacy | 22 | Female | 38 | Beijing | Full-degree study |
| 23 | Kathy | 24 | Female | 15 | Beijing | Other |
| 24 | Porter | 23 | Male | 60 | Beijing | Full-degree study |
| 25 | Jack | 28 | Male | 48 | Beijing | Full-degree study |
| 26 | Samuel | 30 | Male | 48 | Beijing | Other |
| 27 | Maroon | 31 | Male | 84 | Others | Full-degree study |
| 28 | Acupressurist | 36 | Male | 30 | Beijing | Other |
| 29 | Tiffany | 19 | Female | 16 | Beijing | Full-degree study |
| 30 | Will | 31 | Male | 120 | Beijing | Chinese language courses taken in China |
| 31 | Rafe | 26 | Male | 36 | Beijing | Full-degree study |
| 32 | Thomas | 28 | Male | 18 | Beijing | Full-degree study |
| 33 | Claire | 26 | Female | 24 | Beijing | Full-degree study |
| 34 | Jroux | 23 | Male | 24 | Beijing | Participation in exchanges between US and China |
| 35 | Frank | 30 | Male | 36 | Beijing | Other |

∗Names used are pseudonyms

## Data Collection

*Cultural values as the vantage point of exploration.*

At the core of culture are values. A *value* is defined as "an explicit or implicit conception, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, which influence the choice and evaluation of behaviors" (Liu, 2015, p. 104). Therefore, this study was designed to take American sojourning students' cultural value changes, at least partly attributable to their intercultural experiences in China, as the vantage point for exploring their identity of being *the Other*. Seminal work in intercultural communication and cultural values includes the cultural dimension theory proposed by Hofstede and his colleagues (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010; Leung & Bond,

1989), which has been used widely to explain the influences of culture on behavior.

Focusing on values in various cultural systems, Hofstede (1980) identified four cultural

dimensions by comparing work-related attitudes of IBM employees in 66 countries.

These cultural dimensions include power distance, individualism-collectivism,

uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity vs. femininity. The fifth dimension, long-term

vs. short-term orientation was added in 1991 based on research conducted by Leung and

Bond (1989). In 2010, indulgence-restraint was included as the sixth dimension

(Hofstede et al., 2010).

Different from Hofstede's conceptualizations based on nationality, Schwartz

(1994, 1999, 2006) proposed the basic human values theory to measure the cultural

dimensions of individuals. According to this theory, ten motivationally distinct types of

values were originally identified, including *Hedonism*, *Stimulation*, *Self-Direction*,

*Universalism*, *Benevolence*, *Tradition*, *Conformity*, *Security*, *Power*, and *Achievement*.

Various cultures assign differing priorities to these ten values. As an extensively

utilized theory in intercultural communication, Schwartz's basic human value theory

has been tested with more than 270 samples from more than 70 countries. Over time,

Schwartz and his colleagues had further refined the theory by partitioning the ten basic

human values into 19 narrowly refined values, with the hope of solving the fuzzy

boundaries between the original ten basic values and, thereby, distinguishing them more

clearly from each other (Schwartz, Cieciuch, Vecchione, & Konty, 2012). Considering

the fact that this study is an exploration of American sojourning students' experiences

of being the *Other* in China, the model of cultural values proposed by Schwartz is more

suitable than Hofstede's cultural dimension theory due to the former's emphasis on the

individual level of analysis. Therefore, the Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ) was adopted for this dissertation. As an important measurement instrument utilized by Schwartz and his colleagues, the PVQ "comprises descriptions of a particular person's goals, aspirations, or wishes" and for each item "participants are asked to indicate how similar the portrayed person is to them" from one (not like me at all) to six (very much like me) (Schiefer et al., 2012, p. 490).

*Mixed methods as the tools of exploration.*

Mixed methods lend a methodological lens to this research design. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) argue that mixed methods research should be considered as "a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry" (p. 5). Proponents of mixed methods argue that by combining quantitative and qualitative research methods, one can improve the overall strength and validity of a study and produce better solutions (Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Inspired by mixed methods, this study started with a quantitative calculation of each participant's value changes brought by his or her intercultural experiences in China and ended with a semi-structured interview with each American sojourner based on his or her self-reported value changes, from which the sense of being the *Other* in China emerged.

In order to better capture participants' intercultural changes, each of them was required to complete the PVQ online before the semi-structured interviews were conducted. Based on the version provided by Schwartz (personal communication, September 16, 2015), the PVQ utilized in this study was created on the platform provided by Qualtrics at the University of Oklahoma. This questionnaire was composed

of two parts. The first part comprised demographic questions, such as age, gender, length of sojourn in China, and location. The second part contained 57 Likert scale questions on 19 values (see appendix A). For each value, participants read the descriptions of a prototypical person who held that value. They were then asked to compare themselves with this prototypical person 1) before they came to China, 2) right now, and to compare this prototypical person to other Chinese people around them. Answer choices ranged from 1 to 6, with 1=Not like me at all, or 1=Not like Chinese people around at all, and 6=Very much like me or 6=Very much like Chinese people around. The first two questions captured participants' numerical changes on each value attributed to their sojourn in China. The third question measured these American sojourners' cultural value differences from the Chinese people around them by the time of this research. Each participant was asked to finish the PVQ online under a pseudonym. When they completed the survey, they were required to email their pseudonyms back to the investigator for two purposes. One was to protect confidentiality, and the other to link their survey results to the subsequent semi-structured interviews.

After the PVQ survey, a semi-structured interview was prepared based on each participant's self-reported value changes. The difference in the cultural value scores before these participants came to China and after spending a period of time in China was calculated to generate a "cultural value fit indicator" (Schiefer et al., 2012, p. 490). Similarly, the difference between the participants' current cultural value scores and their evaluations of Chinese people's cultural value scores was measured to provide an indicator of cultural difference. These numerical scores, together with two indicators for

each participant, along with detailed definitions of each cultural value were grouped into a table labeled *Table of Intercultural Changes* (see appendix B for an example). This table was used to guide the subsequent semi-structured interviews with each participant. Semi-structured interviews are well-suited to such qualitative studies as the exploration of culture-bound identity changes in two ways. One is that the interviewer can ask planned questions based on an interview guide; the other is that interviewees are allowed more freedom to provide descriptions of their own experiences from which the interviewer can ask unplanned questions to explore a variety of feelings and thoughts (Fontana & Frey, 2005; Rubin & Rubin, 2011). During the semi-structured interviews, each participant was asked about their numerical intercultural changes and perceived cultural gap between them and Chinese people around them (see appendix C for the list of questions).

Before the interview started, the investigator explained to each participant the purpose and nature of this study. A consent form with written explanations of this study was provided to each participant. All interviews were conducted in participants' desired location. English as American sojourners' mother language was used during interviews to make sure these participants could fully express themselves. With the approval of each participant, the interviews were recorded using a digital audio-recording device. In addition, note taking was utilized by the investigator. Information such as changes to interviewees' volume, pauses, body language, and facial expressions were noted. Some participants did not leave the interview location immediately when the interview was over and continued to talk to the interviewer. Upon their approval, notes during these interactions were taken as well. Ultimately, 35 interviews were completed and

transcribed by the investigator and the University of Oklahoma Document Service

Office. To ensure accuracy, transcripts done by the investigator were sent back to

interviewees for checking. Interviews transcribed by native English speakers from the

Document Service Office were checked by the investigator. Ultimately, data for this

study consisted of 79 hours of recorded audio, generating a 1,276-page transcript that

included 743,092 words.

*Data Analysis*

As mentioned, the constructivist version of grounded theory proposed by

Charmaz (2006) guided the data analysis. An incident was compared and contrasted

with other incidents; empirical data with concept, concept with categories, and

categories with categories, in order to reach higher levels of abstraction and advanced

conceptualizations (Cho & Lee, 2014). Additionally, memos were written through the

coding process to keep a record of research reflections at different times. By virtue of

the constant comparative method, the investigator read and re-read the data to locate

common themes and patterns across the interviews by asking generative questions and

writing analytic memos throughout the analysis period. Specifically speaking, common

themes emerged during the open coding, based on participants' self-reported cultural

differences on nine dimensions, including *Conformity*, *Mianzi*, *Guanxi (social*

*networking in China)*, *Humility*, *Material Emphasis*, *Sense of Being the Outsider*,

*Tolerance for Differences*, *Consequences Brought by Study Abroad* and *Social Circle*.

During the focused coding, the *Social Circle* category was dropped due to its subtle

significance to this study. The theme, *Sense of Being the Outsider*, was placed on a

higher level of conceptualization as a core concept, and was further partitioned into

three sub-categories, namely *Exoticized Other* (*Objectified Other, Generalized Other*, and *Alienated Other*), *Stereotyped Other* (*Fantasized Other, Underestimated Other*, and *Disgraced Other*), and *Ostracized Other* (*Excluded Other* and *Self-ostracized Other*) (see Table 2 for the typology of American sojourners' *Otherness*). Value discrepancies brought about at least in part by *Conformity*, *Mianzi*, *Guanxi*, *Humility*, *Material Emphasis*, and *Tolerance for Differences* were integrated into a sub-category, *Being Exposed to Cultural Value Discrepancy*, which was affiliated with *Ostracized Other*. Finally, the axial coding was conducted to examine all codes under the core concept, *Sense of Being the Outsider*, to answer the following questions: (1) under which context the American sojourners became otherized; (2) how they were otherized; and (3) what were the consequences of their being otherized. Upon the completion of the axial coding, the formation of the American sojourners' *Other*-identity was visualized in a diagram (see Figure 1).

In order to increase the accuracy of the data analysis, the investigator checked back with participants via email and invited them to examine whether their experiences were accurately interpreted. Based on their feedback, revisions were made and then transcripts re-submitted to participants for another review. Eight face-to-face follow-up interviews were conducted to clarify disagreements between participants' explanation and the investigator's interpretation or to address questions that emerged from the analysis. Data saturation occurred when the $32^{nd}$ interview was completed. After this interview, the investigator interviewed three more American sojourners at a later time to verify results from previous analyses.

**Table 2. Typology of American Sojourners' *Otherness***

| Category | Concept | Definition |
|---|---|---|
| Exoticized *Other* | Objectified *Other* | Sojourners who are stared at by Chinese people |
| | | Sojourners whose photographs are taken by Chinese people |
| | | Sojourners who are seen as tokens for superiority |
| | Generalized *Other* | Sojourners who are generalized to a homogenous group by Chinese use of specific labels |
| | Alienated *Other* | Sojourners whose physical features are highlighted by Chinese use of specific labels |
| | | Sojourners who are asked occidentalizing questions |
| Stereotyped *Other* | Fantasized *Other* | Sojourners who encounter the fantasies held by Chinese people about the United States and Americans |
| | Underestimated *Other* | Sojourners whose linguistic proficiency is underestimated |
| | | Sojourners whose Chinese cultural literacy is depreciated |
| | Disgraced *Other* | Sojourner who are viewed by Chinese people as members of a genetically inferior race |
| | | Sojourners who are viewed by Chinese people as sexually promiscuous |
| | | Sojourners who are viewed as suspicious by Chinese people |
| Ostracized *Other* | Excluded *Other* | Sojourners who are separated from the Chinese social circle |
| | | Sojourners who are rejected by Chinese people based on nationality |
| | Self-ostracized *Other* | Sojourners who view themselves as out-group members based on linguistic barriers |
| | | Sojourners who view themselves as out-group members based on cultural value discrepancies on four dimensions:<br>• conformity to in-group identification and homogeneity,<br>• conformity to authorities,<br>• *mianzi*, or 面子 in Chinese culture, and<br>• *guanxi*, or 关系 between Chinese people |

**Figure 1. Formation of American Sojourners' *Other*-identity**

**Power Structure**
- Chinese cultural emphasis on in/out-group divide based on homogeneous, monolithic nature
- Long–time isolation of China from the world
- American dominance in the world
- The global White supremacy

**Stimuli to *Othering***
- Non-Chinese phenotypical features
- Linguistic barriers
- Cultural value discrepancies

**Communicative *Othering***
- Exoticizing
- Stereotyping
- Ostracizing

**Permanent outsider in China**
- Socially superior yet powerless minority
- Cultural *Other* who "properly" behaves as outsider
- Sojourners who expand their horizons

**CHAPTER FOUR: EXOTICIZED *OTHER***

Of all forms of identity, racial identity is "the most salient aspect of self-identity" (Shin & Jackson, 2003, p. 227). Phenotype is an essential racial marker based on obvious physical characteristics such as skin color, hair color and eye color (V. Chen, 1994; Shin & Jackson, 2003).Therefore, sojourners in China, especially those with Western features, frequently arouse attention from ordinary Chinese people who rarely see foreigners on a daily basis (Kochhar, 2011). Chinese people, curious about outsiders, often stare at foreigners and exoticize them (e.g., what they wear and what they carry) (Kochhar, 2011). As a result, American sojourners in China are regarded as the exoticized *Other*, specifically objectified, generalized, and alienated as distant and mysterious Occidental creatures. This chapter elaborates the ways in which American sojourners' exoticized *Otherness* emerges from interacting with Chinese people.

**Objectified *Other***

Since the establishment of the current government in 1949, China did not widely open its doors to the outside world. That changed in 1978 with the launch of the "Reform and Opening-Up" policies (Kochhar, 2011). Han-centric ethnic policies advocated by the Communist Party of China since 1949 displaced notions of race and ethnicity by consolidating the dominant position of Han people (Hung, 2014). Hence, original Chinese people, especially those from remote areas and smaller cities, have limited experiences of engaging in dialogue with people from different racial and ethnic groups. Thus, seeing individuals with phenotypical features such as white skin and blond hair is novel for the Chinese. They notice and point out, literally, these American sojourners' exoticness through nonverbal cues and verbal acts, overtly differentiating

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these Americans as exoticized *Others*.

<center>*Being Objectified for Observation.*</center>

From the monolithic Han perspective, Chinese people are characterized by yellow skin, black hair, and black eyes, all of which were absent among the 35 American participants in this study. Due to the phenotypical features described above, American sojourners' sense of being different was frequently highlighted by Chinese people's stares. Through further communication with Chinese people, these Americans interpreted differences as a sense of *Otherness* grounded in their exoticness, as mentioned. For instance, June, who studied abroad in Nanjing and graduated with a Master's degree in Beijing, admitted that she felt she stood out when Chinese people stared at her. Being noticed in this way frustrated June because it repeatedly drew attention to the fact that, while in China, she was an exotic foreigner above anything else. According to June's description, her frustration increased because her exoticness— rooted in her Western phenotype–would never fade away. Being in this trap of exoticized *Other*, June indicated there was no way for her to fit into Chinese society, no matter how long she stayed in China, concluding she would always be observed, first and foremost, as a foreign woman (an exotic *Other*) by Chinese people.

In addition to Western looks, cultural artifacts carried by these American sojourners embodied exoticized *Otherness* as well. As a second-generation Chinese immigrant born and raised in the United States, Mochamochi was working and living in Nanjing, a second-tier city in Southeast China. Compared to such first-tier cities as Beijing and Shanghai, which are highly cosmopolitan, Nanjing offered local Chinese people fewer opportunities to interact with Westerners. Therefore, American sojourners'

exotic looks caught even more attention in Nanjing than in first-tier cities. Although

Mochamochi has a Chinese face, she was still singled out by local people in Nanjing

because of her distinctive religious artifacts. Unlike many young Chinese women of Hui

nationality, Mochamochi always wore her scarf in a unique way whenever she went

outside. The scarf, which symbolized Mochamochi's Hui identity, continually exposed

her to the stares of local people on the street. Mochamochi indicated this made her feel

uncomfortable. Similar to June, Mochamochi endured the stares rather than changing

her cultural attire. In this situation, Mochamochi, who was also very sensitive to stares,

compared herself to a captive zoo animal:

> I think the biggest thing for me is that I feel I am being objectified. I do not feel that they see me as a person. I feel they are at the zoo. You know? They are looking at an elephant or they are looking at a monkey. And they do not see me as me, for being Mochamochi, but they see me as a person who's wearing this scarf, maybe represents Islamic to them or maybe it represents a Uigher to them. I don't know whatever it represents to them. But whatever they see, they are not seeing me as me. And that's what bothers me, I think. I have no idea what they are thinking about. They do not communicate with me. It is okay if they stare and ask a question. But if they do not open that up, it really upsets me.

For Mochamochi, the continual, direct, and intense stares reduced her to an object, less

than human, and as a mere symbol. The lack of desire on the part of local Chinese

people to communicate with her further deprived her of human dignity, Mocamochi

explained. In her eyes, Chinese people perceived her as nothing but an exotic object

available to be continually observed. Based on these perceptions, Mochamochi

developed her identity as the exoticized *Other* from a sense of difference highlighted by

and grown from stares prompted by physically embodied cultural distinctiveness.

*Being Objectified for Amusement.*

Similarly, verbal communication initiated by local Chinese people often

objectifies American sojourners by treating them as exotic objects for their own amusement. For example, several American sojourners mentioned that some Chinese tourists take pictures of them at scenic spots, especially in remote and rural areas. Many of these Chinese people have never seen Westerners before, so they hoped to digitally record these exotic images. Having already spent 5 years studying and working in China, Kevin was formerly uncomfortable with Chinese people's efforts to take a picture of him. He became increasingly annoyed because, overwhelmingly, interactions were triggered solely by his exoticness. Chinese tourists wished to digitally record Kevin in the same way as they did to awe-inspiring scenery. Under these circumstances, Kevin felt that he was first objectified by Chinese tourists as scenery, to be digitally recorded for future amusement. As a result of interacting with Chinese tourists, Kevin was exposed to the identity of being an exotic object. Similar to Kevin, these interactions also irritated Tiffany. Working on her Bachelor's degree in a Beijing university, Tiffany described Chinese people's behaviors as being progressively more annoying. These actions, as Mochamochi argued, rejected Kevin and Tiffany as people; rather they were objectified as exotic symbols, recorded and saved in a way they described as dehumanizing.

Even when some American sojourners indicated being less annoyed by the picture-taking behaviors than Kevin and Tiffany, they still described this type of behavior negatively. Mike, who was working on his Master's degree in Nanjing at the time of the interview, described his feeling:

> But for me it [being asked by Chinese tourists to take pictures together] is strange because like I come from a situation where like, everyone's different. You know? To me, like…different people is normal.

Since its inception, the United States has been a multi-cultural nation that embraces all races and ethnicities. Being born and raised in such a country, American sojourners are accustomed to seeing and interacting with people from many racial and ethnic groups. More importantly, the Civil Rights Movement against racial discrimination started in the 1950s and has deeply influenced American culture. Therefore, it is significant for Americans to avoid giving attention to or making decisions based on phenotypical features. Mochamochi recalled that even when some Americans could not control their curiosity, they often peeked at her. When she looked back, those Americans appeared ashamed or embarrassed, and stopped staring. Given this situation, these American sojourners have, for their entire lives, seen individuals who are physically different from them. In the egalitarian American society, it is not appropriate to take pictures of others based on exotic physical features or artifacts. For example, Mike found it strange to take pictures of other people based on their exoticness, even though he often cooperated with Chinese people by attributing their behaviors to curiosity, and normalizing such curiosity as a universal component of human nature.

### *Being Objectified for Superiority.*

The exoticness of American sojourners in China also symbolized a sense of superiority, which emerged from the specific power structure of U.S.-China relations. In the post World War II period, the United States has gradually attained the leading standing in the world. Being a citizen of such a powerful country made American sojourners feel that their country could provide substantial security even when they were abroad. Therefore, June admitted that American sojourners received special treatment by the Chinese government, which conceives its relationship with the United

States as one of great importance. Additionally, Americans' advantages in salary and benefits in China further enhance their superiority in the eyes of average Chinese people. Berry, who followed his father to China in the 1990s, recalled that foreigners in China at that time were much richer than average Chinese people. Even though this gap has been greatly reduced after 30 years, expatriate employees from Western countries still receive the highest salaries and benefits in China (Mo & Su, 2012). In contrast, local Chinese employees, in general, are an economically disadvantaged group. Consequently, advantageous remuneration offered to American sojourners in China, together with powerful protections from their own country, has facilitated these sojourners gaining higher social status in China. From the perspective of the average Chinese person, these special treatments denote American sojourners' superior position in China.

In this context, Susan, who was working on her Master's degree in Nanjing, described her feeling about making friends with Chinese people:

> But I mean Chinese people who make friends with a lot of foreigners, a lot of time, they think, "oh, I am so cultural, I am so educated. All my friends are foreigners."

According to Susan's description, her American look and nationality were linked to a sense of being cultural and educated by her Chinese friends, who tried to stand alone above others through making friends with Americans. To put it differently, Susan was seen as a token of superiority, and her Chinese friends intended to acquire this superiority by hanging out with her. By doing so, these Chinese people could elevate their social status and distinguish themselves from other Chinese who were less cultural and educated. Susan was objectified as a symbol of cultural and educational superiority in the same way as tokens of identity (e.g., clothes and ornaments) operate for

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materialistic individuals. Ultimately, American sojourners like Susan were objectified as the superior *Other*, exclusively associated with their exoticness in the specific power structure of U.S.-China relations.

The exoticized *Otherness* related to superiority was exemplified in Kevin's experiences as well. Kevin was sometimes invited to business dinners by his Chinese friends. Such an invitation was interpreted by Kevin as a showing-off behavior enacted by his Chinese friends to distinguish themselves from other Chinese people at the table. Kevin described this as if he were a dancing bear, as discussed earlier, and the purpose of his presence was to improve his Chinese friends' public image. Although Kevin attempted to cooperate by attending these dinners, he could not embrace being objectified, let alone objectifying his Asian American friends in the same way. The objectification grounded in his exoticness ultimately provoked Kevin to grow tired of being a foreigner in China. No matter how hard he worked, his exoticness overrode his individuality in Chinese people's eyes.

## Generalized *Other*

### *Being Generalized for Exoticness*

Beyond the aforementioned nonverbal cues and verbal acts, ethnic labels are often created by a society's census process, used to refer to minority racial and ethnic groups (Hecht et al., 2005). These labels focus on group memberships that reduce racial and ethnic differences to overly broad, general categories that do not capture the complex relationships among ethnicity and behavior (Collins, 1995; Hecht et al., 2005; Longshore, 1998; Phinney, 1996; Trimble 1995). Phenotypical features are frequently used to differentiate racial and ethnic groups. As mentioned, Asian people typically

have black hair, black eyes, and yellow skin. As a result of ethnic labeling, binary structures such as normal-alien, insider-outsider, us-them, and superior-inferior are created, and the *Otherness* of individuals from minority racial and ethnic groups is formed and re-formed during intercultural communication.

Westerners in China, along with many other non-Chinese people, are placed in a broad ethnic category called *laowai* (老外 in Mandarin, "foreigner" in direct translation), regardless of their nationalities, religions, and ethnicities. Being labeled *laowai* indicates foreigners in China are not only perceived as a strange presence in the Chinese society (Kochhar, 2011), but also are typically reduced to a homogenous assembly, which is based exclusively on their physical appearance. Consequently, factors such as nationality and profession are blurred by the overly simplistic generalization prompted by the label *laowai*. As a result, American sojourners who were addressed as *laowai* by local Chinese people were perceived as outsiders or the *Other* with a similar foreign face. Will, who had been living in China for 10 years at the time of the interview, rejected the label *laowai* for its generality:

> That's why I don't like 老外 [laowai], because it is not specific. It just means you are not from around here, you are not from around here at all.

When asked about what he meant by "being specific," Will associated the term with the accentuation of a person's individuality that makes an individual who he/she is, including personality type, education background, nationality, race, and sojourning purposes. However, these individual traits of American sojourners were erased when labeled *laowai*. As a consequence, Will said that *laowai* pigeon-holed him into a broad category that did not only make his differences prominent, but also positioned him only as a non-Chinese person (or object, as described above). To put it differently, Will was

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perceived as a generalized *Other,* as opposed to a Chinese person, even though he is

fluent in Mandarin and has been married to a woman from Beijing for nearly 10 years.

Similar to Will, Jroux, who majored in Linguistics and had studied Mandarin for nearly

5 years in China, described that *laowai* reduced his ability to learn about China,

including studying Mandarin, making friends with Chinese people, learning Kongfu,

and working as an English teacher in a major Beijing university. Similarly, Claire, who

worked very hard to acquire an understanding of Chinese culture and Chinese society in

many aspects, said that her individuality disappeared when people called her *laowai*. As

Kevin argued, these American sojourners fell into the category of the *Other* in the

Chinese society under the label *laowai*, which highlighted and generalized their

foreignness without paying attention to their unique individuality. Consequently,

American sojourners were exposed to a generalized *Otherness* that was established

based exclusively on their physical characteristics, rather than unique individual traits.

Similarly, the label *waijiao* (外教 in Mandarin, "foreign teacher" in direct

translation) also contributed to a sense of the generalized *Other* among American

sojourners in Chinese society. Kathy had been working in China for 1 1/2 years at the

time of the interview. As Jroux's university colleague, Kathy was primarily responsible

for teaching oral English. She frequently had arguments with her students about the

label *waijiao* assigned to her based only on her non-Chinese appearance. For Kathy, the

notion of *waijiao* was alien in part because no term for foreign teachers exists in the

United States. So when Chinese students called her *waijiao*, Kathy described being

treated as "non-Chinese" rather than the individual she is. Similar to Kathy, Mike was

often pointed out by local Chinese people as *waiguo mote* (外国模特 in Mandarin,

"foreign model" in direct translation). As Mochamochi elaborated, Chinese people did not see her as a person, but as the *Other* based exclusively on phenotype. The Chinese character "外" ("foreign" or "outsiders" in direct translation) was placed in front of these American sojourners' professions to denote who they were in a generalized way. Ultimately, the emphasis on American sojourners' non-Chinese features positioned them as the generalized *Other* in Chinese society.

## Alienated *Other*

### *Being Foreignized for Non-Chinese Looks*

Sojourners' non-Chinese looks are described by local people as *laowai* and *waijiao*, which puts all non-Chinese people in one of these general categories, erasing their individuality, as mentioned above. In addition to the emphasis on phenotypical differences, these labels further generated a sense of being alienated from these American sojourners through the use of these terms and others, including *foreign* and *alien*. Jroux mentioned that it was considered rude to address American sojourners as *laowai*. Echoing Jroux, Maroon, who had lived in China for nearly 10 years, explained that it was extremely rude to point at people on the street and call them "foreigners" when in the United States and Europe. He attributed this linguistic taboo to the bad connotations of the term "foreign" and suggested that it was polite to show specificity and awareness by addressing people by their origins (e.g., a British doctor, a Canadian professor, etc.).

> So the word "foreigner" has a really bad connotation in English. You don't call people foreigners. You may refer to someone, oh say "oh, he's Japanese" referring to where he is from, his background. This is polite.

> This negative connotation, according to Kevin, is involved when people are

described as *laowai*—the term implies being more foreign than others. The emphasis of

being foreign makes Jroux describe how he was aliened by the label *laowai*.

> There's different ways to translate it [laowai], but you can translate it, it's like alien, and that's kind of in my mind how I translate it and that's… that's a very rude word to use in America. I never heard it actually. So in my mind that word is "just… you're calling me alien."

Due to foreign looks, American sojourners were separated from the crowd by

Chinese people by virtue of the label *laowai*. Being placed in the position of minority,

these sojourners' foreignness was considered by Chinese people, who are the majority

in the Chinese society, as unusual. As Tiffany disclosed, when local Chinese people

uttered *laowai*, they were actually talking about sojourners' unusualness grounded in

their foreign looks. Under this circumstance, the label *laowai* initiated a certain speech

act that unequally distributed power between American sojourners and local Chinese

people, with the Americans perceived as the alien minority and the Chinese people who

represented the normal majority. American sojourners, deprived of their individuality by

the label *laowai*, face the only given option: being aliens in Chinese society. Based on

this, Jroux indicated he was discredited as a person and his experiences were rejected.

*Being Occidentalized for Western Looks*

Besides the label *laowai*, American sojourners also felt alienated by Chinese

people's questions about America and typical Americans and their lives. Jack and Stacy

were working on their Ph.D. and Bachelor's degrees, respectively, in a famous Beijing

university. Although both had studied in China for more than three years at the time of

the interviews, they still described being bombarded with questions from local Chinese

people about their nationality and sojourning purpose. For example, Jack was typically

asked where he was from. When he mentioned he came from the United States, Chinese

people would comment that he did not look like an American. Stacy had to explain why she chose to study in China to her Chinese classmates from time to time, and was often asked by Chinese people if she was from Russia. When these questions were asked by Chinese people, American sojourning students repeatedly answered them. Such encounters, as Jack described, frequently reminded him of differences by repeatedly inviting similar questions from different Chinese people around them. Due to the accentuated differences, Jack and Stacy indicated they were very clearly *Others* in Chinese society. The *Otherness* exposed them to Chinese people's imagination of the Occident represented by the questions they asked, as described above.

Besides the aforementioned inquiries, American sojourners were often questioned about typical life in the United States. Susan had already studied in China for four years, and had a Chinese boyfriend at the time of the interview. Her intercultural romantic relationship provided Susan more opportunities to interact socially and professionally with Chinese people. In addition to being mistaken for a Russian during interaction with Chinese friends, Susan also encountered questions such as: Are there black haired people in America?', 'Can Americans use chopsticks?', and, 'Can they eat spicy food?' Similar to Susan, Maroon sometimes was asked by his Chinese colleagues about what Americans typically eat for dinner. These inquiries from Chinese people, according to Susan, brought to light the fact that Chinese people differentiated Western sojourners as distant and alien individuals, fundamentally different from Chinese people. These questions probing the sojourners embody the perception of the Occident, perceived as a distant and mysterious culture in the same way Orientalists perceived the Orient. Said (1979) described European people's

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hegemonic discourse of the Orient as a European fantasy, which filtered the Orient

through their knowledge about it into Western consciousness in a power structure.

Therefore, the Orient is orientalized not only because it is discovered to be Oriental in

normal ways, but also because it is made Oriental (Said, 1979). By the same token,

Chinese people who questioned American sojourners, did not only inquire about typical

American life, but also tried to confirm their assumptions of the Occident by projecting

their own understanding of it through the sequence and wording of those questions.

Therefore, these questions encountered by American sojourners had less to do with the

ways typical United States and Americans looked and acted like, but placed these

Americans in the position of occidentalized *Other*. As Will elaborated:

> Often when people think they are asking about the other, they are actually
> asking about their own prejudice and misconception and models.

## What Does Being Exoticized *Other* Mean?

According to CTI proposed by Hecht et al. (2005), one way to internalize

communication as identity is to create symbolic meanings and exchange these meanings

through social interaction. Specific to American sojourners' experiences in China, it can

be argued that their interactions with Chinese people create symbolic meanings of being

the *Other* in China, grounded in their exoticness. Symbolic meanings of being the *Other*

were assigned to these American sojourners through various social interactions, such as

staring, labeling, asking questions, and recording images. These social interactions, as

Cooley (1902) argued in his concept of "looking-glass self," shaped American

sojourners' understanding of themselves, which, as mentioned, grew from Chinese

people's perceptions of them. Consequently, American sojourners indicated that they

were observed as distant and mysterious individuals from the Occident, based almost

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exclusively on their phenotypical differences highlighted during their social interactions with Chinese people. The Chinese, as explained previously, objectified, generalized, and alienated the Americans, according to their presumptions about them. In the end, these American sojourners were exoticized as the *Other* in Chinese society, and this situation was described by Susan as putting sojourners on a pedestal.

Another way to internalize communication as identity refers to individuals' conformation or validation through social interactions when they are placed in socially recognizable categories (Hecht et al., 2005). Coming from an immigrant country, American sojourners have seen and interacted with people from various racial and ethnic groups. More importantly, they are required to follow rules and laws on race-related issues. Therefore, American sojourners in this study not surprisingly described Chinese people's behaviors that exoticized them as distant and mysterious aliens negatively. In order to smoothen their sojourning experiences in China, these American sojourners accommodated being the exoticized *Other* in four ways: ignoring, confronting, accommodating, and utilizing.

American sojourners tended to *ignore* transient exoticizing behaviors enacted by Chinese strangers. For example, Tiffany and Jroux mentioned that they were not really bothered by being called *laowai*, which they often overheard while walking outside. In this context, Chinese people who assigned *laowai* to these two American sojourners were complete strangers and the labeling was transient, evidenced by overhearing the label as they passed by Chinese people. From Tiffany and Jroux's perspectives, these Chinese people on the street were strangers, and therefore there was no point in caring about what they said, let alone being bothered by these behaviors. And, ignoring the

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comments was often the response from these sojourners, especially when they were in a good mood and engaged in enjoyable activities. Mochamochi said she could ignore stares from Chinese people when she was in a good mood. However, when in a bad mood, she became frustrated more easily with stares and objectification. As Susan illustrated, small incidents such as staring were enough to accentuate her sense of being the *Other* in China.

When annoyed by these intrusive behaviors, some American sojourners chose to *confront* Chinese people about the objectification, generalization, and alienation they experienced. For instance, Susan and Claire displayed their ability to speak Mandarin when they heard local strangers address them as *laowai*. After realizing that Susan and Claire could speak Mandarin, the Chinese people, surprised to be sure, stopped labeling them verbally. Mochamochi, whose religious attire provoked stares from local Chinese people in Nanjing, employed a less direct way of confronting Chinese people, due mostly to her passive tendencies. When intense stares produced frustration, Mochamochi started to speak in English, her first language. In doing so, Mochamochi said she could express her frustration and anger most comfortably, given that she was not comfortable speaking Mandarin when discussing deep feelings and emotions.

Although American sojourners often did not embrace Chinese people's exoticizing behaviors, they were willing to *accommodate* the behaviors sometimes due to practical concerns. Claire mentioned that there was no way for her to escape the label *laowai*, because she would always be perceived as a foreigner everywhere in China. Viewing this as an unchangeable reality, Claire had to accept the label *laowai* rather than attempting to get rid of it. Moreover, Claire admitted that she did not want to be

recognized as an American by Chinese people. Due to nationalistic feelings, some

Chinese people linked American individuals to the complicated disputes between the

United States and China, and treated them as scapegoats of the American government.

In addition to the nationalistic reaction, many Chinese people assumed that all

Americans were rich and even made this assumption about Claire when she went

shopping. Therefore, in order to protect herself and avoid the possibility of being over

charged, Claire accommodated by using the label *laowai* when necessary. Similarly,

both Kevin and Mike accommodated the picture requests at scenic spots even when it

was annoying to be objectified as exotic foreigners. Compared to Mike, Kevin showed a

stronger antipathy by directly rejecting a Chinese tourist's request to take photos in the

beginning. But later, Kevin felt that the Chinese person did not have bad intentions; he

asked only because he had never seen foreigners before. For this reason, Kevin changed

his mind by interpreting his accommodation as helping others. Unlike Kevin, Mike

usually agreed to take pictures with Chinese tourists based on his understanding of

people's curiosity of seeing individuals who looked different from them. In addition to

picture taking, Kevin played up his exoticness when he was invited by Chinese friends

to have dinner with other people. Although Kevin said he was annoyed by his role of

"dancing bear" at these business dinners, as mentioned, he did not mind taking these

opportunities to get to know local people who might benefit his business in the future.

It should be noted that exoticness did not only distinguish American sojourners

from Chinese people, but also provided a somewhat unique edge for gaining benefits as

an exotic Westerner in China. Based on a sense of superiority mentioned above, and

symbolized by Western physical attributes, many Chinese advertisers prefer hiring

Western models with the hope of transferring symbolic meanings such as innovation

and quality to their products. An example of this access to professional opportunities by

virtue of exoticism, Bobby earned a good salary working as a model in Sichuan.

Although he indicated he was bothered by being singled out by local people as a

foreigner to his face, Bobby admitted that he reaped substantial benefits from being an

exotic *Other* in China. Similarly, Nick, the only African American participant in this

study, made many Chinese friends on campus through playing basketball. Chinese

basketball players admired Nick's skills, welcomed him to spend time with them, and

enjoyed learning about basketball techniques. Slater described being welcomed by local

Chinese because he had traits desired by some Chinese people, such as blue eyes and

white skin color. Coming from a more powerful and developed country, Slater was

assumed by Chinese people to possess a higher social status and privileges in China.

Based on his privileged position, Slater was enthusiastically welcomed by Shanghai

residents, rather than being treated dismissively as was the case with Chinese people

who were not from Shanghai. Moreover, Slater's exoticness made his strong interest in

Chinese culture more valued and cherished by Chinese people. He was invited to sing

traditional Chinese songs on television and was offered chances to perform at the Spring

Festival Gala organized by a popular local television station. Finally, Will had an

experience similar to Slater's. When Will first came to China 10 years earlier, he spent a

lot of time observing local Chinese people and their behavior in public areas. Will's

interest in Chinese folk activities helped him win the favor of local Chinese people, who

patiently taught him Chinese customs and dialects.

  According to CTI, identity can be explored on four levels: personal, enacted,

relational, and communal (Hecht et al., 2005). The perceived difference between a set of different layers of identity is defined as an *identity gap* (Jung & Hecht, 2004; Jung, Hecht, & Wadsworth, 2007). The first identity gap, the personal-relational identity gap, occurs when an individual's self-image or self-concept differs from the identity ascribed by other people (Jung & Hecht, 2004). To put it differently, this identity gap describes the inconsistency between an individual's self view and his or her perception of how other people view him or her (Jung, 2011). In terms of American sojourners in this study, their personal-relational identity gap centered on the difference between their self-image grounded in their unique individuality, and their objectified, generalized, and alienated exotic *Other* ascribed by Chinese people during intercultural interactions. Facing the personal-relational identity gap, American sojourners either ignored or confronted Chinese people's behaviors that exoticized them. The second gap, the personal-enacted identity gap (Jung & Hecht, 2004), results when an individual perceives him or herself in one way but expresses or presents him or herself in a different manner when interacting with others (Jung & Hecht, 2004). Consequently, some American sojourners chose to accommodate and make full use of their exoticness in Chinese society, even when they found Chinese people's aforementioned behaviors annoying and invasive in many instances.

In sum, American sojourners were viewed as a minority population by local Chinese people during intercultural communication and interaction. The Americans were quickly distinguished from Chinese people given physical differences such as hair and eye color. Given the lack of interaction with other cultures until the past few decades, Chinese people found American sojourners exotic, based primarily on their

very different physical features. Being isolated as the exoticized *Other*, American sojourners were objectified as targets of observation and amusement, generalized into an inadequate, broad ethnic category that ignores individuality, and alienated as a distant and mysterious occidentalized *Other*. The dominant position of the United States globally has ensured many American sojourners access to privileges overseas, such as higher social status and advantageous professional opportunities. By virtue of these privileges and advantages, some American sojourners typically made full use of their exoticness to carve out niches in Chinese society by making Chinese friends quickly, acquiring lucrative employment, and being embraced by Chinese people who demonstrated their admiration for their professional skills and other talents. Consistent with cultural fusion theory, intercultural communication results in a fused identity that takes various forms, rather than a universal identity somehow delivered at the end of a linear path (E. Kramer, 2000).

**CHAPTER FIVE: STEREOTYPED *OTHER***

During inter-group communication, stereotypes may be triggered by social categorization enacted by one group through simplifying and systematizing information about non-group members (i.e., *Others*) (Lauring, 2008; Tajfel, 1981). Among the various categories, race, ethnicity, and nationality are frequently used to develop stereotypes and often promote the over-generalization of individuals within and among groups. Over-generalization contributes to homogenous and one-dimensional descriptions, missing the rich nuances, complexities and variations within, between, and among individuals and groups (Collins, 1995; Longshore, 1998; Phinney, 1996; Trimble 1995). Specific to intercultural communication, stereotypes are inevitable because interlocutors from different cultures often lack firsthand personal interaction with the cultural *Others* (Lebedko, 2014). These interlocutors navigate initial interactions with cultural *Others* guided by their incomplete and inaccurate expectations of culturally different *Others*. In this intercultural communication context, stereotypes work both positively and negatively. When viewed as a way to gain benefits, stereotypes are used by sojourners to acquire respect and admiration from local people (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2010). At the same time, stereotypes often reinforce ethnic prejudices and perpetuate racist beliefs, creating barriers to effective intercultural communication (Hecht et al., 2005; Lebedko, 2014; Moore, 2006). As a result of stereotyping, sojourners' sense of difference is made prominent, contributing to the emergence of the *Other*-identity in a different culture (Bhatia, 2007; Liu, 2007). Focusing on *Otherness* generated by stereotypes, this chapter illustrates the ways American sojourners' identity of being the *Other* was formed through their interaction with Chinese people.

**Fantasized *Other***

*Being Fantasized for Global White Supremacy*

As set out in the previous chapter, Chinese people occidentalized American sojourners through asking questions to test their ideas about the United States and ordinary Americans. These pictures Chinese people developed about the *Other* were labeled by Lippmann (1922) as *stereotypes*, which were grounded in their presumptions of what the United States and ordinary Americans should look like and act. These stereotypic perceptions of America and ordinary Americans were clearly exemplified in Chinese people's assertions of Americans' typical behaviors and traits. Tiffany recalled one such instance:

> Like um like one time I was talking to this one guy and he was like, he asked me what kind of stuff I did for fun in high school, like in an American high school? In high school I had to study pretty hard because I went to a really good high school, not like a normal American high school, so I told him about that. And he was like "Wow you are not a normal American kid" and I am like "You don't know any American kid; you don't know how normal American kids are."

According to Tiffany's description, the Chinese man indicated without doubt that Americans had fun in high school, and further normalized this idea by extending it to all American high school students. Thus, this Chinese man categorized Tiffany as an abnormal American because she did not fit his stereotype of American high school students. Stereotypes generated by Chinese people were tightly held and extremely difficult to change, even in the face of empirical evidence to the contrary. For example, Tiffany and other sojourners described being singled out by Chinese people in ways consistent with the latter's presumptions about Americans. When Chinese people discovered American sojourners did not fit into these molds, they labeled these Americans "abnormal" rather than question the accuracy of their stereotype. Ultimately,

stereotypes might promote binary opposition structures such as "we Chinese-you American" and "normal-abnormal," placing American sojourners in the position of the *Other* when applying Chinese stereotypical views of the United States and Americans to them. Similarly, Kathy was described as liberal and creative by her Chinese students, who indicated their belief that Americans in general were more open-minded and innovative than Chinese people. And Claire was considered wealthy by many Chinese people who thought all Americans were rich.

Compared to questions centering on what the United States and ordinary Americans look like, Chinese stereotypes often had less to do with pure curiosities, and were more related to their fantasies about American culture. Assertions made by Chinese people, such as the view that Americans experience fewer academic burdens in high school, more open-mindedness and innovation, and higher earning potential, reflected their fantasies of American life. Thereupon, a power structure was generated, ascribing a superior position to America/Americans while placing China/Chinese on a lower status within a social hierarchy. The unequal power distribution within this structure is attributable, at least in part, to *global White supremacy*, which refers to the higher social status historically reserved for White people (Blay, 2011). Rising from White nationalism, global White supremacy is created and maintained to defend a system of wealth, power, and privilege exclusively available only to White men (Blay, 2011). Conversely, White people's privileged access to these symbolic resources further consolidates their dominance in social relationships with non-White individuals (Blackwood & Purcell, 2014; Bourdieu, 1985). In order to legitimize White privilege, their power in social hierarchies is described in various dominant cultural narratives that

put forth racist and misogynist views, as inherent to simply being White-i.e., that White people are the ideal representation of civilization and advancement (Blackwood & Purcell, 2014; Blay, 2011). In this context, China has been subject to the global White supremacy since the mid-19th Century when it was dragged into the global political system during the First Opium War (1840-1842). Although a series of social movements and revolutions during the past century have boosted China's all-round development, it still cannot be compared to the United States on most criteria. Perceiving this gap between themselves and Americans, the Chinese tended to idealize American culture consistent with fantasized pictures of the United States and Americans. Due in part to these stereotypes, it is not surprising that American sojourners in this study were placed in the category of the fantasized *Other*, and viewed as more powerful and dominant, culturally and socially.

### Underestimated *Other*

The discourse of *Othering* "sets up a binary opposition between 'them' and 'us'" and "portrays 'Other' groups as different" (Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005, p. 72). From these differentiations, one group is given the opportunity to foster stereotypes of the other and initiate discriminatory behaviors according to their stereotype-laden perceptions (Lauring, 2008). For example, first-generation Indian immigrants in Bhatia's (2007) study were stereotyped as individuals who were incompetent to speak understandable English due to their Indian accent. As a result, they were banned from engaging in certain occupations in the United States (Bhatia, 2007). Such visible ethnic markers as Indian accent, according to Bhatia (2007), did not only symbolize Indian immigrants' foreignness, "but also may be interpreted as a mark of incompetence and inefficiency"

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(p. 134). Consequently, a sense of marked *Otherness* was ascribed to these first-generation Indian immigrants in American society (Bhatia, 2007). The marked *Otherness* was also illustrated by American sojourners' experiences in China. Resulting in large part from their non-Chinese looks, American sojourners in this study were underestimated in terms of Mandarin proficiency and understanding nuances of Chinese culture.

*Being Seen Linguistically Incompetent*

The work of Bhatia (2007) revealed that language could be taken by a dominant group as an important criterion for non-group members and to foster stereotypic views of them. The *Otherness* marked by dominant groups' stereotyping of non-group members was further heightened by American sojourners' interaction with Chinese people. Different from many Indian immigrants who were otherized after revealing their Indian accents, American sojourners had been marked as the *Other* before they spoke a single word. Based on their Western physical attributes, these American sojourners were seen by Chinese people as individuals who possessed no Mandarin language skills or very few who have an extremely limited level of fluency. For this reason, Sarah, who had lived in China for five years at the time of the interview, was frequently exposed to Chinese people's underestimation of her Mandarin proficiency.

> Yeah. They [new interns in Sarah's company] will say like, I would be like, we were discussing something like, and this person will be like "这个怎么说呢?". It was like "how do I say this to you?" They get really scared. There're like "这个没法儿解释". They were like "there's no way to explain this" because you're not a Chinese person. They're like "oh my god what do I say?"

Sarah's description illuminated that new Chinese interns in her company exclusively ascribed Mandarin proficiency only to people who were ethnically Chinese. In their

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minds, it was impossible for non-Chinese people, including Americans, to completely

understand what was said in Mandarin. Holding strong to this stereotype, the Chinese

interns struggled to determine how to explain certain issues in Mandarin to a non-

Chinese person like Sarah. These Chinese interns' reactions frustrated Sarah, who

indicated these young Chinese people were not interacting in order to know her as a

person because they viewed Sarah first and foremost as a foreign woman, and therefore

incapable of understanding complicated Mandarin. Analogous to Sarah, Susan was

passed over by many Chinese students for developing a friendship because of their

limited abilities in speaking English–seen as the only language for communicating with

Americans. In the same vein, Stacy was often ignored by her Chinese classmates during

group discussions, because these Chinese students did not think Stacy could keep up

with their discussions conducted in Mandarin. Slater was typically given a picture menu

at a McDonald's in Nanjing, because the Chinese staff members assumed he could not

speak Mandarin, expecting him to point to the picture of what he wished to order.

During the aforementioned interactions, American sojourners were primarily

differentiated from Chinese people by being designated as non-Chinese. This

categorization involved stereotyping out-group members as incompetent outsiders (T.

Lee & Fiske, 2006). Therefore, differences between the American sojourners and

Chinese people were interpreted by the Chinese as an inherent incompetence, on the

part of the Americans, to understand or use complicated Mandarin. Ultimately, these

American sojourners were seen as the stereotyped *Other*, and as linguistically

incompetent.

Significantly, the stereotype of linguistically incompetent *Other* did not dissolve

after American sojourners showed their Mandarin proficiency. Maroon mentioned that Chinese people could not understand his Mandarin even though he has excellent pronunciation skills. He recalled going out with an Asian American friend to shop in Beijing. They got lost and had to ask Chinese people for directions. Maroon recalled a time when he asked a Chinese gatekeeper at a shopping mall for directions, he was told "no English, no English" by that Chinese person. Then, Maroon's friend, an Asian American woman who could not speak Mandarin as well as Maroon, went to the same Chinese person and repeated the question full of grammatical errors. All of a sudden, that Chinese gatekeeper understood what she said. In the beginning, Maroon thought he had not pronounced Mandarin correctly. So he asked several Chinese friends afterward and was told there was nothing wrong with his pronunciation. Therefore, Maroon attributed the miscommunication between him and that Chinese gatekeeper to the gatekeeper's expectation that foreigners could not speak Mandarin.

> Even something is, you know, language comprehension, there is this expectation that you cannot speak Chinese. You don't understand. So sometimes they don't even listen to what you say. So you might have to repeat yourself multiple times and they would be like "okay." I always ask my Chinese friends with me "Did I say speak wrong? Were my pronunciations wrong? Were my tones wrong?" They said "No, no, no, it is perfect. He just does not expect you speak Chinese."

Maroon referred to this miscommunication as an *outsider-context-problem*, arising from Chinese people's often highly limited exposure to non-Chinese people fluent in Mandarin. Under this circumstance, the Chinese gatekeeper stuck to his stereotypic perception of Americans even when hearing non-Chinese individuals speak Mandarin. Instead of setting aside the stereotype in the face of a Westerner speaking Mandarin very well, the stereotype prevailed. As Miller and Turnbull (1986) noted, perceivers might selectively focus on targets' expectation-consistent behaviors and ignore

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expectation-incongruent actions. Therefore, Maroon could not make his Mandarin understood by the Chinese gatekeeper who firmly held the expectation that a foreigner–which Maroon clearly is–was incapable of communicating in Mandarin. Consequently, Maroon was stereotyped by the Chinese gatekeeper as a linguistically incompetent *Other*, despite his nearly flawless Mandarin.

It should be noted that American sojourners were consistently stereotyped as linguistically incompetent *Other* even when they were fluent in Mandarin. Claire pointed out that Chinese people's surprise at her fluency in Mandarin was stereotyped *Otherness*, too, as she was separated from other Americans.

> If I speak Chinese like people go "oh it is so different". But in the U.S. if someone speaks English, I don't really care or get excited like regardless if they look foreign or say they look Chinese. We are not going to have the same perception because America has so many different people there.

From Claire's point of view, Chinese people indicated she was different from other Americans primarily based on her ability to speak Mandarin well. This evaluation given by Chinese people reflected their assumption that typical Americans are unable to speak Mandarin. Therefore, they are surprised by Claire's fluency in Mandarin, which violated their expectations. Yet, Chinese people's excitement was not embraced by Claire, who indicated that it was normal [in her culture] for people of various races and ethnicities to speak English. Living in a multicultural environment, Claire was accustomed to hearing people of any race speak English. Therefore, she did not hold the expectation that English is exclusively spoken by individuals of her race and ethnicity. Claire's expectation for other people's linguistic proficiency was in sharp contrast to that of the Chinese people, who did not expect non-Chinese people to speak Mandarin. In this context, Claire's difference was noticed by Chinese people who displayed surprise and

delight. From the difference marked by the Chinese, Claire's sense of *Otherness* emerged, grounded in Chinese people's stereotypical perceptions of non-Chinese people's Mandarin proficiency.

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*Being Considered Culturally Incompetent*

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Culture is defined as "a unique meaning and information system, shared by a group and transmitted across generations, that allows the group to meet basic needs of survival, pursue happiness and well-being, and derive meaning from life" (Matsumoto & Juang, 2007, p. 12). In addition to the objective and explicit elements such as food and clothes, culture also contains subjective and implicit elements on the psychological level, such as shared symbols, language, values, and norms (Floyd, 2013). Stories in the previous section have elaborated American sojourners' *Otherness* that emerged from Chinese people's underestimation of their Mandarin proficiency. In this segment, the stereotyped *Otherness* is explained in relation to Chinese people depreciating the capability of American sojourners to understand Chinese culture. As out-group members in China, American sojourners were assumed by Chinese people to be incapable of understanding intricate nuances of Chinese culture. Based on this stereotype, these American sojourners were continually told by Chinese people that they did not (and could not) understand certain issues simply because they were foreigners. For instance, Susan named herself after Mulan Hua (花木兰 in Mandarin), a famous female general in Chinese legend. Overwhelmingly, when Susan told Chinese people her Chinese name, she indicated her Chinese counterparts assumed she knew nothing about the origins and meanings of her chosen name.

> Since my Chinese name is 花木兰, it is like every time when I meet someone new, they would be like "do you know who 花木兰 is?" I am like "yes, it is my

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name, of course I know." But they are like "let me tell you this story about China. Let me tell you all about it." I was like "I have had this name for 8 years. I know. I am pretty confident about what's going on." [This is] because I am still not Chinese, there is no way that I could possible know.

Although Susan had used this Chinese name for eight years, she was still seen, at least primarily, as a foreign woman. Therefore, it was impossible for her to know about the legend of Mulan from the perspective of Chinese people. Based on this stereotype, the Chinese were eager and excited, proud to explain the legend to her. Susan attributed these assumptions to her non-Chinese appearance, which, in the view of the Chinese, rendered her incapable of understanding Chinese culture. Similar to Susan, Sarah was often told by her Chinese friends that it was hard for her, as a Westerner, to understand the intensity of Chinese parents' pressured on children because the Chinese presume those pressures did not exist in the West. Jack concisely described the situation as a Chinese cultural nuance that was impossible for him to understand as a foreigner.

As Susan described, Chinese people's stereotypic views of her separated her quickly. Ryan described how this separating attitude prevented him from becoming very close to his Chinese friends who too often reminded him of his incapability to understand Chinese culture. Samuel, who had studied and worked in China for four years at the time of the interview, said Chinese people's reactions to behaviors that brought the differences between Chinese and non-Chinese to the forefront. Such mutually exclusive categories as "you foreigners" and "we Chinese" generated by Chinese people's discourse further obstructed American sojourners' entrance into Chinese society (Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005). Simply put, any person with a non-Chinese face was incapable of understanding the language or culture of China. This permanent divide frustrated American sojourners in this study, who indicated that efforts to learn

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about Chinese culture were wasted. In the end, these Americans were fixed on the position of stereotyped *Other* once again, in which differences were magnified by Chinese people's view of Americans as incapable of learning about Chinese culture.

## Disgraced *Other*

In addition to the fantasized *Other*, stereotypes sometimes designate individuals from certain groups as disgraced. Many descriptions of stereotypes are negative (Allport, 1954; Cuddy & Fiske, 2002; Fiske et al., 2002; Hecht et al., 2005; Kurylo, 2013; Liu, 2007; Modood, 2011). Specifically, Allport (1954) contended that stereotypes of out-groups reflected uniform antipathy (as cited in Cuddy & Fiske, 2002; see also Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). Katz and Braly (1933) pointed out that ethnic stereotypes were uniformly negative. Hecht et al. (2005) reasoned that "failure to identity these proximal factors can reinforce ethnic prejudices and perpetuate racist stereotypes" (p. 265) which negatively affected sojourners and immigrants by portraying them as inferior, threatening, unwelcome, and eventually they may even be rejected by the host society (Liu, 2007). Modood (2011) elaborated that some cultural attributes, especially physical features, functioned as the basis of hostility based on "a set of antagonistic or demeaning stereotypes based on alleged or real cultural traits" (p. 45). Some of the American sojourners in this study were categorized by Chinese people's stereotypic perceptions of the *Other* as disgraced in three ways: racially differentiated, sexually promiscuous, and psychologically discredited, presented in the next sections.

### *Being Perceived Racially Differentiated*

Due to non-Chinese looks, American sojourners were considered by Chinese people as a fundamentally different racial group. Therefore, American customs and

habits were attributed by Chinese people to racial differences between American and Chinese individuals. For example, Sarah heard about the Chinese custom of *zuo yuezi* (坐月子 in Mandarin, "confinement in childbirth" in direct translation) when she was taking summer classes in Beijing.

> The first time I heard about that [zuo yuezi] was in class right after graduating, I was in Beijing, I was taking a summer class. And our Chinese teacher told us about it. I was like "are you kidding me?" I was shocked. "She's not allowed to have shower, she's staying in bed for a month after giving birth?" That's so bad for your health. My teacher was pretty offended I realized. At that time I realized. She was really offended and she was like "you foreigners, like how many push-ups can you do?" I was like "ten." "But I cannot do any. We Chinese are weak. So you have to accept we are weaker than you. We need to do things like 坐月子." I was like "em, I don't think so. That's not the reason why." So that was really awkward.

Sarah described Chinese women's confinement in childbirth as bizarre. Shocked by this custom, Sarah did not understand why Chinese women had to stay in their house for a month after delivering a baby, and were forbidden to bathe. In Sarah's opinion, *zuo yuezi* was bad for women's health. Therefore, Sarah turned to her Chinese teacher for information about this custom, and was told that it was because Chinese women were not as physically strong as foreigners like her. Such a racial tone did not convince Sarah; she regarded this postulation as an unscientific statement based exclusively on racial differences between Americans and Chinese people. Based on these racial differences, sojourners such as Sarah were stereotyped as racially different from the Chinese people. The racially differentiated *Other* was also exemplified by such small things as drinking habits. For example, Kathy and Jack were accustomed to cold drinks. This habit was attributed by Chinese people to being a foreigner. Kathy's Chinese colleagues explained that Chinese people would get sick by drinking cold things because they are not foreigners. Jack was directly told by his lab-mate that Chinese people were physically

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not capable of drinking cold water because their DNA was different from foreigners. Similar to Sarah, Jack did not accept this Chinese lab-mate's unscientific statement, which was seen as a reflection of his mental images of "we Chinese'" and "you foreigners." It also surprised Jack that such a false statement was uttered by a young, intelligent Chinese scientist majoring in biology, who completely abandoned his scientific knowledge in order to support a clearly unscientific explanation.

A common thread running through these stories is the Chinese attribution of differences such as post-childbirth behaviors and drinking habits to race, based exclusively on physical attributes. As Jack mentioned, conversations frequently ended with Chinese communicators saying the American cannot understand a given situation "because you are foreigners," or a similar statement. As a result, American sojourners were socially constructed as non-Chinese individuals, and, significantly, as racially different from Chinese people. This construction irritated American sojourners on several levels. One irritant was this attitude of the Chinese people triggered the impression left by racism. According to Will, the statement that Americans were racially different from Chinese people was exclusively grounded on racial differences (skin, hair, and eye color) between these two groups. Such a claim, in Will's opinion, was not only unscientific, stating human beings had 99% of DNA in common, but Will also underscored this kind of racism with the logic of eugenics, used to justify some terrible racism against black people and Chinese people in his home state, California. To put it differently, racism had connotative meanings attached to it and these race-based justifications in this intercultural context were viewed as against human law. Born and raised in an egalitarian country that operates with the idea of equality among diverse

races, Will had been aware since childhood the significance of fighting against racial inequality, learning that such discrimination was immoral. Consequently, Will indicated he was bothered by the Chinese people's aforementioned statement and automatically associated it with its negative connotation, racism. From these racial distinctions, American sojourners' identity of being the *Other* was formulated.

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*Being Assumed Sexually Promiscuous*

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In his 2006 book, *River Town: Two Years on the Yangtze*, Peter Hessler (2006) depicted one of his Chinese students who indicated women in the West could marry anyone and get divorced whenever they wished without caring about what other people may think of them, and further that Western women were famous for their sexuality and very open to the strangers. The stereotype described by Hessler (2006) was also applied by a random Chinese man to Tiffany when she was at a bar in Beijing.

> I didn't really want to talk to him because he was like some random old guy in a bar. He was like 30 something and was talking to me. I didn't really want to talk to him, so it was like not being super friendly and he was like "why aren't you being friendlier? You are an American. Are you like trying to be like a Chinese girl? Like what are you doing?" I was like "no, I just don't want to talk to you," like stuff like that.

According to Tiffany's description, the Chinese man thought Tiffany, as an American woman should be open to strangers' accosting in a bar. This Chinese man's assumption of American women echoed Hessler's (2006) description. In the view of many Chinese, people in the West have a more liberal attitude toward sex, romantic relationships, and marriage, regardless of factors such as religion or nationality. As a result, the term *kaifang* (开放 in Mandarin, "being sexually promiscuous" in direct translation) is often the first label used by Chinese people when they think of foreigners. Maroon explained this phenomenon:

You know, everything, whenever any topic like dating or anything comes up, always the first word out of a Chinese person's mouth is foreigners are very 开放. In some ways, this is true. In some ways, it is not true, particularly for America. Americans are actually much more conservative than Europe. Americans and maybe French people don't have the same concepts about sex, and love and affairs, these kinds of things. This is just another example. But this is a typical stereotypical example. They always say we are very 开放.

Based on this stereotype of Westerners, the Chinese man in the bar revealed his ideas about Americans when he suggested that Tiffany should be more open to his flirting. When his approaching was rejected, this Chinese man concluded that Tiffany was trying to be like a Chinese woman, more reserved than American women. From this Chinese man's perspective, Tiffany was not who she was, but a foreign woman who should be sexually promiscuous, consistent with his expectations. Tiffany's experience of being labeled as sexually promiscuous was also mentioned by Maroon. Maroon had a friend sent by an NGO to a remote area in China to teach English. During the first two weeks, this American woman encountered frequent sexual harassment from local Chinese men who thought she was open to having sex with them. Even as a male American in China, Maroon was continually confronted with sexually promiscuous *Otherness*. For much of his time in China, Maroon was not dating at all. Regardless, he was told by some Chinese people to his face that he must have multiple girlfriends at the same time because he was a foreigner. Maroon explained that he could not imagine anyone in America raising such a question to other people's faces. Therefore, these stereotypes of him irritated and shocked him, he revealed. Similar to Maroon, Tiffany indicated she was annoyed by the Chinese man's generalized and biased assumption of American women. Maroon's friend was described as being disturbed and outraged by the local Chinese men's sexual harassment. Based on their Western looks, these

American sojourners were stereotyped by Chinese people who took it for granted that all foreigners are sexually promiscuous. Exposure to Chinese people's stereotypic views of Westerners put American sojourners in the position of the sexually promiscuous *Other* in China.

*Being Regarded Psychologically Discredited*

One-dimensional and incomplete descriptions of groups perpetuate inter-group stereotypes that portray individuals from these groups as threatening and unwelcome (Hecht et al., 2005; Liu, 2007). With these stereotypes in mind, people from one group psychologically discredit non-group members during inter-group communication. The American sojourners in this study were psychologically discredited by Chinese people as the impudent and insulting *Other*. Owing to the suffering from the suppression and oppression by western countries in various forms for decades (Kochhar, 2011), Chinese people demonized Westerners by comparing them to evil people. In this context, the term *yang guizi* (洋鬼子 in Mandarin, "foreign devils" in direct translation) was invented to designate Western imperialistic invaders coming to China. Similarly, the phrase *riben guizi* (日本鬼子 in Mandarin, "Japanese devils" in direct translation) was also created and widely adopted by Chinese people. Although the People's Republic of China (P.R.C.) has been established for more than 70 years, the ideology of fighting oppression by imperialistic powers has been passed from one generation of Chinese people to the next by virtue of such labels as *yang guizi* and *riben guizi*, and this mentality can be activated in certain circumstances. For instance, Claire was addressed as *yang guizi* by two uneducated Chinese people in a restaurant before a military parade for the 70th Anniversary of Victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance against

Japanese Aggression and the End of World War II (V-day parade for short). The Chinese government's propaganda of the V-day parade fixated on the Chinese victory over oppression by fascist states in general, and Japan in particular. This event and related rhetoric activated Chinese people's ideology of fighting oppression imposed by imperialistic powers and the importance of working to bolster nationalism. Consequently, labels such as *yang guizi* and *riben guizi* evoked memories of Chinese people, especially the uneducated. The particular political environment in the restaurant prior to the V-day parade, according to Claire, was invoked to justify why those two Chinese men referred her as *yang guizi*. Being somewhat familiar with Chinese history, Claire knew very well the negative connotations of *yang guizi*. Therefore, she directly expressed her disgust toward this term, used in an attempt to discredit her, by yelling at the Chinese men.

Akin to *yang guizi*, the term *laowai*, discussed in the previous chapter, brought discredit to American sojourners in China as well. According to interviews in this study, *laowai* was endowed with images of impudent and insulting foreigners who were unwelcome by Chinese people. Will disliked the term *laowai*, he said, because he was lumped in (i.e., over-generalized) with some highly undesirable foreigners in China.

> There are always foreign exchange students, Americans exchange students, who [say]"this is very cheap; I am exotic here and pretty girls are nice to me" or "cute boys are nice to me." You know, "Oh, all of sudden, I am handsome and girls wouldn't talk to me back home. I am a geek. This is great." Some of them are sweet, and some are assholes and goes, "I am special and I am great." Then I may have a problem. I have big problem because they make it harder for me. Don't see that fucking 老外, because you are going home in 6 months. I am still here.

According to Will's description, some American sojourners in China behaved impudently and arrogantly as a result of their privileges in China. These American

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sojourners' behaviors in China irritated Chinese people, who stereotyped that all Americans behaved in the same way. Due to this stereotype, Will was exposed to Chinese people's antipathy toward impudent and arrogant Americans, who made his life in China harder. Will described this treatment as unfair, becoming a scapegoat of all *laowai*s. Consequently, Will was psychologically discredited by Chinese people who only saw him as yet another disrespectful American in China.

In addition to the two types of psychologically discredited *Otherness* mentioned above, American sojourners in this study were also stereotyped as troublemakers in China. Claire recalled a time when her feathers were ruffled by Chinese authorities' stereotypic view of her. At the onset of the Jasmine revolution (2010-2011), Claire was studying in Beijing. She was the only person stopped by subway security officers for a security check when waiting in line to enter the subway.

> I was commuting from 新街口 [Xinjiekou stop] to 圆明园 [Yuanmingyuan stop], and I was the only foreigner taking that subway. And all of a sudden they are making me take my bags apart, and they are having to check everything, but they are letting other Chinese people through without checking their bags, and I would get kind of upset about that.

Chinese security officers' behavior made Claire conclude that she was checked just because she was not Chinese. When she saw Chinese people walking by without having their bags inspected, Claire showed her anger by questioning these Chinese security officers about this unfair treatment. However, Claire's protest was in vain. In the end, she threw everything into the security check and left that area by taking the subway. To her surprise, Claire encountered Chinese authorities' suspicions for the second time on the same day.

> That evening, a police officer came to the apartment and wanted to make sure I wasn't a journalist, I was still at 清华 [Tsinghua University], I was still a student

and they took a photo of me. And I remember my Chinese mom [the wife of Claire's host family] got kind of mad and was like "Why do you need a photo of her?"and they were like, "Oh it is for education purposes."

Chinese authorities' extra security procedures exposed Claire to the blatant difference between her and Chinese people. Outraged about being stereotyped as a troublemaker, Claire frankly admitted that she did not want to conform to Chinese authorities' security checks that distinguished her from the Chinese people exclusively based on her non-Chinese appearance. Consequently, being separated from Chinese people in this way placed Claire in the position of the *Other* suspected by Chinese authorities to be a troublemaker. Similar to Claire, Will was checked by Chinese policemen when he and his son made a report at a police station in Beijing about a bike theft. Will was surprised when the Chinese policemen asked for his visa first, rather than attending to his son's stolen bike. Will explained his experience with the stereotype that foreigners are troublemakers.

> They [Chinese policemen] don't want to take the report from my son, they don't want to take a report about a bike theft and so I hear this from other foreigners too that when they walk into the police station with a complaint or with a thing, they just fixate on "Well, what have you done wrong? Are you here illegally? Let me see your papers. What work unit are you in?"Um you know, they are trying to not take new cases or new paperwork or anything on it.

The suspected *Other* was also exemplified by American sojourners' avoidance of getting into a dispute with Chinese people in public. The Americans had learned they could not win because Chinese people took it for granted that any problem was the foreigners' fault. Will said that when he had an argument with Chinese people, more Chinese people came over and he saw in their expressions that this foreigner was creating problems. Chinese people's suspicion of American sojourners exposed these non-Chinese individuals to a predicament in which they became vulnerable to Chinese

blackmailers. Kathy noted that one of her American colleagues was accused of crashing a Chinese couple's car. Due to limited Mandarin proficiency, this American man could not verbally defend himself when the Chinese couple denounced him in front of other Chinese people. Kathy and three other American teachers who were walking by saw this American man and immediately joined his side by arguing that this Chinese couple just wanted to get money from this man. Eventually, the police came and decided that the Chinese couple should be responsible for the crash. Different from Kathy and her American colleagues, Will dismissed Chinese blackmailers by showing his proficiency in the Beijing dialect. Once, Will recalled, he was charged RMB 2000 (USD 294) by an old Chinese lady, who trapped him into breaking her basket. Detecting this lady's trick, Will declined to compensate her. Initially, Chinese onlookers held the attitude that Will was wrong because he was a foreigner. But these people quickly changed their mind and went away when they heard Will speak the Beijing dialect. These stories illustrated that Chinese people tended to trust other Chinese strangers and suspect such non-group members as American sojourners. The different treatment of American sojourners was a result of people's propensity to trust an in-group rather than out-group member (Foddy & Dawes, 2008; Platow, Foddy, Yamagishi, Lim, & Chow, 2012; Tanis & Postmes, 2005). These in-group favoring behaviors used trust in strangers as a function of group-based categorization, increasing the salience of group membership by distinguishing in-group members from out-group members. Of the salient group memberships, American sojourners' *Otherness* was created and marked by discredited images entrenched in Chinese psychology. As Will described, the distrust he captured in Chinese people's expressions made him feel that he was just another *Other* in China.

### What Does Being Stereotyped *Other* Mean?

Stereotyping involves three steps (Floyd, 2013). The first step is to "identify a group to which we believe another person belongs" (Floyd, 2013, p. 61). The second is to recall a generalization "others often make about the people in that group" and the third step is to "apply that generalization to the person" (Floyd, 2013, p. 61). To put it simply, certain attributes are selected and attached to a certain group. These attributes are later deemed to be present in any individual who comes from that group. As a result of stereotyping in the context of intercultural communication, sojourners' differences are marked and made salient, feeding the emergence of the identity of being the *Other* in a different culture (Bhatia, 2007; Liu, 2007). Elaborations in the preceding sections echo Jaynes and Williams (1989) by demonstrating that stereotypes can work positively or negatively in inscribing *Otherness* to sojourners during intercultural encounters. This argument is also supported by the Stereotype Content Model (SCM), which holds that stereotypes are frequently ambivalent and vary along two dimensions: high and low competence and high and low warmth (Fiske et al., 2002; Fiske, Xu, Cuddy, & Glick, 1999; T. Lee & Fiske, 2006). According to SCM, out-groups are perceived as warm when they do not compete with in-group members for the same resources, and are seen as competent when they occupy higher-status when compared to in-group members (Fiske et al., 2002; T. Lee & Fiske, 2006). Combinations of high and low levels of competence and warmth generate four types of stereotypes, including the admiration stereotype (high competence and high warmth), the paternalistic stereotype (low competence and high warmth), the envious stereotype (high competence and low warmth) and the contemptuous stereotype (low competence and low warmth) (Dovidio

& Gaertner, 2010).

The American sojourners in this study were admired and/or envied by Chinese people based in large part on Chinese stereotypic fantasies of the United States and Americans. T. Lee and Fiske (2006) elaborated that national origins of immigrants "will guide majority members' perception of them" in that "each immigrant nationality has its own unique economic and social history with regard to its host country" (p. 754). Therefore, global White supremacy, as described earlier, endowed American sojourners with competence in terms of economic success, educational advantage, and higher social status in Chinese society. Thus, Kathy and Tiffany acquired admiration from Chinese people when there was no competition between them. Claire encountered envy from local Chinese vendors when she tried to bargain with them for lower prices. As a consequence of positive stereotypes, American sojourners were described as the *Others* who exclusively possessed unique traits fantasized by Chinese people. Consequently, they were positioned as symbols of a relaxed lifestyle with fewer burdens, more open-mindedness, richer innovation, and higher earning capacity. Once Americans dispelled these positive stereotypes imposed by the Chinese, they were further otherized as abnormal or atypical Americans. This stereotyping, inspired by Chinese people's confidence in their presumptions about the United States and Americans, differentiated American sojourners' fantasized *Otherness* from occidentalized *Otherness*, which was shaped by Chinese people's less assertive behaviors. Whether of acceptance or rejection, the Chinese put American sojourners in the position of the stereotyped *Other*, a position viewed positively.

American sojourners' citizenship provoked the perceptions on the part of the

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Chinese people as an economically and socially privileged group. In part, the unique social and political history of the United States and China contributed to stigmatization of the American sojourners along with stereotyping. When stereotyping "is sufficiently negative then surely it can achieve the status of the stigmatized" (Jeacle, 2008, p. 1301). *Stigma* is defined as a socially discredited attribute, behavior or reputation. Individuals are mentally categorized by others as undesirable (Goffman, 1963). Stigma also describes a discrepancy between an individual's actual social identity and his or her social identity virtualized by others in the form of stereotyping (Goffman, 1963). Among three types of stigma, tribal stigma, arising from race, nation, or religion is of most relevance to the discussion here due to its emphasis on an individual's group identity (Goffman, 1963). Holding stereotypic views of Westerners, Chinese people made certain assumptions about these non-Chinese individuals. From these assumptions and expectations, these foreigners' virtual social identity was formed, which was often quite different from categories and attributes they demonstrate in their actual social identity. The stigma applied to American sojourners arose from the discrepancy between their social identity virtualized by Chinese people's negative stereotypes, and their actual social identity. Americans were stigmatized by the Chinese, seen not as normal people but as non-Chinese individuals, who were then negatively stereotyped.

American sojourners were stereotyped as incompetent out-group members. Long-term isolation from the rest of the world has limited Chinese people's interaction with non-Chinese individuals, especially those fluent in Mandarin and well acquainted with Chinese culture. As a result, Chinese people underestimated American sojourners' linguistic and cultural competence by perceiving them as foreigners who were unable to

speak Mandarin or to understand Chinese culture. The Chinese often underestimate American sojourners' love for China and reject the latter's substantial efforts in learning Mandarin and accumulating knowledge of Chinese culture. Consequently, Sarah described being upset because she had to repeatedly demonstrate her Mandarin proficiency every time new interns joined her team. Maroon needed to repeat his address several times until taxi drivers finally understood he was speaking Mandarin. Jroux felt demoralized by situations in which Chinese people rarely expected him to grasp Mandarin at a higher level. In addition to the feeling that most of their endeavors were wasted, American sojourners also indicated they were dismissed by the Chinese, demonstrated by reactions such as "you foreigners do not understand" when trying to offer opinions. As Jroux described, he was unqualified to voice his own opinion about China-related issues exclusively because of his non-Chinese appearance. American sojourners explained they were infuriated by these judgments that shut them out, and described these judgments as closed-off, dumb, and ignorant. Consequently, American sojourners' *Otherness* was brought to light by many of the interviewees, emerging from their lack of communication with Chinese people about certain issues. The stereotyped incompetent *Other* meant that these American sojourners had no right to be part of certain interactions with Chinese people. The Americans were labeled "outsiders."

The stigma ascribed to American sojourners was more overtly epitomized in the *Otherness* ascribed by Chinese people's stereotyping of these sojourners as disgraced. Based on information received from social channels, including media, people form stereotypes of out-group members (Bar-Tal, 1997). In China, ubiquitous Hollywood movies and television programs sold at local DVD vendors or online left Chinese

people the impression that Americans, in general, were sexually promiscuous (Eikenburg, 2014). Thus, American women were thought by some Chinese men to be open for one-night stands and male Americans were assumed to have multiple girlfriends at the same time. When these American sojourners interacted directly with Chinese people, the latter would apply their stereotypic views to these sojourning individuals, specifically, the view of these sojourners as tainted in a disgraceful way. In addition to the formation of stereotypes of out-group members, social channels including family and community can pass these stereotypes to the next generation, creating a climate that "serves as facilitator or inhibitor of particular stereotypic contents" (Bar-Tal, 1997, p. 496). Therefore, even a well-trained young Chinese scientist attributed drinking habits and preferences to racial differences. By the same token, a Chinese college teacher assumed that confinement in childbirth was inevitable for Chinese women because, based on their own explanations, they were not as strong as Western women. In this context, American sojourners were differentiated by Chinese people as a racially different group through stereotyping. In addition to societal channels and socialization enacted by in-group members, the history of intergroup relations and socio-political factors are of special importance in the formation of stereotypes of out-group members (Bar-Tal, 1997). Years of antagonism and hostility toward imperialistic invaders produced conditions in which Chinese people demonized foreigners in large part through labeling them as *yang guizi*. The misbehaviors of some impudent and arrogant foreigners further aggravated Chinese people's antipathy toward this group. Coming from the stigmatized group, American sojourners were discredited as untrustworthy outsiders, and continually experienced being under a cloud of

suspicion.

So far, the first layer of American sojourners' symbolic meanings was fostered, grounded in stereotypes developed and maintained by Chinese people. By virtue of being fantasized, underestimated, and disgraced, American sojourners were differentiated from Chinese people as stereotyped out-group members. However, American sojourners resisted the Chinese stereotyping, which bothered, frustrated, dismissed, and discounted them, they explained during interviews. Therefore, they adopted a variety of strategies to deal with Chinese people's stereotypes. The first strategy utilized by American sojourners was *avoidance*, defined as a pattern of verbal and nonverbal behaviors that tended to increase psychological and interpersonal distance between the stigmatized group and the non-stigmatized group (Klein & Snyder, 2003). Given the stereotype of psychologically discredited foreigners, American sojourners indicated they kept a certain distance from Chinese people, and did everything possible to avoid involvement in any disputes with them in public. For these reasons, Will remained aloof from Chinese people's business, and avoided arguing with Chinese people in public because he and other sojourners were overwhelmingly thought by Chinese authorities to be troublemakers who initiate disputes. He also said he hesitated to be the first one to help a sick Chinese man on the subway, because, in his description, other Chinese people may mistake his actions as harmful. When direct contact with Chinese people was unavoidable, American sojourners sometimes maintained the distance between them and Chinese locals by concealing their nationality. Goffman (1963) defined such strategies as *passing*, which was commonly used by stigmatized individuals when they concluded their stigmatized attributes were invisible

to non-stigmatized and advantaged group members. Passing involves elimination of features that mark an individual as a stigmatized group member, concealing these features or denying them (Klein & Snyder, 2003). The American sojourners in this study chose to conceal their nationality by allowing Chinese people to generally recognize them as *laowai*. For example, Claire was willing to be recognized as *laowai* rather than American with the hope of avoiding some Chinese people's antipathy toward Americans in general, or the possibility of being overcharged by Chinese vendors.

The second strategy used by American sojourners was *compensation*, described as a typical interactional strategy used by minority groups that involved "trying to get along well with the perceiver by tuning their behavior to the perceiver's behavior and rendering the flow of conversation as smooth as possible" (Klein & Snyder, 2003, p. 177). Some American sojourners in this study compensated for Chinese people with passive acceptance of the aforementioned stereotypes. For instance, Sarah stopped giving suggestions to her Chinese friends once she learned how firmly they believed in confinement in childbirth. Ryan decided to accept how his Chinese friends lived their lives under parental pressure, instead of persuading them to make a change. Such suggestions for change, according to Ryan, could have made his Chinese friends angry or could have insulted them. Therefore, Ryan decided to keep silent and wished his Chinese friends good luck when they told him that it was impossible for him to understand certain situations because he was not Chinese. Stacy accepted that her Chinese group members' ignored her during discussions and took easy tasks assigned to her as such arrangements did no harm to her. Will kept opinions to himself when he was underestimated by his boss in terms of his capability to understand Chinese culture, and

assumed by his Chinese wife that Americans were racially different from Chinese. Claire conformed to Chinese authorities by accepting the security checks. These compensations enacted by American sojourners echoed an argument proposed by Klein and Snyder (2003), that stigmatized group members were not motivated to dispel negative stereotypes regarding them if they wanted to maintain pleasant interaction with individuals from non-stigmatized groups. It should be noted that American sojourners also actively utilized Chinese people's stereotypes of them to ensure smooth interaction between them. This was best exemplified by Will's experiences of drinking with Chinese people. Will did not like drinking liquor, so he regularly told the Chinese men trying to persuade him to drink liquor that he could not drink because, as a foreigner, he was physically not as strong as they were. By playing into Chinese people's stereotypes, Will placed himself in a submissive and inferior position in front of the Chinese drinkers. In doing this, Will successfully avoided drinking liquor as well as protected Chinese drinkers' public images at the same time.

The last strategy adopted by American sojourners was *refusal*. For example, Jack ignored his Chinese lab-mate's stereotypical views of foreigners' consumption of cold drinks and continued his own way of drinking in response. In addition to ignoring, Klein and Snyder (2003) also posited that stigmatized individuals might refuse to abide by non-stigmatized group members' scripts and "impose their own self-presentational agenda" (p. 177). For example, Sarah encouraged her interns to get rid of concerns brought about at least in part by the stereotypical views of foreigners' linguistic capability and explain things to her in Mandarin. Slater initiated communication with Chinese people in Mandarin with the hope of better preparing them for subsequent

interactions. He also used body gestures to guide an old Chinese lady working in a convenience store to respond to him in Mandarin. Stacy declined to accept the statement that foreigners could not understand certain issues in China, and took a step further by requiring her Chinese classmates to explain those issues to her. In addition to dominating the conversation flow, American sojourners also displayed their Mandarin proficiency in order to resist being taken advantage of by some Chinese people. When using the Beijing dialect in front of the Chinese blackmailer described earlier, Will discovered that Chinese onlookers' attitude shifted immediately from hostile suspicion to a neutral stance. As out-group members, Will's adoption of in-group members' linguistic style reduced the gap between them and Chinese people. Not only was a grasp of competitive linguistic style used by in-group members, but also collective action could be used to bolster American sojourners' non-deferential behaviors when blackmailed by Chinese people. Sarah mentioned that they once helped one of her American colleagues out of a fraud accusation by joining his side and arguing with the greedy Chinese couple in Mandarin. Such a collective action bred a sense of collective identity among American sojourners, who indicated that they were not an isolated group member. Therefore, they considered it more possible to respond assertively to bullying initiated by dominant group members (Klein & Snyder, 2003).

In sum, American sojourners were frequently placed by Chinese people into social categories and evaluated by them during the formation of stereotypes. Thus, categorization is considered "an underlying process" of developing stereotypes (Bar-Tal, 1997, p. 492). As the result of categorization, Chinese people ascribed to American sojourners "homogeneous traits, intentions, and other characteristics (i.e., stereotypes)"

(Bar-Tal, 1997, p. 492). Therefore, stereotypes are seen as "an antecedent and an outcome for analyzing the nature of intergroup relations" (Bar-Tal, 1997). Situated in a specific social and political history of the United States with regard to China, American sojourners were endowed with privileges and superior positions as a result of global White supremacy. Due to this perspective, these Americans were positively stereotyped as the *Other* by Chinese people through their fantasies about the United States and Americans. However, the prevailing stereotypes of immigrants and sojourners focus on their stigmatized images, including being viewed as incompetent and untrustworthy outsiders (T. Lee & Fiske, 2006). By virtue of having various channels of information, Chinese people had already formed stereotypic views of Westerners. This previously acquired information (and, significantly, misinformation) mediated Chinese people's direct contact with American sojourners by directing them to pay exclusive attention to information congruent with established stereotypes, and to ignore clues inconsistent with those stereotypes (Bar-Tal, 1997). American sojourners' group membership brought about by stereotyping and by selective accentuation of differences between them and Chinese people. In combination with individuals' desire for positive social identity (Bar-Tal, 1997), stereotyping further placed American sojourners in the position of tainted and discredited *Other* by stigmatizing them as incompetent and disgraceful individuals.

Further, these Americans, in the view of many Chinese, were abnormal when compared to Chinese people, who had been taught to view themselves as normal. By far, American sojourners' symbolic meanings, based on Chinese people's stereotypical views of them, were fostered through such social interactions as fantasies,

underestimation, and disgrace and were exchanged among Chinese people, as Hecht et al. (2005) elaborate. Overall, American sojourners reported feeling awkward, unscientific, ridiculous, and even racially discriminated against their identity of being the stereotyped *Other* in China. These stereotypic views of out-group members are stamped on the collective memory of the group, and are designed to reflect the group's ethos (Bar-Tal, 1997). American sojourners in China were powerless as a disadvantaged out-group, unable to effectively challenge these stereotypes (Bar-Tal, 1997). Ultimately, they fused the identities of being the stereotyped *Other* into their original cultural identity and moved ahead by virtue of negotiation strategies including avoidance, compensation, and refusal, as described previously.

**CHAPTER SIX: OSTRACIZED *OTHER***

Compared to exoticized *Otherness* and stereotyped *Otherness*, American

sojourners' ostracized *Otherness* emerged from the negative attributes assigned to the

out-group including discrimination, prejudice, isolation, and rejection. Specific to this

study, ostracized *Otherness* was formulated in two ways. The first was the situation in

which American sojourners were deliberately excluded and rejected by Chinese people

in an unfriendly manner. The second was the psychological distance they maintained

from Chinese people when exposed to insurmountable, perpetual insuperable barriers of

inadequate linguistic proficiency and cultural value discrepancies. In response to the

double ostracizing, these American sojourners were excluded from participating in some

social activities initiated and organized by Chinese people on one hand. On the other,

they kept Chinese identity and Chinese people at a distance because of cultural

estrangements.

**Excluded *Other***

*Being Segregated from Chinese Circles*

As mentioned previously, American sojourners in this study were otherized by

Chinese people who labeled Americans as outsiders. In this type of *Othering*,

Americans were segregated from Chinese social and professional circles. For example,

June was working in the marketing department of a start-up company. Holding different

ideas about ways to target potential audiences, June could not agree with her Chinese

colleagues about specific marketing strategies. As a result, the CEO and another co-

founder of the company decided to communicate with each group separately, without

making them speak to each other. Although this communication approach might

improve efficiency and avoid intergroup conflict, June remained unsatisfied, she said, because the two groups should, in her view, work cohesively rather than being isolated from Chinese colleagues' professional circles. In addition to workplaces, the separation of Chinese staff and non-Chinese staff also existed in universities and other organizations. Steven once worked as an English teacher at a university in Southeast China. To his surprise, the foreign teachers in the foreign language department were intentionally separated from the Chinese teachers through the creation of institutional structures such as academic departments, and cyber structures including chat rooms. By taking the non-Chinese teachers away from the mainstream social circle, department heads intended to prevent them from knowing what was happening in the department. In addition to institutional interventions, other barriers were erected. For example, Chinese teachers who were experts in teaching English hardly spoke to the foreigner teachers. Similar to Steven, Kathy was also exposed to an enormous divide between American and Chinese teachers in her department. According to Kathy's description, at board meetings, all Chinese teachers sat together on one side of the room, while the foreign teachers sat on the other side.

The separation of Americans and Chinese people in workplaces extended to cyberspace as well. As a free instant messaging application, WeChat (微信 in Mandarin) has been widely adopted to facilitate organizational communication online, using a group chat feature. By establishing a chat group on WeChat, the group founder can invite individuals to participate in-group discussions online, and can send announcements and notifications to group members. With a strong bias against out-group members, as described, some chat groups established by Chinese people were not

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open to American sojourners or other outsiders. For instance, Kathy noticed two WeChat groups in her department–one for foreign teachers, the other for Chinese teachers. Similarly, Claire found it was difficult for her to join the WeChat group established and run by Chinese students in her department. When she asked if she could post a notice on the Chinese WeChat group, she was told that only the Chinese WeChat group administrator could do that. In this way, Claire was denied access to the Chinese-only WeChat group.

Aside from these formal situations, the divide between Americans and Chinese people was also noticeable in informal milieus. Ryan indicated he often played ski-board with Chinese people he considered to be friends. However, he never received acclamation from the Chinese players no matter how good his performance was. On the contrary, Chinese players cheered for each other even when they did not perform ski-boarding tricks as well as Ryan, who attributed the differential treatment to his non-Chinese identity. Ryan converged on the Chinese interaction strategy in this situation: Ryan ignored the Chinese players when they ignored his good performances. Ryan expended great effort to avoid facing the reality that he was excluded by Chinese players, people he described as close friends. Claire recalled when she was separated by her Chinese classmates at a party. Soon after finishing a game with international students, Chinese students in Claire's department suddenly replayed the game without inviting American students. At that moment, Claire described how she was susceptible to being separated by Chinese classmates once again. Although she said nothing, Claire could not resist asking herself why these Chinese students behaved in this manner.

The accounts elaborated here exemplify that during social categorization

processes, people who are similar in physical characteristics become members of the in-group, and all others are labeled out-group members. The group differentiation not only contributes substantially to in-group favoritism (Foddy & Dawes, 2008; T. Lee & Fiske, 2006; Platow et al., 2012), it also often results in out-group bias (Devine, 1989; Tajfel, 1974). Consequently, out-group members are devalued and placed further away from the in-group. Many of the American sojourners described how they were ostracized in this way.

In addition to these separation strategies, American sojourners were also excluded by Chinese people's rejection. Compared with separation, rejection is a more direct way to ostracize American sojourners from mainstream Chinese society. Skin color as a stigma symbol (Goffman, 1963) distinguished American sojourners as an unwanted out-group (T. Lee & Fiske, 2006). Consequently, these American sojourners encountered rejection from Chinese society in various ways. For instance, Claire was not allowed to take part in some social activities organized by her university because those activities were exclusively open to Chinese people, though no reason was given for the separation. Chinese players would not allow Thomas to play football with them. Mark was shunned by his ex-girlfriend's parents who were against intercultural marriage. Jack was prohibited from purchasing train tickets after waiting in line, only to be told by an elderly Chinese man that the line was for Chinese people only. Compared to these American sojourners who experienced rejections from the Chinese, Will encountered the exclusion through his Chinese stepdaughter, who was otherized by her Chinese teacher at school.

> I pulled my kids out of public school, not just because I think the education is brutal, but because they would be othered by their classmates because of their

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connection to me. And it was not just the classmates, it was the teachers…And their English teacher would harangue my children in class. "Why don't you move to America?" and my daughter would have nothing wrong with her English homework, and at the bottom you know you get 老师评价 [evaluation from teachers]. She always gave her "come on, 最差 [the lowest grade]."

Although Will's stepdaughter is Chinese, she was otherized by her classmates and teachers at school exclusively because of her American stepfather. This family-based connection exposed this girl to tribal stigma, "transmitted through lineages and equally contaminate all members of a family" (Goffman, 1963, p. 13). As a result, the co-ethnicity of Will's stepdaughter positioned her as a member of an out-group. In this situation, the in-group members adopted a hostile attitude toward the out-group when they indicated they felt threatened by out-group members' behaviors, and, accordingly, intergroup hostility often resulted in exclusion (Schaafsma & Williams, 2012). Will's stepdaughter was also excluded by her English teacher, who appeared threatened that her own English proficiency might not be as good as that of her young student. To mediate her fear, this English teacher picked on Will's stepdaughter in two ways. First she frequently otherized this student in front of her classmates by asking, for example, "Why don't you go back to the United States?" Second, the teacher continually gave Will's stepdaughter low scores on her English homework, which irritated Will. He described his anger:

> But on the bottom there is the teacher's rating, from one star to four stars. She always gave her only one star. Only one star. Basically saying not good enough, not good enough. "What's not good enough? There is no single mistake on here." Not good enough was only coming from her attitude, not from the objective work that my daughter was doing. It was that "I have better English than you, you have to make mistakes," because it came out of a deep insecurity.

From Will's perspective, this English teacher intentionally excluded his stepdaughter based on the idea that she was a threatening *Other*. As an intercultural business

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counselor, Will mentioned that he tried his best to get over being otherized by Chinese people, but he could not accept that his child was being rejected as a threatening *Other*. For Will, he had to make peace with the Chinese people's *Othering* of him because he was the one who made the decision to move to China. However, his child did not make this choice and, therefore, it was unfair for her to be otherized by Chinese people. Consequently, Will explained how his own sense of being *Other* was intensified through his child's exclusion because of her connection to him. Ostracizing that targets children of sojourners and first-generation immigrants accentuates the pain experienced by dislocation and displacement (Bhatia, 2007).

## *Being Rejected by Chinese Nationalism*

From the perspective of American sojourners, the in-group favoritism discussed previously is associated with Chinese *nationalism*, defined as "a perception of national superiority and an orientation toward national dominance" (Kosterman & Feshbach, 1989, p. 271). Nationalism implies "a comparison of the national in-group with relevant other nations, that is an intergroup comparison with the tendency to upgrade the national in-group as compared with national out-groups" (Kosterman & Feshbach, 1989, as cited in Wagner, Becker, Christ, Pettigrew, & Schmidt, 2012, p. 320).This point is taken up by the developers of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986a), who argued that in-groups intended to positively differentiate themselves from relevant out-groups with the hope of maintaining or enhancing a positive social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986a). As the result of upgrading the in-group, out-groups are devalued and the derogation of them is positively related to the degree of nationalism (Wagner, Becker, Christ, Pettigrew, & Schmidt, 2012). The devaluation of the out-group sometimes

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devolves to actual rejection of the out-group and even intergroup threat (Brewer, 1999; R. Brown & Zagefka, 2005). Therefore, American sojourners in this study disclosed that they encountered rejection from Chinese people when the national in-group detected various types of threat from outsiders, including Americans criticizing China, and Americans seen as intense, out-group rivals.

Being seen as members of an out-group, American sojourners were disqualified by Chinese people, the national in-group, from criticizing China. For example, Maroon mentioned that his Chinese colleague automatically defended China when he criticized corruption in China. This defense seemed odd to Maroon because this Chinese colleague was continuously critical of China, often saying things very similar to the things Maroon had said. Maroon attributed the difference to his own identity as a foreigner in China, which carried the connotation that he was not allowed to criticize China in the presence of Chinese people.

> The idea is don't get the foreigners involved… I think there is this instinct where they do not like people who aren't Chinese criticizing China.

Maroon described his Chinese colleague's answers as nationalistic. He said that the Chinese people he knew refused to hear criticism about China from non-Chinese individuals. Maroon mentioned that he was generalized as the *Other* most of the time by Chinese people. It was not surprising that when the topic turned to politics, Maroon's nationality became significant and, based on his non-Chinese category, the Chinese declined to hear criticism from an outsider, even a friendly one.

In addition to being rejected for criticizing China, American sojourners were often viewed by Chinese people as rivals, exemplified clearly during sports activities. Luke discovered the Chinese people in his gym nearly always wanted to compete with

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him.

> When I walked in, the gym was not like, it was a very Chinese gym. Dude, when I went to the benchpress, which is the thing where you do this (lifting his arms). The Chinese guys literally stopped what they were doing. They stopped working out. They wanted to see how much weight I could put on this machine. They stopped. So then I lifted. As soon as I was done, literally one guy would come up and try to lift two…Every guy in the gym wanted to lift that way.

As discussed above, intergroup comparisons arising from nationalism have a strong tendency to favor the national in-group when compared to national out-groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986, as cited in Wagner et al., 2012; See also Kosterman & Feshbach, 1989). In the context of sporting activities, national in-groups, the Chinese in this case, would strive to enhance their positive social identity in front of out-group members by defeating them. As a result, Chinese men at Luke's gym would attempt to lift twice the weight when Luke was finished lifting. By doing this, these Chinese men could demonstrate to themselves and other in-group members that they were better than out-group members, including Luke.

Chinese people's tendency to exaggerate the virtues and talents of their own group–an outgrowth of nationalism–was clearly illuminated in sports competition. Maroon described that sports competitions between American sojourners and Chinese people often escalated into a battle for pride between the United States and China, based at least in part on Chinese people's nationalistic feelings. Maroon mentioned that one of his American professors beat a Chinese professor at arm wrestling. In the beginning, the professors were together at a casual party organized by the American professor. During the party, people began arm wrestling. To this American professor's surprise, the Chinese professor was obviously angry after having lost the match to him. Later, the American professor confessed to Maroon that the fact that he won the arm wrestling

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hurt that Chinese professor's national pride. Sports competition was strongly associated

with national pride by Chinese people. This national pride also bothered Maroon when

he was studying in Nanjing.

> So, one of our students in the center wore glasses, short, very kind of thick, kind
> of viewed himself as the leader of all the Chinese students. Oh, man. He played
> basketball with me, right? You know one time he brings me to play basketball
> with some other Nanjing students, right? And a couple of the guys were on, they
> weren't on the main Nanjing University basketball team; they were on one of the
> department teams, or one of the sub-school teams, something like that right. So
> they were like basketball players from different colleges. And you know, I was
> playing and I would start to beat them. And there were all kinds of Chinese
> around. This is you are losing face of the country.

Maroon explained that the basketball game was a source of national pride; when he

started to win, some of the Chinese players elbowed him in the face. This action was

typically viewed as a foul. However, other Chinese players and the Chinese referee did

nothing about it. When Maroon touched those Chinese players who elbowed him, he

was charged with a foul by the Chinese onlookers. This differential treatment excluded

Maroon. After experiencing several similar scenarios in subsequent years, Maroon said

he had enough of the treatment and decided to stop playing basketball with Chinese

players.

Compared to Maroon and his American professors, Mark encountered more

extreme reactions from Chinese players after he won a table tennis tournament.

Interested in playing table tennis, Mark joined a Chinese table tennis club at the

university where he worked. During a tournament, Mark earned fourth place. As he

explained, Mark was surprised when the Chinese players only celebrated the top three

players, all Chinese.

> Yea, yea competition, so I probably finished like fourth place and it seemed like
> they were celebrating like the top three finishers, like and maybe that is

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something they planned to do, because you know having the top three all take a picture that is something that is probably pretty common, but like I felt kind of left out of the celebration and I think they all went to eat afterward.

Throughout the tournament, Mark said he felt that Chinese spectators and Chinese players did not really want to see an American win the table tennis tournament, in which Chinese people had immense national pride. Therefore, Mark was left out by Chinese players after winning the final match, being excluded from taking part in celebration activities organized by the Chinese players. To put it differently, he was segregated from and by Chinese players. The exclusion was caused in large part by Chinese people's nationalistic attitude about table tennis, and Mark said it made him uncomfortable. Although he tried not to care about being excluded, Mark admitted that the rejection from Chinese players prevented him from developing deeper friendships with them.

Maroon concluded that every foreigner who came to China experienced exclusions enacted by Chinese people in some way during sports competitions. This exclusion was based on nationalism, a statement supported by Hessler (2006), who elaborated that sports competition succeeded in establishing and promoting nationalism. An English teacher, Hessler (2006) spent two years working and living at a small college located in Southwest China. This college once organized a faculty basketball tournament. Hessler (2006) discovered that his participation and that of another American teacher in the English department aroused a great deal of resentment from other participants. As the two Americans learned, these games took on national significance for the Chinese, who saw that the participation of the two Americans transformed these games into "a matter of China vs. America …an issue of saving face for the Motherland" (Hessler, 2006, p. 57). In response to these nationalistic reactions,

Hessler (2006) described:

> The games grew steadily rougher and rougher. The referees also took sides; they allowed our opponents to foul us while constantly whistling us for phantom violations. In the game before our tutorial, I had been whistled more than fifteen times for double dribble—by the end of the game I only had to touch the ball and the whistle would blow. Adam and I were considering pulling out of the tournament, which we eventually did. It seemed the best solution for everybody involved (p. 57).

When Hessler (2006) complained to his Mandarin teacher about the unfairness of the referee, he was told that it was wrong for him to question the referee's calls. The Mandarin teacher also told Hessler (2006) that the referee was penalizing him because he dribbled in a way that was unacceptable by Chinese standards. Refusing to admit that the Chinese referee penalized Hessler (2006) out of his resentment of foreigners, this Mandarin teacher said that Hessler (2006) would have to adjust to how people played basketball in China, if he wanted to play. Hessler (2006) wrote that he had already heard similar discourse about "this is the Chinese way" too many times. Annoyed by this statement, Hessler (2006) ended the discussion with his Mandarin teacher, indicating he did not "want to be lectured about basketball with Chinese characteristics" (p. 57). In addition to basketball games, Hessler (2006) was exposed to Chinese nationalism when he won the 22nd Annual Long Race in the same small Chinese city. When a local newspaper interviewed a Chinese runner about his thoughts about a foreigner finishing first, the runner answered:

> To have a sports competition in a Chinese area and allow a wai guoren [foreigner] to take first place, I feel very ashamed. This gives us a wakeup call: our students and adults need to improve the quality of their bodies, because if we improve our strength, we can be victorious!

Based on this high degree of nationalism, Chinese people felt very ashamed when they were defeated by foreigners like Hessler (2006). The Chinese believed that they should

maintain and enhance their positive social identity as the national in-group by winning

these competitions. Hessler (2006) attributed the basketball failure and the Chinese

runner's response to the hyper-nationalism that permeated this small city. From his

point of view, sports strongly intensified nationalism (Hessler, 2006).

The intergroup threat-aroused nationalism was further intensified when

international political relations became tense. During the past 30 years, U.S.-China

relations have been full of twists and turns. Against this backdrop, Chinese people have

for generations perceived America as threatening, a country that occasionally bullies

China. Based on this hostile perception of America, some Chinese people directly

expressed their hatred toward this country in front of American sojourners. For instance,

Kevin was told by a Chinese taxi driver that he felt happy when 9/11 happened. A

Chinese convenience store owner said "I hate America" directly to Will. When U.S.-

China relations intensified, Chinese people frequently extended their hostility toward

America to American sojourners. In this situation, American sojourners instantly

became the scapegoat for the American government's actions, and faced various attacks

from Chinese people, even when an American had a deep connection to, and affection

for, China and Chinese culture. Thus, Kaiser Guo, famous in the American diaspora in

China, was excluded from his Chinese community after the U.S. bombing of the

Chinese embassy in Belgrade in 1999. As an American-born ethnic Chinese, Kaiser Guo

was formerly the lead guitar player for 唐朝 ("Tang Dynasty" in direct translation), an

influential Chinese rock/metal band. A founding member of the group, Kaiser Guo was

eventually forced to leave the band in 1999 in part due to the political clashes between

the United States and China. Will described Kaiser's experiences:

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He [Kaiser Guo]is bi-cultural. He is American-born Chinese. He is a psychologist and got his Ph.D in Asian Studies. But he has been [in China] for 20 years. He was the lead guitar player for 唐朝 when they started out. But he was forced to leave a little bit because of his American affiliation. At that time, he was[caught in] a back-lash a little bit against America, because the U.S. was bombing the embassy in Belgrade. His relationship with his 哥们 [buddies] fell apart because he was still American and the Other. They threw him out.

Chinese people's nationalism against the backdrop of political disputes between the United States and China frustrated Will, he explained. Even though Kasier Guo was ethnically Chinese and had lived in China for many years, he still could not avoid being excluded by his co-ethnics when U.S.-China relations became tense. After the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade by the United States, Kaiser Guo was quickly categorized as an American, an outsider abandoned by other band members who ignored his Chinese identity. In the same vein, some of Will's American friends in China were aggressively excluded by Chinese people when difficult political issues developed.

And I have friends especially … when … political things [are] going on. They have people (Chinese people) come up with [a] camera, running on their cell phone and try to start a video, and push him like "You are so fat. Why are you so fat. Fuck off. Go back home. Foreigners are not welcome." Try to make him take a swing and then they can take a video and be like "This bad foreigner tried to punch Chinese people."…[M]y friend's wife, they spit on her shoes on the subway. And women (Chinese women) followed and stared aggressively.

From Will's perspective, exclusions arising from nationalism were virtually inevitable for American sojourners who are not ethnically Chinese. Their non-Chinese appearance was interpreted by some Chinese people as a symbol of foreign imperialism, which often triggered xenophobic behavior. Even though Will had lived in China for 10 years, he remained insecure anytime U.S.-China relations became tense, because his identity of being a foreigner, especially an American, made him a target for Chinese people's

anger.

In addition to international disputes, the history of intergroup relationships influences the ways in-groups explain the behavior of out-group members as well (Bar-Tal, 1997). American sojourners revealed that the suppression and oppression by Western imperialistic powers for decades had entrenched the anti-foreigner sentiment, now a pervasive collective memory in Chinese society. Partially facilitated by such institutional powers as media and education systems, the anti-foreigner sentiment was translated into a cognitive schema that arbitrarily categorized many out-group behaviors as provocative acts. For instance, Will once saw a poster in which two scenarios were compared. One scenario depicted a Chinese man lying on a bed with an opium pipe, 100 years ago, and the other a Chinese man concentrating on a cell phone. Finding this poster quite interesting, Will recalled, he posted it on his WeChat moment (a function for WeChat users to share pictures and comments to WeChat friends). To Will's surprise, one of his good friends who had worked with him for 10 years suggested he should take the post down.

> [He is] a close Chinese [friend and] also [a] Beijinger… he is older and I respect him very much. Um, he messaged me and said "Will you have to take that down" and I said "Why?"He said because "As a foreigner first, opium was 你们外国人做的 [you foreigners did this], and you're bringing up …a weak spot in Chinese history, 中国丑陋的历史 [the ugly moment of Chinese history]".

At first, Will said he felt conflicted about his Chinese friend's suggestion, in part because the error rested on his identity of being a foreigner rather than on the message itself. Although Will was bothered by this, he admitted that if a really good friend was second guessing his motives in posting that picture, his other WeChat friends, especially his clients, might also interpret the post in the wrong way. With concern for his own

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safety, Will decided to remove the post in order to avoid insulting other Chinese people on his WeChat. Will described this logic as the genetic fallacy: the validity of a statement was assessed based on a speaker rather than truth. Even though the First Opium War ended nearly 200 years ago, the history of intergroup relations continues to influence Chinese people's perception of foreigners today (Bar-Tal, 1997). Although Will did nothing wrong, some Chinese people could have interpreted his action from the anti-oppression perspective, fostered in the specific historical context of hundreds of years ago. Consequently, Will's post might have been seen as a threat to China, and though illusory, did trigger collective memories of oppression.

Imaginary-threat thinking was apparent when American sojourners refused to meet some Chinese expectations or follow certain norms. According to social identity theory, the national in-group defines norms and expectations for out-group members, and those who fail to perform according to the script do not provoke positive attitudes from in-group members (Tajfel & Turner, 1986a; Turner, 1987). Specifically, the American sojourners in this study became imaginary enemies of some Chinese people. Will recalled a time when he was invited to a party organized by his stepdaughter's current teacher. At the party, Will politely rejected a drunk Chinese man's request to drink liquor with him because Will did not like drinking it. To Will's surprise, the drunk Chinese man, who had been a soldier, smacked Will's wine glass out of his hand and then struck him in the throat. Stunned, Will said he just stood up and left, hearing the Chinese guy yelling at the top of his lungs about "foreigners coming here and running their mouths." According to Will's description, the Chinese drunk man expected him to drink Chinese liquor. Will's rejection violated this Chinese man's expectation, and due

in large part to his being drunk, was interpreted as a devaluation of Chinese liquor. Therefore, this Chinese man accused Will of running his mouth in China, and then attacked him out of anger because Will's rejection threatened his national pride, also perhaps inflated by alcohol. Will said he felt hurt by this attack, because he never thought he would be otherized in a circle that he identified as his community. This attack exposed Will to the reality that he was still excluded as the *Other*, at least by heavy drinkers, in spite of his self-identification as an in-group member.

## Self-Ostracized *Other*

As mentioned above, American sojourners who were considered to be members of a national out-group were deemed threatening by some Chinese people, members of the national in-group, during intergroup communication. These perceived out-group threats, real or imagined, endangered Chinese people's maintenance and enhancement of their positive social identity as the national in-group. Thus, American sojourners were ostracized by Chinese people through separation and rejection strategies. In addition to exclusion enacted by the majority group, minority groups often self-identify as the *Other*, especially when exposed to intergroup differentiations that are perceived by outsiders themselves to constitute a distinct *Other* identity (Modood, 2011). Linguistic and cultural barriers prompted many American sojourners to ostracize themselves during intercultural interaction.

### Self-Ostracized due to Linguistic Barriers

Stepping outside their own cultures, sojourners experience feelings of being unable to express fully themselves in a second language (Suarez, 2002). For instance, Mochamochi reported that she had difficulty adequately expressing abstract concepts in

Mandarin due to her limited vocabulary. Corder (1983) argued that, "second-language speakers are found to contribute fewer ideas, to take less active roles in communicative interactions, to change and simplify content, and to ignore difficult to express subjects" (as cited in Peltokorpi & Clausen, 2011, p. 512). Therefore, Mochamochi said she was restricted by her limited Mandarin proficiency in making friends with Chinese people, especially when she first arrived in China. In a similar vein, Tiffany said she could not be funny when communicating with Chinese people because she could not make jokes in Mandarin. Kathy recalled she did not have natural, comfortable conversations with Chinese people in Mandarin because, she said, there would always be language limitations, a communication barrier she considered ultimately insurmountable.

In addition to communication barriers produced by linguistic gaps, the impact of Mandarin on Americans' identity also exposed them to other divisions between them and Chinese people. Sarah made clear her resentment of her Chinese identity constructed by Mandarin speaking. When she first came to China, Sarah named herself Xiaodan (晓丹 in Mandarin), which denoted femininity in Chinese culture. Working for a beer company, Sarah was often required to have dinner or go to *Karaoke* with her Chinese clients. Being constrained by her low level of Mandarin skills at that time, Sarah could not fully express herself. But she took advantage of this situation by leaving the impression of an innocent pretty American woman on her Chinese clients. By doing this, Sara received invitations to many social activities as a token foreigner, and successfully promoted her beer during these activities. For Sarah, Xiaodan implied a kinder and simpler person, quite different from her American identity as Sarah. As a person who wished to be honest with everything, Sarah preferred her American identity

over her Chinese one.

In addition to obstacles in expressing themselves, American sojourners also struggled to understand Mandarin. Linguistic barriers obstruct information flow, impede knowledge-sharing and transfer, and create power and advancement (Peltokorpi & Clausen, 2011; Peltokorpi & Vaara, 2014). Given the strong influence of language on communication, American sojourners explained they were often excluded by linguistic barriers from stepping into Chinese people's social and professional circles. No matter how hard they studied Mandarin, they frequently did not understand what Chinese people said. Susan explained that often when she sat with Chinese friends, she could not follow the conversation flow due to inside jokes interwoven with other messages. Although Susan studied Mandarin for many years and could understand everything her Chinese boyfriend said, she still said it was difficult for her to catch Chinese people's culturally-bound jokes. Growing up in the United States, Susan lacked social understanding and nuanced cultural contexts. Berry explained this gap created by growing up outside Chinese culture:

> I mean as a foreigner you know without like growing up here with Chinese parents and Chinese school, you know, you don't get like the classical… and I never studied even in English some of the classical works, I didn't like take that standard of Chinese or like for very long to get a lot of the like idioms or like cultural background for the language, so it's hard to get that…I'm not going to stop trying to understand it but I know that I probably will never fully understand it.

American sojourners described the divide between them and Chinese people produced by the culture-based linguistic gap, and indicated they did not feel they were part of Mandarin-dominated conversations. As a result, Thomas quit having lunch with his Chinese classmates because he did not want to continuously feel embarrassed by his

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limited Mandarin proficiency. Susan indicated that she was isolated from Chinese friends' conversations, and June said she was ostracized from Chinese social circles.

Due to psychological and functional impacts on social interaction, language is considered a strong determinant of social categorization (Giles & Johnson, 1981). The American sojourners' experiences illustrated the role language played in the process of social categorization. Functionally speaking, American sojourners' limited Mandarin proficiency distinguished them from the national in-group and categorized them as members of an out-group. They were unable to fully express themselves when speaking Mandarin, nor to fully participate in Chinese people's conversations in that they were unable to understand some cultural references and humor. The inability to express themselves and to understand Mandarin gave them a sense of losing control when communicating with Chinese people. Furthermore, the lower level of Mandarin skills bred some resentment on the part of these Americans, who were forced to acknowledge that they were members of an out-group in China. Being separated from the Chinese system by linguistic barriers, these American sojourners explained they would never be Chinese. Accordingly, they would never completely view China as their home. Ultimately, they had to isolate themselves from the Chinese system by acknowledging the permanent divide between them and Chinese people caused in large part by linguistic barriers impossible to fully overcome.

*Self-Ostracized due to Cultural Value Discrepancy*

At the core of culture, a *value* is defined as "an explicit or implicit conception, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, which influences the choice and evaluation of behaviors" (Liu, Volčič, & Gallois, 2015, p. 104). In addition to linguistic

barriers, cultural values function as less overt determinants of social categorization

based on their impacts on social interaction (Peltokorpi & Clausen, 2011). Perceived

value discrepancies among groups have been shown to be related to negative

orientations toward out-groups by generating intergroup bias, prejudice, stereotypes,

and antagonism (Rokeach, Smith, & Evans, 1960; Schwartz & Struch, 1989; Schwartz,

Struch, & Bilsky, 1990; Struch & Schwartz, 1989). As a result of devaluation, out-

groups were exoticized, stereotyped, and ostracized as the *Other* by mainstream society,

as described in previous chapters. In addition to *Otherness* assigned by national in-

groups, many national out-group members ostracize themselves, becoming the *Other*

when experiencing value discrepancies. In this study, American sojourners' values

diverged from those of Chinese people around them and were grouped using the

following four dimensions: conformity to in-group identification and homogeneity,

conformity to authority, *mianzi* in Chinese culture, and *guanxi* among Chinese people.

*Conformity to in-group identification and homogeneity.*

One of the most noticeable value discrepancies between American sojourners

and the Chinese rested on the individualism-collectivism dimension, which captured the

characteristics of two types of self-construal. Markus and Kitayama (1991) first

described *self-construal* as a way that individuals defined and made meaning of the *Self*.

The first type of self-construal is called the *interdependent self-construal*, which

emphasizes the importance of maintaining beneficial interdependence among

individuals (Hsu, 1985). The interdependent self-construal's attention to the

fundamental connectedness of human beings to each other echoes the focus of

*collectivism* (Triandis, 1989, 1994, 2001), which "refers to the broad value tendencies of

a culture in emphasizing the importance of the 'we' identity over the 'I' identity, in-group interests over individual desires, and other-face concerns over self-face concerns" (Ting-Toomey, 2010, p. 173). Therefore, individuals with an interdependent self-construal form the *Self* in relationship to others in society, and they tend to be "associated with collectivistic sense" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 227). As a result, these people would pay attention to the interpersonal domain, care about other people's opinions, emphasize in-group relationships, value homogeneity and unity, and advocate compliance and conformity (Hofstede, 1980; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Matsumoto & Juang, 2007; Triandis, 1989, 2001). According to American sojourners' descriptions, Chinese people around them embodied these collectivistic attributes. Situated in a collectivistic culture, the Chinese people tended to identify themselves as individuals belonging to certain groups rather than as discrete individuals. For example, Chinese parents took it for granted that they must plan their children's lives, making such decisions as which university to attend, which major to choose, whom to marry, when to marry, when to have children, and which job offer to accept. Under the influence of Confucian values such as conformity and compliance, Chinese children were taught to follow their parents' arrangements and to do everything possible to meet their parents' expectations, even when these plans went against their own wishes. When a conflict arose between Chinese children's individual desires and their families' expectations, these Chinese children tended to prioritize the latter, sacrificing their own dreams and desires if inconsistent with the life the parents had planned. Additionally, Chinese people preferred strong group cohesiveness, marked by intense emotional connections to each other and collaborative activities among in-group members. As American

sojourners disclosed, Chinese people typically asked each other private information such as salary and pregnancy plans, could live with the same roommates for four years, and did everything together in college. Given the emphasis on the divide between in-groups and out-groups, Chinese people did not pay enough attention to strangers' needs. Thus, they ignored traffic rules, jostled others, cut lines, and watched strangers engaged in physical conflict in public without attempting to stop one from being beaten by another (Hessler, 2006). In terms of interpersonal communication, Chinese people were inclined to abide by unanimous standards imposed by their affiliated organizations, co-ethnics, and the larger Chinese society. As a result of this strict compliance, Chinese people conformed to a homogeneous life that was not determined by their own desires. Some even feared failure of standing out from the homogenous crowd.

Behaviors based on these collectivistic values held by Chinese people often frustrated American sojourners who possessed the second type of self-construal, the *independent self-construal*. Contrary to the interdependent self-construal, the independent self-construal describes individuals as autonomous and independent (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Therefore, the independent self-construal is compatible with individualism (Triandis, 1989, 1994, 2001), which emphasizes "the importance of the 'I' identity over the 'we' identity, individual rights over groups interest, and individual-focused emotions over social-focused emotions" (Ting-Toomey, 2010, p. 173). Thus, people with individualistic tendencies focus on developing their own goals and needs; pay primary attention to distinctive personal traits, attributes, and features; and value self-enhancement, achievement, autonomy, privacy, and freedom to make decisions for themselves (Hofstede, 1980; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1995).

In terms of behaviors, these people prefer uniqueness to conformity (Kastanakis &

Voyer, 2014). Coming from the American culture, rated as highly individualistic by

Hofstede and his colleagues, American sojourners found it difficult to understand

Chinese families' pervasive intervention into their adult children's lives. In terms of

friendship, Americans indicated they preferred privacy, behavioral autonomy, and

emotional independence to the collectivistic alternatives. Striving for uniqueness, these

Americans refused to suppress their individuality to meet social expectations by

conforming to near monolithic standards held by majorities, and some declined to be

silent when encountering restrictions to individual choice. In public, the Americans

appeared to be bothered by Chinese people's ignoring of public orders. From the

American sojourners' perspective, the value discrepancies mentioned above were

irreconcilable based on their firm beliefs in autonomy, privacy, uniqueness, priority of

individual needs and goals, and tolerance for people different from them.

*Conformity to authorities*.

The second value discrepancy between American sojourners and Chinese people

lay on the dimension of high-low power distance. *Power distance* is defined as "the

extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the

family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally" (Hofstede, 2011, p. 9).

Inequality and power are at the center of power distance. According to Hofstede (1980),

*high power distance* is associated with "unequal power distribution, asymmetrical

relations, authoritative feedback from experts or high-status individuals, and rewards

and sanctions based on rank, role, status, age, and perhaps even gender identity" ( as

cited in Ting-Toomey, 2010, p. 173). Compared to Western cultures such as American

and British cultures, Chinese culture has substantially higher power distance (Hofstede et al., 2010; Sanders, 2014; Spencer-Oatey, 1997), as many American sojourners mentioned when interviewed. As discussed previously, Chinese parents exerted a huge influence on their children's decisions. Pressured by parents, Chinese children were expected to follow their parents' orders regardless of what these children might prefer. Chinese parents expected obedience from their children, rather than viewing even adult children as equals. Chinese families were excellent examples of high power distance culture (Hofstede, 2011). American sojourners also described institutions and organizations in China as having a high power distance. American sojourners described that the use of power by their Chinese supervisors and clients was legitimized by the higher position they possessed, rather than their competence. Subordinates expected to be told what to do, unlike individualistic Americans who were expected to solve problems and work autonomously (Hofstede, 2011). Consequently, some American sojourners were compelled to work against their will. For example, Ryan was asked to work overnight on a translation that was sent to him at nearly midnight and was to be finished before 10:00 am the next day. Kevin was told to follow his Chinese client's requirements and was not allowed to offer suggestions about ways to do things better, or even to challenge or reject the client's unreasonable requirements. In terms of larger social institutions such as the government, high power distance exerted huge impacts on Chinese people. Realizing there were many problems (e.g., air pollution) in China, Chinese people still chose to put up with these problems rather than make changes, because, unlike Americans, Chinese people could not substantially impact the Chinese government. Chinese people were unable to challenge government authorities who had

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near absolute power. Additionally, American sojourners explained that the high power distance found in Chinese culture in general was also clearly seen in the male dominance in Chinese society. They mentioned that Chinese companies preferred to hire male employees, and women were expected to be submissive, quiet, easily manipulated, and less ambitious than men. Male domination was labeled sexism–and also unlawful in the United States–by several American sojourners.

High power distance in Chinese culture appeared to annoy American sojourners, who valued low power distance. Cultures with low power distance "tend to value equal power distribution, symmetrical relations, a mixture of positive and negative messages in feedback sessions, and equitable reward and cost distributions based on individual merit" (Ting-Toomey, 2010, p. 173). Compared to Chinese culture, American culture is perhaps the best exemplar of low power distance. These American sojourners said that once they were adults, they needed to be treated by their parents, supervisors, and clients as autonomous individuals, and that in general, no adult should attempt to impose their will on others too much. In addition to positive feedback, these American sojourners explained it was constructive to voice different opinions to their supervisors and clients. Moreover, they valued power gained by merit rather than a position in a hierarchy. Last but not least, these American sojourners advocated gender equality. As a result of living in a culture with low power distance, American sojourners reported that they found alien the high power distance existing in Chinese families, institutions, organizations, government and between genders. Bothered by high power distance, some American sojourners confronted people in dominant positions, and consequently, were punished. For example, Stacy received a low grade for one class because she

questioned the Chinese teacher's capability to grade her English assignments. Frank was informed that he did something wrong after he showed his disagreement and distaste with his boss's authoritarian management style. Even when American sojourners accommodated the Chinese cultural emphasis on conformity for the sake of making a living in China, the Americans said during interviews that even though they kept their views to themselves in public, they would not choose to live permanently in a culture with such high power distance.

*Mianzi in Chinese culture.*

The concept of *face* is manifested and interpreted differently across cultures (Servaes, 2016). In Chinese culture, the concept of face is termed *mianzi* (面子 in Mandarin), described as the idiosyncrasy perhaps most difficult for Westerners to fully understand and master (Lin, 2016). Hwang (1987) defined *mianzi* as "an individual's social position or prestige, gained by successfully performing one or more specific social roles that are well recognized by others" (p. 960). Therefore, *mianzi* is closely tied to people's social position, and formed from dynamic social interaction. Based on the desire for other people's recognition and acceptance, Chinese people are more concerned about publicly losing their *mianzi*, seen as "condemnation for unethical behavior" (Chen, 2011, as cited in Servaes, 2016, p. 462). Therefore, Chinese people earn *mianzi* by protecting their self-image during social interaction (G. Chen, 2011). Heavily influenced by collectivism and Confucianism, Chinese people tend to acquire *mianzi* by prioritizing other people's feelings and public image above their own (Hwang, 2011; X. Lu, 2009; Mao, 1994; Xie & Li, 2007). By doing so, they can avoid causing other people to lose valued attributes or characteristics in front of others, and maintain

harmony within their social groups (X. Lu, 2009; Mao, 1994; Xie & Li, 2007).

The notion of *mianzi* in Chinese culture is not exactly the same as the concept of face in Western cultures, which is define as "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for him- or herself" (G. Brown & Levinson, 1978, p. 66). Analogizing social behavior in everyday life to that of a theater performance, Goffman (1959) described face as a social attribute and public image obtained through interaction with others in the form of public performance or representation of self. In order to acquire and maintain public images, individuals must do *facework* that involves impression management and the projection of self-image (Goffman, 1959; Hwang, 1987). By enacting this facework, people can shape a favorable image of themselves and impart that image to others (Schlenker, 1980; Schneider, 1969, 1981; Tedeschi & Riess, 1981). Although face is examined in a relational context, elaborations mentioned earlier put more weight on individuals' rational role in managing their public image. Compared to other-focused *mianzi*, face is more self-centered. This difference is ascribed to the Western cultural emphasis on individualism (X. Lu, 2009; Xie & Li, 2007), which values autonomy over subordination, competition over harmony, and individual desires over group interests.

Given these differences between *mianzi* in China and face in the West, American sojourners indicated the notion of *mianzi* was foreign to them in three ways. First was the variety of ways individuals protected their public self-images. When others made mistakes, Chinese people typically adopted indirect strategies and dealt with mistakes in private to avoid loss of *mianzi*. Therefore, American sojourners discovered that Chinese people preferred talking to others about their mistakes or inappropriate behaviors in

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private and making only indirect comments about mistakes in public. In this way, Chinese people could not only avoid embarrassing others, but more significantly, they could achieve and maintain harmonious relationships overall (Mao, 1994). These other-focused behaviors enacted with the hope of achieving harmonious interpersonal relationships were alien to some American sojourners, especially if they knew little about Chinese culture. Being raised in an individualistic culture, American sojourners had less concern about how they were perceived by others than Chinese people did. For example, Americans did not think it would be a big deal if they pointed out a mistake publicly. During social interactions, American sojourners typically preferred task over harmony and employed a direct communication style in the name of improving efficiency. However, living in China as sojourners, these Americans often passively accepted and accommodated Chinese people's way of giving *mianzi*. For example, June said she found it best to be indirect with her Chinese colleagues about what she expected from them. Sarah found talking to frisbee players privately about ways to improve their performance on the sports field was effective. Ryan and Stacey said they avoided expressing opinions that challenged the opinions held by their Chinese professors, especially about international disputes between the United States and China.

In addition, Chinese people protected other people's *mianzi* by virtue of a specific social code. For example, Chinese people typically lowered their own cups when making a toast to their guests, paid for their friends' meals, and complimented acquaintances' performances even when they were not very good. In contrast, American sojourners did not typically praise people for behaviors that were not worthy of respect. For example, Luke did not compliment people when they showed off. Bobby declined

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to give positive comments to a bar owner's poor management. When a fake compliment was given to them, these American sojourners did not accept that either. For example, Mark said he was uncomfortable when Chinese people complimented his Mandarin proficiency, because he knew he was not very good. Although American sojourners often adjusted their behavior to accommodate the notion of *mianzi*, they did not embrace this concept. They clearly stated that they were more straightforward in the United States. Fake compliments, many said, encouraged dishonesty, inconsistent with one of their primary ethnical principles.

The second way *mianzi* was an alien idea for Americans was that subordination was determined by power distance rather than merit. As a relational concept with inherent hierarchy (G. Chen, 2011), *mianzi* can be gained by virtue of status, authority, and wealth in Chinese society (Ho, 1976; Hwang, 1987). Therefore, the higher position one holds, the more *mianzi* he or she will gain from others (X. Lu, 2009). Consequently, Chinese people at the bottom of the pyramid are expected to give face to those at the top as a way to show respect. However, reverse face giving is neither expected nor guaranteed. For this reason, American sojourners reported that they saw many Chinese employees give face to their supervisors and clients, even at the expense of their own benefits and rights. Among these American sojourners, most of them refused to accommodate *mianzi* based on unequal power distributions. As elaborated previously, *mianzi* giving was interwoven with high power distance, which violated the American sojourners' egalitarian values consistent with low power distance. In addition to authority, wealth could also guarantee face giving in China, based on an individual's social position and influence (He & Zhang, 2011; Jiang, 2009). For example, consumers

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in China were generally willing to spend more money on items for social occasions that could enhance their social class, and then used the elevation in social class to gain more *mianzi* from others (Jiang, 2009). The display of wealth is deemed positive, acceptable, and common for Chinese people as a means to attain *mianzi* (Legrand, Brandmeir, & Pinguelo, 2011). As a result of the association of wealth with *mianzi* in Chinese society, American sojourners explained that many Chinese people seemed to be obsessed with material possessions, which were used to denote their success, achievement, and social status. These showing-off behaviors grounded in materialism were dismissed by the American sojourners interviewed, who labeled the acts as arrogant and shallow.

The third way *mianzi* was alien to Americans was the collective nature of *mianzi*. *Mianzi* does not only exist at the individual level, but also rests on both relational and group levels (G. Chen, 2011; He & Zhang, 2011; Spencer-Oatey, 2007). Specific to China, relational *mianzi* and group *mianzi* have greater prominence (He & Zhang, 2011), because the collectivistic culture in China stresses shared attributes and characteristics among in-group members. Therefore, one person can gain *mianzi* from his or her intimate relationship, such as marriage or friendship (He & Zhang, 2011). By the same token, this person can also acquire *mianzi* from his or her affiliated groups, including workplaces, sports teams, hometowns, and nations (He & Zhang, 2011; Spencer-Oatey, 2007). It should be mentioned that the *mianzi* acquisition works in the opposite direction, too, that is from individuals to relationships and to groups to which they belong. As He and Zhang (2011) illustrated, individuals' positive images "can add to the respectable identity of the group and enable the whole group to claim *mianzi* from other groups or members outside the group" (p. 2369). Thus, the acquisition and loss of

*mianzi* synchronize with that of relationships and groups to which people belong. Because of collective *mianzi*, Chinese people believed that they lost the *mianzi* of their nation, of China itself, when they were defeated by such American sojourners as Maroon and his American professor during sports activities. Similarly, they blamed Liu Xiang, a former Chinese 110-meter hurdler, for losing the *mianzi* of China and all Chinese people when he withdrew from competition at the Beijing Olympics in 2008 because of a previously unrevealed injury. Moreover, as described in earlier chapters, Chinese people often invited their American friends to participate in some social activities because they could earn *mianzi* from the presence of these sojourners. *Mianzi* was based on collectivism that exposed the divergence between American sojourners and Chinese people due to the different understandings of the *Self*. As discussed above, the independent *Self* was valued in American culture and the interdependent *Self* is prevalent in Chinese culture. The Americans interviewed in this study highly valued their autonomy, uniqueness, self-achievement, and individuality. Among these American sojourners, only three of them adjusted to collective *mianzi* despite their disagreement with it. Kevin and Claire gave *mianzi* by attending some parties, because they highly valued these Chinese friends and willingly compromised. Will had to accommodate his Chinese wife's sense of collective *mianzi* because he did not want to damage his marriage. Ryan had to be aware of what he said in front of Chinese professors to avoid becoming a victim of Chinese nationalism. Other American sojourners preferred their individualistic approach to face, avoiding becoming involved in the domain of Chinese people's collective *mianzi*.

*Guanxi between Chinese people*.

In addition to *mianzi*, *guanxi* (关系 in Mandarin, "inter-relationships, social networking, or special interpersonal relationships" in direct translation) is another important Chinese value (Garcá, 2014; Servaes, 2016). In societies that stress long-term relationship orientation and collectivism, *guanxi* is essential for an individual's success (Hofstede et al., 2010), because it is interwoven with attributes of social capital, including power, social status, and resources (Garcá, 2014; Hackley & Dong, 2001; Valentini, 2010). Not surprisingly, people want to avoid damaging *guanxi* for short-term benefits (Hofstede et al., 2010; Servaes, 2016). *Guanxi* for Chinese people is as significant as social capital is for Westerners (Valentini, 2010). American sojourners mentioned they saw no difference between *guanxi* in China and social networking in the United States, both of which were designed to establish connections with others and gain more opportunities in the workplace. Although *guanxi* overlaps with social networking concerning the role of social capital, it exerts more influence on Chinese people than social networking does in Western societies. Unlike social networking emerging as a response to "the system's failure to adapt to modernity," *guanxi* forms "the structural pattern of the Chinese social fabric" (G. Chen & Starosta, 1997, p. 5). Built on Confucianism, *guanxi* guides people upward in "the hierarchical social order proclaimed by Confucianism" (Garcá, 2014, p. 799) to a higher position without disrupting social harmony. Therefore, *guanxi* and *mianzi* are regarded as "the two wings of harmony" in Chinese society (Servaes, 2016, p. 461). As a result, *guanxi* penetrates all walks of life and extends to basic levels of interpersonal communication, for example making friends in China. Consequently, the line between professional and personal relationships becomes "extremely blurred'" in China (Gupta & Bartlett, 2007,

p. 1). *Guanxi*-loaded friendships were described by American sojourners as transactional or instrumental in nature. From their perspectives, Chinese people were nice and engaged in making friends with the sojourners based on the expectation that they would benefit in the future. To put it differently, these Chinese people expected the American sojourners to do them a favor in the future. This favor is called *renqing* (人情 in Mandarin, "favor" in direct translation). Hwang (1987) described *renqing* as follows:

> … To ordinary people, Chinese ethics gives a positive value to the obligation of reciprocation and lays heavy stress on the practice of such maxims as "Do not forget what other people have done for you" and "Do not forget the beneficence done to you, even if it is small." Supported by such rules, the benefactor can rightly look forward to a return, a reciprocal action not to be neglected by the receiver, in the future, when he, himself, is in great need (p. 957).

Focusing on the nature of reciprocity, Fan (2002) elaborated that "guanxi describes a reciprocal exchange of favors in which one is able to prevail upon another or be prevailed upon" (as cited in Garc á, 2014, p. 803). As a social code, exchanges of favors are mutually compulsory in Chinese culture. Thus Chinese people recognize it is a social obligation to return people's *renqing* after others do you a favor (Buttery & Wong, 1999). Holding this logic, Chinese people prefer to help others first in order to be in a position to anticipate repayment in the future. Kathy described this interaction as:

> You had to help Chinese out when they've done you a favor and ask you do something for them.

Coming from an individualistic culture, American sojourners indicated they valued autonomy and had negative attitudes about social obligations imposed on them. Therefore, Chinese people's expectations annoyed the American sojourners who said friendship with these Chinese people had little to do with genuine friendship. These American sojourners were generally uncomfortable about being indebted to others.

Therefore, they were cautious about being approached by or becoming involved with Chinese people. For example, Susan insisted paying for her meal when having dinner with her Chinese friends. When *guanxi* became inevitable, American sojourners would accommodate Chinese people to a small degree, as long as Chinese expectations were reasonable. For instance, Samuel and Maroon could do *guanxi* with their business partners for the sake of business. But when favors sounded ridiculous, they rejected repaying *renqing*.

In addition to reciprocal obligations of mutual favors carried by *guanxi*, American sojourners were also bothered by the material embodiment of the Chinese version of social networks. According to the American sojourners' descriptions, Chinese people who wished to establish and maintain *guanxi* with them often treated them to a fancy dinner and bought them fabulous gifts. When the price was affordable, and especially when the Chinese person was considered to be a true friend, American sojourners very frequently accommodated material manifestations. But when these debts went beyond their financial capabilities, American sojourners avoided becoming involved *guanxi* with Chinese people. As mentioned previously, Susan suggested splitting the bill with her Chinese friends when they had dinner together. Frank avoided accepting gifts from the Chinese. Kathy used her identity as an outsider in China to avoid returning material favors to Chinese people. Although American sojourners indicated they grew weary of material-embodied *guanxi* in China, they also indicated that from their perspectives, these behaviors were bound to culture, a social code rather than a dirty trick or a trap. However, *guanxi* was seen as unethical when a large amount of money was offered by Chinese people for some privileges. For example, Stacy

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mentioned that her former boyfriend, who was Chinese, used expensive gifts to establish and maintain *guanxi* with officials in the local government. In exchange, this man enjoyed many privileges that helped him escape punishment when he was found to have broken rules and laws. Berry also mentioned that some of his Chinese clients expected his company to treat them to expensive dinners for the sake of maintaining *guanxi*. From Berry's perspective, these lavish dinners were, at their root, bribes. Maroon said Chinese people who wanted to do projects with him frequently offered him bribes.

A third feature of *guanxi* was power exchange. Deriving from relationships among people, *guanxi* exists between in-group members, such as family members, friends, colleagues, business clients, and neighbors (D. Lee & Dawes, 2005; Su & Littlefield, 2001). With the emphasis on in-group members' interests, Chinese people indicate a belief that it is their duty to help in-group members who are in the same *guanxi* with them. Given the compulsory obligation to return favors, people who are on the receiving end when *guanxi* occurs must use their power to provide benefits to benefactors when asked to do so. Consequently, power shifts occur during reciprocal exchanges of favors required by *guanxi*, and become one of the most noticeable characteristics and functions of this Chinese version of social networks. The more intimate the in-group relationship, the more stable the *guanxi* is, and the more compulsory the repayment of favors is. For this reason, *guanxi* established between blood relatives is longer-lasting than that built on business activities. Further, the interests and desires of family members are given priority over those of business associates. *Guanxi* is an obligation-oriented phenomenon, according to Su and

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Littlefield (2001), and this distinguishes it from the social networking found in Western

cultures; social networking is not a situation in which repayment is viewed as

compulsory. *Guanxi* produces some outcomes of which Americans held skepticism. For

example, prioritizing relationships with family members over skilled individuals

contribute to nepotism and corruption, when powerful people create exclusive benefits

for their own family members and acquaintances (Su & Littlefield, 2001). These

behaviors are often contrary to social justice and violate rules about open and fair

competition for jobs and other resources. This favoritism (which is against federal law

in the United States) reduces organizational efficiencies that are more possible when

people are qualified for a job rather than simply being related to or acquainted with a

powerful person (Ip, 2009; Su & Littlefield, 2001). *Guanxi* rooted in corruption and

bribery is called *backdoor guanxi*, defined as using one's network of *guanxi* "to

negotiate business solutions that include personal gain for at least one of the parties

involved" (Bedford, 2011, p. 153). Entailing exchange of power for money or other

personal benefits, *backdoor guanxi* commonly occurs when one of the parties has

exclusive control of a limited resource required for the business operations of another. A

person who maintains effective control of such a resource is in a prime position to

engage in backdoor *guanxi* (Bedford, 2011). The American sojourners in this study, who

came from a culture that values individual merit and equality, expressed that *guanxi* in

China, especially backdoor *guanxi*, contradicted the idea of individual merit. They

deemed *guanxi* as negative based on the role of relationships over merit. As sojourners

who typically had limited social networks in China, some of these Americans became

victims of *guanxi* while in China. For example, Ryan was unable to get sponsorship for

a skateboard tournament because he did not have any *guanxi*, that is, he did not know

Chinese people who might sponsor him. Although these American sojourners

acknowledged that relationship-based *guanxi* existed in many countries, they indicated

it was overwhelming and deeply rooted in China. For this reason, they described

Chinese society as operating on *guanxi*. In the view of the American sojourners, these

behaviors generated by *guanxi* in China violated their own ethnical principles, such as

individual merit matters, and open competition must be fair. Therefore, American

sojourners indicated they resisted *guanxi* in general, and backdoor *guanxi* in particular,

when interacting with Chinese people.

## What Does Being Ostracized *Other* Mean?

According to social identity theory, individuals are grouped into various clusters

as a result of social categorization enacted through social comparison (Tajfel, 1974;

Turner, 1987). Consequently, people form in-groups by associating themselves with

people similar to them, and label individuals who are different from them as members

of an out-group (Tajfel, 1974, 1978, 1981, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986b; Turner,

1982). Therefore, the focus of social comparisons during the social categorization

process is to establish distinctiveness between in-group and out-group members (Tajfel,

1974). In order to maintain self-esteem, in-groups tend to positively differentiate

themselves from out-groups by devaluing and even rejecting those labeled outsiders,

especially when they perceive threats from these outsiders (Brewer, 1999; Pehrson,

Brown, & Zagefka, 2009; Wagner et al., 2012). In the context of collectivism that

highlights in-group cohesiveness, the devaluation and rejection of out-groups are more

marked. This trend was shown in the statements made by American sojourners about

their intercultural experiences in China. In addition to being exoticized and stereotyped, American sojourners in this study were also ostracized by Chinese people for their *Other*-identity. For example, they were placed outside Chinese people's social circles, physically and virtually, in the workplace and in many aspects of daily life. They were ignored when playing with Chinese people, were segregated from participating in some activities with Chinese people, and even were attacked when challenging Chinese people's ethnocentrism. American sojourners who settled in China with their families did not only encounter such ostracizing activities themselves, but also witnessed these exclusions through their children. Compared to Chinese people's exotic and stereotypical perceptions of them, these American sojourners reported that they were exposed to a more evident and stronger antipathy from the host environment, which they described as being stressed, frustrated, irritated, heart-broken and helpless. These American sojourners attributed Chinese people's behaviors to the Americans' non-Chinese appearance, which was stigmatized by the Chinese. Recognizing that appearance was unchangeable, these American sojourners stated they were continually told by Chinese people that China was not their place. Consequently, they were persistently and openly ostracized as the *Other* in China.

The exclusion of out-groups became more evident when nationalism was interwoven with intergroup relations. Among various criteria of social categorization, nationality is used by people and their in-group members to imagine a socially constructed community, which is termed *nation* (Anderson, 1991). Emerging from in-group identification with their own nation, nationalism is detrimental to positive out-group evaluations in that in-group members too often view their country as superior to

other nations and hence should be dominant (Kosterman & Feshbach, 1989). Consequently, national out-groups face devaluation and derogation in the form of prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination. The devaluation and derogation of out-groups depends on two factors: the strength of national identification and identity content (Wagner et al., 2012). When the nation of the in-group is compared with relevant out-groups, in-group members who are positively attached to their nation will devalue out-groups (Mummendey, Klink, & Brown, 2001; Wagner et al., 2012). Additionally, in-groups' national identification contributes to prejudice toward out-groups when the nation "is defined in an essentialist way, such as basing the defining features on unchangeable attributes like race or ethnicity" (Pehrson et al., 2009, as cited in Wagner et al., 2012, p. 321).

Specific to the case of China, it can be inferred that these two factors were found among Chinese people, according to American sojourners' descriptions. On one hand, Chinese people were positively attached to their own country. On the other, Chinese people ascribed the definition of being a Chinese to such essentialist features as having Chinese blood. As the result of the Chinese people's strong national identification and their essentialist definition of China, American sojourners in this study experienced more severe exclusions. They were not allowed to criticize China, even when what they said was also mentioned by Chinese people. During sports competitions, they were regarded by Chinese people as rivals who should be defeated for the pride of China. Due to China's present and previous relationships with Western countries in general and America in particular, these American sojourners became victims of Chinese people's ethnocentrism and nationalistic emotions. With their relocation to China, these

American sojourners changed from the majority in their own country to the minority in

China. This shift of power exposed them to the nationalistic feelings of majorities in

Chinese society. Therefore, they developed negative attitudes about nationalism in

China, even though many of them admitted that it occurred in many other countries in

the world. The anti-foreigner sentiment deeply entrenched in Chinese nationalism (and

nationalism generally) was described as a ridiculous mentality, attributed to groupthink,

shaped and promoted by media, schools, governments, and individuals in China. From

these American sojourners' perspectives, nationalism in China created a divide between

them and Chinese people. As a result, they were ostracized as the *Other*, which various

interviewees described as unpleasant, shocking, a feeling of helpless, unsafe, worrisome,

and terrifying.

In addition to being ostracized by Chinese people, American sojourners

ostracized themselves when they realized the seemingly insurmountable linguistic and

cultural barriers. Unlike exclusions grounded in American sojourners' non-Chinese

appearance, self-ostracizing activities were attributed to their orientation to Chinese

culture on a deeper level. These American sojourners were not forced to face the divide

between them and Chinese people. On the contrary, they sensed the existence of this

line when they did not follow Chinese social scripts. Coming to China in their 20s,

these American sojourners had not completely mastered Mandarin and thus were unable

to fully express themselves in conversations with Chinese people, and they did not fully

understanding Chinese people's culture-bound conversations. Even when they had

studied Mandarin for a long time, slang, dialects, and inside jokes remained unknown to

them. Compared to formal language courses in schools, these types of Mandarin which

occurred during Chinese people's daily lives were culture-based and context-bound. Therefore, American sojourners could only understand and acquire these slang terms, dialects and inside jokes by growing up in the target culture. For example, Susan mentioned that sometimes her Chinese friends talked about cartoons popular during their childhood. Every time conversations moved to such topics, Susan recalled she was unable to participate because had no knowledge of Chinese cartoons. Moreover, the identity emerging from speaking Mandarin was different from that shaped by American sojourners' mother language. The mismatch between the two types of linguistic identities exposed American sojourners to their differences from the Chinese. Consequently, they agreed that they were outsiders in China.

Besides language, cultural values are important criteria for social categorization. Individuals identify their in-group members in terms of cultural value fit, and distinguish themselves from out-group members via cultural value discrepancies (Schiefer et al., 2012). Elaborations of these value discrepancies mentioned above illustrate that values should be understood as a system rather than discrete elements, as Schwartz (1992, 1994) argued. Examining culture's embodiment at the level of individuals, Schwartz (2011) proposed a pair of value types–embeddedness and autonomy–to explore the formation of relationships and boundaries between an individual and a group. As a society emphasizing the embeddedness value, China stresses "the integration of individuals into a social entity with shared goals and ways of living," and supports the belief that "meaning in life comes through social relationships and identification with groups, whose goals and interests precede individual goals and interests" (Schwartz, 2011, as cited in Schiefer et al., 2012, p. 488). Therefore, young

Chinese people strive to meet homogeneous expectations from their parents and the larger society. With the emphasis on an individual's group affiliations, *mianzi* in Chinese society is collectivistic in nature. Individuals acquire *mianzi* from their groups and add *mianzi* to these groups as well. In addition to people's identification with groups, collectivistic societies that value embeddedness, including China, also put weight on various social relationships on which societies are fabricated. For this reason, *guanxi* is essential to Chinese culture as it forms "the structural pattern of the Chinese social fabric" (G. Chen & Starosta, 1997, p. 5). Influenced by Confucianism, Chinese people see repayment of favors as compulsory. Situated in the same *guanxi*, they put in-group members' interests before merit-based evaluation systems. Embeddedness is incompatible with American sojourners' values, which prioritizes autonomy. In such autonomous societies as the United States, people are encouraged to think and behave as unique individuals (Schiefer et al., 2012). American sojourners, therefore, demonstrated a preference for developing and executing their own ideas and thoughts over conforming to a unanimous way of thinking, as well as a preference for their own benefits over group interests (when those interests were in conflict). They all held the view that they were independent masters of their own lives rather than a cog in the wheel of interdependence. As a result of this divergent thinking and frequently incompatible values, Americans overwhelmingly refused to assimilate into Chinese culture, as mentioned. Uniform evaluation criteria, focus on others, collective *mianzi,* and compulsory repayment of *guanxi* also played a role in the refusal to assimilate. Perhaps the main reason was the temporary nature of sojourning generally; there was simply no long-term need for these American sojourners to assimilate.

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Another set of value types proposed by Schwartz (2011) is hierarchy-egalitarianism. As a society that accommodates high power distance, Chinese people strongly view social relations as "hierarchically structured with a certain number of people being superior while others are comparatively subordinate" (Schiefer et al., 2012, p. 488). The unequal distribution of power and status in hierarchically stratified societies like China is seen as natural and desirable (Schiefer et al., 2012; Schwartz, 2011). In societies with high power distance, people in lower social positions are required to follow orders given by superiors, specifically supervisors and clients, even when they do not wish to obey those requirements. Children must listen to and obey their parents, and it is the parents who make the major life decisions for children. Male job applicants are preferred by institutions and organizations over females. Compliance with social norms is viewed as a central requirement for establishing and maintaining harmony among subordinates and their superiors. In following these norms, subordinates protect the public image of superiors who overwhelmingly acquire their *mianzi* from power rather than merit.

Additionally, people who are lower in the social hierarchy typically exert great effort to establish *guanxi* with those holding higher positions by virtue of material embodiment, with the hope of using superiors' power to ascend the social hierarchy. Coming from a culture that holds strongly to egalitarian ideals, these American sojourners, not surprisingly, expected people to be treated as equals, indicated a strong belief in social justice, and acknowledged that people were mutually responsible for social interaction and its outcomes (Schiefer et al., 2012; Schwartz, 2011). Therefore, American sojourners typically refused to do things they did not wish to do, including

giving *mianzi* to people with more power without being respected as an equal, making friends with someone for strictly instrumental purposes, and establishing *guanxi* with more powerful people in order to obtain benefits without regard for fairness. Cultural values are highly resistant to change (E. Kramer, Callahan, & Zuckerman, 2012; Rokeach, 1968). Interviewees in this study revealed that these American sojourners did not internally embrace the Chinese cultural values described above. In these circumstances, as mentioned, the Americans ostracized themselves, adopting the label of outsiders in China, based in part on value discrepancies between them and the Chinese. Therefore, while living in China, they associated primarily with other Westerners in China or Chinese people who were more Westernized. To put it differently, these American sojourners ostracized Chinese people who were dissimilar to them on cultural values at the same time.

Living in China as out-group members, American sojourners adopted three strategies to deal with being ostracized *Other*: *accommodation*, *passive conformity*, and *refusal*, described next. When American sojourners considered Chinese cultural values as a different method of political correctness, they showed understanding and tended to accommodate these cultural values by adjusting their behaviors to converge to the social scripts of Chinese culture. For example, Mochamochi conformed to the collective decision made by her Chinese colleagues about where to have lunch because she saw this interaction pattern as a norm which was typically found among colleagues in the Chinese workplaces. Although Nick was not hungry at all, he nonetheless set aside his autonomy in order to make a concession to his Chinese friends who insisted on treating him to pizza because he knew the request was a product of his Chinese friends'

hospitality rather than instrumentality. Kathy said she was extra polite to people who were more experienced and older, because she knew it was important to respect elder teachers in Chinese culture. In terms of *mianzi*, American sojourners associated giving *mianzi* with a display of respect for the public face of others. Therefore, they tried to avoid embarrassing their Chinese friends and colleagues in front of others, and helped them protect their public image by talking to them in private and in indirect ways, accompanying them to some events, treating them to casual meals, and displaying Chinese table manners to them. Similar to *mianzi*, American sojourners accommodated material embodiments of *guanxi* between them and their Chinese friends by paying for their Chinese friends' meals and buying them reasonably priced gifts. Despite the fact that American sojourners accommodated aspects of Chinese cultural values as mentioned above, this did not mean they were assimilated into Chinese society or adopted its values. The accommodations were described by American sojourners as means of dealing with cultural differences to show respect for their Chinese hosts, and with the hope of improving social interactions with Chinese people close to them. Based on their understanding of Chinese culture, these American sojourners actively adjusted their behaviors to meet Chinese cultural expectations, as long as the accommodations did not challenge their own deeply held cultural values, and were reasonable in viewing accommodation of Chinese culture as another way of being politically correct. As the context changed, as Kevin explained, these American sojourners would not perpetuate Chinese cultural values once they returned to the United States.

When American sojourners did not view accommodation of Chinese cultural values as a version of political correctness, they often adopted a strategy of *passive*

*conformity*, considering their disadvantaged, nearly powerless position in relation to Chinese people who were inside these Americans' social circles in China. Consequently, these American sojourners had to be forced to do things against their will by their supervisors, clients, teachers, and host families, and give *mianzi* to these people who held dominant positions. For instance, Ryan passively accepted Chinese ski-board players' ignoring of his performance because he wanted to maintain his friendships with them. Otherwise, he indicated it would be very difficult to find other Chinese people interested in playing this game. If that happened, he would find it much more difficult to learn about Chinese culture and society by integrating himself into Chinese social, academic, and/or professional circles. Frank and Stacy kept their differing opinions to themselves when in the presence of their Chinese supervisors. Will pulled his stepdaughter out of public school rather than asking for the teacher to be replaced. If the Americans had not behaved in the ways just described, they often would have been punished for their lack of compliance. For example, Frank was told it was a mistake to show a variety of opinions about his boss's management style. Stacy got a low grade for questioning her Chinese teacher's capability in front of the whole class. Will's stepdaughter encountered more *Othering* from her teachers after Will bypassed the teacher and took his protest to the school principal. For *mianzi*, Sarah had to give *mianzi* to her landlord by virtue of fake compliments to make her landlord agree to help them fix problems in their apartment. Kathy and Claire tutored their supervisors' children with the concern that rejection could cause these Chinese people to lose *mianzi*. In addition to passive conformity on the interpersonal level, American sojourners were also required to comply with rules, regulations, and laws made by the Chinese

government in order to ensure the sustainability of their sojourn in China. Mark, for example, was very cautious about what he could teach in class and avoided talking about politically sensitive topics in China. Besides conformity based on unequal power distribution, American sojourners had to conform to such unchangeable realities in China as Chinese people's neglect of out-groups and emphasis on *guanxi*. Therefore, Berry, Nick, and Frank had to accept Chinese people's ignoring of traffic rules, and responded by paying more attention to personal safety when going outside. American sojourners who had the plan to work in China for a long time or had already established their businesses in China had to conform to how *guanxi* worked, because it was a prerequisite to doing business in China (Bedford, 2011; Garcá, 2014).

The third strategy utilized by American sojourners in dealing with ostracized *Otherness* was *refusal.* According to the American sojourners, when interviewed, they expressed their refusal to conform by virtue of two different tactics. One tactic was called *confrontation*. Although American sojourners were in disadvantaged, powerless positions, they chose to confront some Chinese cultural values without hesitation when the following requirements were met: (1) their original cultural values were severely challenged; (2) the conformity negatively affected their daily lives in China; and (3) confrontation would not irritate the Chinese government. Based on this, Luke prevented female ground staff working in an airport from being beaten by Chinese men, because such behavior was morally unacceptable to him. June refused to disclose her salary to Chinese people who asked her about it and told them directly that such an inquiry was inappropriate in the United States. Sarah ended a relationship with a Chinese man for his disrespectful behavior toward women. Susan and Mochamochi rejected Chinese

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people who wanted to cut in line in front of them. Growing tired of unreasonable

requirements of clients, Kevin changed his team to a different product line. Tiffany

moved out of her host family's home because she was bothered by the intervention of

her host parents in her life. Unlike their Chinese colleagues, June and Jroux motivated

their Chinese colleagues and Chinese students to think outside the box. Ignoring

China's Internet censorship, Mike purchased a VPN in an attempt to break the firewall

because he needed to establish contact with his family on Facebook.

In terms of *mianzi*, these American sojourners refused to give Chinese people

*mianzi* at the expense of their own interests. Therefore, Thomas argued with Chinese

football players when he was not allowed to participate in the game. Susan refused to

give *mianzi* when she was not treated with equal respect. Will did not like drinking

liquor, and thus politely, and routinely, rejected his Chinese clients' requests for him to

drink liquor with them. Ryan declined to give fake compliments when Chinese people

flaunted their wealth. With respect to *guanxi*, Sarah stopped being involved in this way

with her Chinese clients because she said such behavior encouraged dishonesty. Mark

refused to give his Chinese students a good grade when they offered him presents for

the sake of good *guanxi*. By the same token, Jroux reduced his communication with a

Chinese man who approached him for his own TV program rather than a genuine

friendship—using others as instruments rather than being interested in them as

individuals.

Another tactic utilized by American sojourners was *avoidance*. Because of

concerns about Chinese nationalism, American sojourners avoided engaging in conflict

with Chinese people in public, as pointed out in earlier chapters. For instance, Kevin

and Will avoided disputes with Chinese people, and Sarah stopped talking about politics or international affairs with any of her Chinese friends. Claire would rather be recognized as *laowai* than American, because the identity of being American might have exposed her to potential attacks by Chinese people. In terms of linguistic barriers, these American sojourners took less active roles in communicative interactions, as Corder (1983) argued. For example, Thomas circumvented having lunch with his Chinese classmates. With respect to value discrepancies, these American sojourners adhered to their original values when interacting with Chinese strangers. For example, they consistently prioritized individual interests and uniqueness over Chinese conformity to in-group members and homogenous social expectations. For *mianzi*, they advocated mutual respect, valued respect gained from accomplishments and merit, emphasized genuine comments, and attempted to protect individuals' public image. In a similar vein, they highlighted friendship that had nothing to do with instrumentality, devalued expensive material embodiments when making a connection to others, and praised individual merit over power relationships. On the occasions when Chinese strangers crossed the line and imposed their own values upon the sojourners, the latter took advantage of being non-Chinese to escape the need to conform to Chinese cultural values. For example, June told Chinese elderly women who inquired her about her pregnancy plans that Americans usually had babies later in life. Mochamochi and Kathy utilized their identity of being Americans to escape from doing *guanxi* with Chinese people, allowing their Chinese colleagues to assume that they did not know how to do *guanxi* as foreigners. Jack was not expected to follow Chinese customs as a foreigner to the same degree as his American-born Chinese classmates were by their Mandarin

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teachers. American sojourners kept certain physical and psychological distance from Chinese people, as discussed and explained numerous times. Not identifying themselves as in-group members with Chinese people, these Americans were not required to follow Chinese people's ways. In addition, as outsiders, they did not have the obligation to stick to the social scripts of Chinese culture.

Overall, *Otherness* generated by American sojourners' exotic appearance, along with stereotypical images, separated them from the dominant group in Chinese society by labeling them as out-group members or outsiders verbally and nonverbally. Although such separation ostracized these Americans in one way or another, the sense of being ostracized was more evidently exemplified when these American sojourners were denied access to Chinese society because of the insurmountable gulf between two groups. As elaborated previously, the gulf was formed by segregation and rejection from Chinese people. Being seen as out-group members, American sojourners were excluded from Chinese people's social circles in the workplace and in other areas of daily life. Even if they had wanted to integrate into Chinese culture, their identity of being outsiders deprived them of any possibility of being treated as equal to the national in-group. In addition to segregation, American sojourners were also rejected and even attacked as the result of Chinese people's nationalistic feelings. Due to Chinese people's segregation and rejection, these American sojourners said they felt powerless, unwanted, and unappealing, and their pain of dislocation and displacement was further accentuated. In addition to being ostracized by Chinese people, the gulf between American sojourners and the Chinese was also formed by the psychological distances between the Chinese and Americans. These distances were created in large part by American

sojourners' linguistic barrier, and cultural value discrepancies between them and the

Chinese during social interaction. If these American sojourners were labeled *Other* by

Chinese people through segregation and rejection, the Americans actively acquired the

identity of being outsiders in China, without any assistance from the Chinese people.

Having grown up outside China, the American sojourners could not keep up with

Chinese people in terms of linguistic proficiency. Given the irreconcilable value

dissimilarities, the Americans refused to be assimilated into the Chinese cultural value

system. As a consequence of double ostracization, American sojourners explained that

they did not belong in China. Ultimately, they concluded they would be permanently

ostracized, unable to escape the position of disadvantaged and powerless *Other* in China.

**CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

***Otherness* Rising From Unequal Power Distribution**

*Paradoxical Position in An Asymmetric Power Structure*

Analyses in previous chapters have illustrated that American sojourners' *Other*-identity emerged from biases, prejudices, and stereotypes held by Chinese people against out-groups. Different from many social psychologists' scrutiny of these phenomena on the individual level (Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005), this study examines these notions by embedding them in the larger social context as unequal power distribution, in which American sojourners' *Otherness* was formulated.

*Socially superior minority in China.*

Compared to immigrants coming from less developed countries and regions to the United States, Americans who relocate themselves to less developed countries and regions are frequently considered socially superior by native in-groups and hold that perception themselves (Bloch, 1998). For example, American immigrants in Israel are perceived by Israelis as "a highly desirable category of immigrants" because they are "educated and economically self-sufficient" (Bloch, 1998, p. 183). These Americans possess superior status in comparison to many other immigrants who are placed by Israelis in subordinate positions (Bloch, 1998). American sojourners were also considered socially superior in China. Due to the significance of U.S.-China and E.U.-China relations, Westerners who are sojourning in China are well taken care of, institutionally and financially. Therefore, American sojourning students in this study, especially those who had already started to work in China, did not have to deal with Chinese government's regulations and laws by themselves. Instead, institutions and

organizations the sojourners were affiliated with typically assigned specific staff to

handle visa renewal, accommodation arrangements, and similar logistics for them.

When the American sojourners complained about certain issues, they received prompt

responses to their concerns, and much more quickly than average Chinese people. For

example, June described this as a special treatment of foreigners and said she felt that

she benefited in this way and others as a foreigner in China.

> I mean in some ways, especially the U.S. and China relationship is such a big
> deal. If I were to go back to the U.S. and speak to the big news like "This
> horrible thing happen to me." I think it would be such a bigger deal. But if that
> happens to a Chinese person, especially someone who has no status, went to the
> news agency, even if a foreign one, they are gonna like "okay," you know?
> "We're not going to get involved into your business."

Additionally, higher living standards in the United States guaranteed that the

American sojourners would make a good living while in China. In contrast, sojourners

and immigrants from less developed countries and regions faced declines in their living

standards when moving back to their home countries. Moreover, American sojourners in

China earned higher wages and more benefits than their Chinese colleagues (Mo & Su,

2012). As a result of double financial guarantees provided by both the United States and

China, American sojourners living in China had fewer financial burdens than their

Chinese colleagues, who had no choice but to work hard to make a living. In this

context, American sojourners gained a sense of superiority by virtue of their sound

financial condition. As Mochamochi described, she felt privileged in China in some

ways. For example, Chinese parents had to buy incredibly expensive apartments in

school districts with high-quality elementary and middle schools. By doing so, their

children were much more likely to be accepted by these schools. Otherwise, these

Chinese parents would have had to send their children to substandard schools.

Mochamochi indicated she did not feel the same pressure because her children could go to schools in the United States when necessary. In terms of her own life in China, Mochamochi did not have as many financial worries, in large part because she was paid more than her Chinese colleagues. She did not have to find additional jobs to support her family as many of her Chinese colleagues did.

The elaborations presented above demonstrated that American sojourners acquired higher social status by virtue of their concerns being addressed as priorities, and by earning higher salaries in China. Such special treatment distinguished these Americans from average Chinese people, and placed them in a more powerful and advantageous position by endowing them with institutional and financial privileges. Given these special considerations, power was unequally distributed among these American sojourners and Chinese people. Consequently, they were considered socially superior to average Chinese people.

In addition to benefits on the micro level, the global White supremacy, on the macro level, endowed American sojourners in this study with an edge in Chinese society. Rising from White nationalism, the global White supremacy is created and maintained to defend a system of wealth, power, and privilege which is exclusively open to White people (Blay, 2011). Various dominant cultural narratives are employed to describe White power in social hierarchies as inherent to their Whiteness, and their privileged access to these symbolic resources further consolidates their dominance in social relationships with non-White individuals (Blackwood & Purcell, 2014; Bourdieu, 1985). In the end, White people's privileges are legitimized and their cultures held as the ideal representation of such notions as civilization and advancement by the global White

supremacy (Blackwood & Purcell, 2014; Blay, 2011). Thus, American immigrants' communication styles were considered to be an ideal standard in Israel (Bloch, 1998). As a consequence, these American immigrants declined to accommodate native Israelis in many ways; instead, they attempted to impose their values on Israelis by correcting and remedying the communication style of their hosts (Bloch, 1998). These attempts, not surprisingly, were regarded as condescending and patronizing by native Israelis; from the perception of the Americans, they were considered repairs of miscommunication (Bloch, 1998).

The disparity between the interpretations of American immigrants and native Israelis can be attributed to a White-European-centered worldview, which assumes "Eurocentric communicative effectiveness and competence as normative, thus locating other cultural communication styles as abnormal and marginal" (Jackson & Garner, 1998, as cited in Shin & Jackson, 2003, p. 224). Normalization of the Eurocentric communication style provided American immigrants in Israel with "a way out of being required to adapt to the host's communication behaviors," in part because the Americans' communication style was a "preferred, learned, civilized, morally superior and hence a worthier form of behavior" from the perspective of native Israelis (Blay, 2011, p. 198). Bloch (1998) attributed American immigrants' non-conformity in Israel to their social superiority. In a similar vein, American sojourners in China declined to accommodate to some Chinese communication styles based on their presumed social superiority, ascribed by the global White supremacy and the pervasive Eurocentric perspective. As Jackson and Heckman (2002) summarized, being White was a prerequisite for a social contract and this identity was rarely questioned by White people. The American

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sojourners in this study, especially the White ones, imposed their original values on Chinese people, and described many aspects of Chinese cultural values as boring, unfair, ridiculous, and fake, without questioning the validity of their own value judgments. With this view, American sojourners frequently diverged from the Chinese communication style without hesitation by virtue of such non-conformity as sticking to their own ways of doing and being, and engaging in confrontation when exposed to value discrepancies between them and Chinese people. During the process of divergence, the power was unequally distributed between American sojourners and Chinese people. The sojourners were considered socially superior, and the Chinese were placed at a lower status. As Henley and Kramarae (1991) argued,

> [H]ierarchies determine whose version of the communication situation will prevail; whose speech style will be seen as normal; who will be required to learn the communication style, and interpret the meaning of the other; whose language style will be seen as deviant, irrational, and inferior; and who will be required to imitate the other's style in order to fit into the society (pp. 19-20).

*Powerless minority in China.*

American sojourners in China acquired a sense of superiority, in large part, from their concerns or problems being prioritized as more important than the problems of native Chinese, earning higher salaries and more benefits, and normalizing American cultural values endorsed by the global White supremacy. At the same time, they were still treated as powerless outsiders in China. Coming from a racially diverse country, American sojourners were accustomed to seeing people of various skin colors in their daily lives, while, in sharp contrast, Chinese people had significantly less exposure to individuals with different racial markers. Chinese society is monolithic, overwhelmingly comprised of individuals with Han ethnicity. For Chinese people with

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little education and living in smaller cities and towns, seeing an American, or any non-Chinese person, is rare. Based on curiosity, they objectified Americans as existing for their zoo-like observation and amusement, treated them as tokens of superior social status, generalized them into a non-Chinese group under the label of *laowai*, and alienated them by emphasizing their foreignness and asking questions in accordance with their occidentalized perceptions of the United States. Insufficient direct contact with Americans also contributes to Chinese people's stereotypes of Westerners generally, and Americans, in particular. Consequently, American sojourners were fantasized as living a life desired by Chinese people, and the Chinese underestimated the linguistic and cultural competence of some of the Americans, and disgraced the Americans as coming from a different race and as promiscuous. During social interaction, American sojourners were differentiated from the mainstream society, marked as an exception in China, and distinguished as atypical and abnormal outsiders.

American sojourners were further separated when Chinese people perceived threats from them. A significant amount of research supports the idea that perceived threats play an important role in devaluation of out-groups in general and immigrants in particular (Berry, Kalin, & Taylor, 1977; Liu, 2007; Stephan, Renfro, Esses, Stephan, & Martin, 2005). Negative stereotypes as a domain of threat "serve as a basis for negative expectations regarding the behavior of members of the stereotyped group" (Liu, 2007, p. 765). As stated previously, American sojourners in China were stereotyped as imperialistic, impudent, insulting, and as trouble-making foreigners based in part on historical grievances held by Chinese people, the misbehavior of discredited foreigners, and the Chinese government's distrust of foreigners. Negative stereotypes served to

demonize American sojourners as disrespectful and untrustworthy. Indicating they felt threatened by American sojourners, Chinese people looked down on them, blackmailed them, and were suspicious of them. In addition to negative stereotypes, *symbolic threat*, as the second domain of threat (Liu, 2007), triggered Chinese people's devaluation and derogation of American sojourners, which took the aforementioned separation a step further by ostracizing non-Chinese individuals. Concerning "group differences in values, beliefs, morals and attitudes," symbolic threat is related to a national in-group's "prejudice toward different out-groups" (Liu, 2007, p. 765). American sojourners in this study were identified by Chinese people as outsiders in China based almost exclusively on their non-Chinese appearance. The *Other*-identity of the Americans symbolically threatened monolithic Chinese culture in terms of homogeneity and unity. Given that in-group favoritism was more overtly exemplified among the Chinese who tended to stick to their own social circles that were comprised entirely of co-ethnics in workplaces, in cyberspace, and at sports facilities, these Chinese people demonstrated a preference for sitting with other Chinese people at meetings, participating in online groups open exclusively to other Chinese students or colleagues, and only playing with or cheering for other Chinese players during sports activities. Due to the heightened in-group favoritism, American sojourners were frequently excluded from entering Chinese people's social and professional circles. When perceived symbolic threats escalated to confrontational forms such as protest, critique, and rivalry, Chinese people further ostracized the American sojourners in a more direct and obvious way. The third domain of threat was *realistic threat*, which "concerns threat to the political and economic power of the in-group, as well as threat to the well-being of the in-group" (Liu, 2007, p.

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764). In terms of American sojourners in this study, they were typically considered by Chinese people to pose a realistic threat especially when U.S.-China relations become tense. Because of their United States citizenship, these sojourners were typically made scapegoats by Chinese people for American government policies targeting China. In these conditions, Americans occasionally came under verbal and even physical attack by angry Chinese people.

American sojourners attributed the *Othering* to their non-Chinese appearance that prevented them from being fully accepted into Chinese society. Unlike Western countries that associate cultural identity with an individuals' duration of residence, Chinese identity is primarily defined by Chinese race (blood) and physical appearance (Liu, 2015). Against this backdrop, American sojourners explained their view that it was impossible for them to ever be accepted by mainstreamers in China because they did not look Chinese. Therefore, these Americans describe themselves as powerless outsiders when they were exoticized, stereotyped, and ostracized by the Chinese national in-group. Being a minority in China, these Americans were unable to change the status-quo in China. Their descriptions of being powerless outsiders were accentuated when they were exposed to value discrepancies between them and the Chinese. Cultural values and practices are considered to be key components that work to legitimize Chinese identity (Liu, 2015). If an individual does not hold Chinese values and beliefs, he or she will not be recognized as Chinese (Liu, 2015). Therefore, American sojourners said they stopped striving to integrate into Chinese society when they realized the value discrepancies were insurmountable. However, being a powerless minority in China meant that American sojourners were required to conform to Chinese values and practices as long

as they lived and worked in China. In order to maintain positive social interactions with Chinese people, they had to accommodate Chinese cultural emphasis on conformity, *mianzi* and *guanxi*, and saw their accommodation as a way of being politically correct in China. Compared to the divergence ascribed by their socially superior position in China, these American sojourners remained in a powerless, minority position when direct contact with Chinese people who possessed an edge in the power structure was inevitable. Otherwise, the sojourners would have been punished for their non-conformity as pointed out in previous chapters.

### *Othering Produced through Discourse*

Situated in an asymmetric power structure, socio-historically specific discourse was deployed by Chinese people to assign *Otherness* to powerless minorities, including these American sojourners. Discourse refers to a language or system of representation that makes and circulates the parameters of relevant meaning that people use to talk about a particular topic or subject (Altheide, 1996; Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005). With regard to American sojourners in China, they had no choice but to accept these Chinese acts of *Othering*, produced nonverbally and verbally. First, such nonverbal behaviors as staring and segregation made American sojourners stand out as the *Other*. Such noticeable racial markers as skin color, hair color, and eye color aroused Chinese people's attention quickly and easily. A novel experience for the curious Chinese, seeing non-Chinese people produced stares, pointing, and requests for photos, as described in earlier chapters. From the perspective of the Americans, staring robbed them of their dignity as human beings and treated them as exotic objects for the amusement of the Chinese. Moreover, American sojourners were excluded from social circles based

almost entirely on their non-Chinese identity. Seen as outsiders or out-groups, they were

not welcome to sit with Chinese colleagues, did not receive cheers from Chinese players,

were not allowed to post their messages in Chinese WeChat student groups or to

participate in events organized exclusively for Chinese people. These exclusions served

to ostracize the American sojourners and place them in the position of the *Other* in

China.

Second, ethnic labels like *laowai*, *waijiao* and *yang guizi* distinguished

American sojourners as the *Other* through generalizing, alienating, and discrediting

them. Being called *laowai* or *waijiao*, American sojourners, together with other

sojourners in China, were grouped into the broad category of non-Chinese. As a result,

factors such as race, ethnicity and nationality were blurred by the overly simplistic

generalizations conjured by *laowai* or *waijiao*. Consequently, these American sojourners

were reduced to, simply, non-Chinese, regardless of their religions, origins, or

occupations. Eventually these American sojourners were generalized into the *Other*

defined only as non-Chinese. Besides overgeneralization, *laowai* also triggered

American sojourners' sense of being alienated given the association with such words as

"foreign" and "foreigner" in America, terms considered rude and aggressive discursive

acts of alienation. Due to the bad connotations of "foreign" and "foreigner" in American

culture, *laowai* activated American sojourners' feelings of being alienated, as they

described in the interviews. *Laowai*, as a linguistic taboo, was ascribed with negative

connotations not only by Americans, but also by its association with misbehaved

foreigners in China. American sojourners disclosed that there were indeed many

foreigners in China who aroused Chinese people's antipathy because of their impudent,

arrogant, and insulting behaviors. These ill-behaved foreigners contributed almost

entirely to Chinese people's psychological distaste of all foreigners. In this situation, the

American sojourners who were well behaved explained how they were victims of

Chinese stereotypical perceptions of foreigners when they were addressed as *laowai*,

because this label lumped them with the rude, undesirable foreigners in China, and,

more importantly, discredited them as the *Other*.

Third, such expressions as "you Americans" and "you foreigners" served to

otherize American sojourners by creating a binary opposition between them and

Chinese people. For instance, Chinese people underestimated American sojourners'

ability to understand Chinese culture and Chinese issues by saying "You Americans do

not understand this." They attributed different habits and customs (e.g., drinking cold or

hot drinks, whether or not to perform confinement in childbirth) to generic differences

between Chinese and Americans by saying "You Americans are different from us."

They concluded that Americans in general were promiscuous by uttering "You

Americans are *kaifang*." American sojourners said that a line was drawn between them

and Chinese people by virtue of these labels, that this line existed in the collectivistic

mentality of the Chinese people, and that this divide between in-group and out-group

was carefully maintained. Being out-groups in China, American sojourners said it was

impossible for them to cross the divide between them and Chinese people, because the

discourse of *Othering* placed "them" and "us" into these two categories that were

mutually exclusive and in binary opposition (Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005). American

sojourners' sense of being *Other* was further accentuated by "you Americans" and "you

foreigners" when used in the context of inter-group conflict. For example, Americans

were suspected to be troublemakers when China was under potential threat from the United States. In addition, they were rejected and ostracized by Chinese people when nationalism emerged. Under these circumstances, the expression of "you foreigner" did not only create a divide between American sojourners and Chinese people, but also carried an implicit accusation of Americans that grew from negative emotions and hostility toward bullies from other countries, both actual and fictive. Against this backdrop, American sojourners were further pushed away by Chinese people as the perpetual *Other*, and, infrequently, even attacked by some Chinese individuals as a threatening *Other*.

Fourth, *directives* such as requests that otherized American sojourners through their objectification often disclosed Chinese intentions. An illocutionary speech act, a *directive* refers to a speech act designed to make the hearer perform particular actions in accordance with the speaker's intentions (Holdcroft, 1979; J. R. Searle, 1975). Therefore, requests can reveal a speaker's purpose in making a certain directive. The purpose often reflects the speaker's mental construction of the hearer. In terms of American sojourners in this study, they were frequently asked by Chinese people to take pictures of and/or with them in tourist areas. In talking to these Chinese people, American sojourners realized the former asked for pictures because they had never seen foreigners in their lives. The Chinese people wanted to record these Americans their exotic images, in order to document this big event in their lives. The local Chinese labeled these non-Chinese individuals as the *Other*, and objectified them as pieces of exotic scenery rather than treating them as human beings. Similarly, American sojourners were marked as the *Other* when they were approached by Chinese people

who wanted to befriend them or who invited them to business dinners. These invitations were initiated based on these Chinese people's expectations that they would acquire superiority from being with American sojourners, considered to be tokens of advanced culture and higher social status. Akin to objectification for exoticness, *Otherness* carved by Chinese people's admiration for the social superiority of the American sojourners otherized these non-Chinese individuals as well. They were first seen as foreign tokens to be used to enhance social superiority, rather than as people with unique personalities.

Fifth, *assertive*, another illocutionary speech act, otherized American sojourners by exposing them to prejudice, biased statements, and cultural views Chinese people firmly hold to. Assertive is defined as a speech act that commits a speaker to the truth of the propositions he/she expresses (J. R. Searle, 1975). American sojourners in this study frequently encountered assertions made by Chinese people. For example, Chinese asserted what Americans looked like, even when they had never seen an American before, based on their imagination of the Occident. Many Chinese claimed that American sojourners had limited linguistic and cultural proficiencies, and said they believed that all Americans were promiscuous and genetically different from Chinese people. Although these assertions were regarded by American sojourners as prejudiced and biased, they were firmly held by Chinese people as true depictions of Americans. Given these firmly-held beliefs, Chinese people applied these depictions to American sojourners and ascribed cultural traits carried by these assertions to these Americans, regardless of whether or not these non-Chinese individuals matched the assertions. As a minority in China, American sojourners said they felt powerless to change the mainstreamers' prejudiced and biased perceptions of them. In this context, they lost

control of their *Other*-identity, which emerged from and lived in Chinese people's

occidentalization and stereotyping of foreigners. Consequently, these American

sojourners were assigned the identity of being *Other* and were unable to change this

fictive identity, as it is held by Chinese people, and must change from within.

As a social act, discourse performs the social, political, or cultural functions

within organizations, institutions, groups, society, and culture-at-large (van Dijk, 1997).

Enmeshed in power's operation, discourse works by "suggesting particular norms as

standard, inviting people to see the world from particular viewpoints, controlling the

bodies and behaviors of people, and therefore, constructing human beings as subjects—

subjects of the power it carries" (Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005, p. 62). From the

postcolonial perspective, various identities of minority groups have been erased and

denied by majority groups through wielding the discourse of *Othering*, which suggests

particular people and their behaviors are normal, standard, and superior, and

distinguishes individuals who do not conform to these norms as deviant, abnormal, and

inferior (Bhabha, 1983, 1984, 1985; Shin & Jackson, 2003; Spivak, 1987). The

discourse of *Othering*, according to Inokuchi and Nozaki (2005), "sets up a binary

opposition between them and us" and "offers two mutually exclusive categories and so

brings a power to order one's view(s) of the *Other*, *Self*, and the relation(s) between the

two" (p. 72). In terms of American sojourners, their unique identities were reduced to

the objectified, generalized, alienated, fantasized, underestimated, discredited, and

ostracized *Other*, regardless of other demographic parameters. They were not

themselves anymore, but the *Other* in opposition to the monolithic Chinese identity.

Their differences from Chinese people, situated in an asymmetric power structure, were

rejected as being deviant, abnormal, and atypical on one hand, while being admired and seen as desirable on the other. Consequently, American sojourners' *Other*-identity represented both the discursive privilege and the oppression formulated by these paradoxical positions in a structure in which power was distributed unequally between them as a minority group and Chinese people as an overwhelming majority. To put it differently, they were both privileged *Other* and oppressed *Other* simultaneously.

## *Otherness* Derived from Fused Identity

Although American sojourners expressed their feelings of being powerless *Other*, and especially the oppressed *Other* in China, it did not mean that they could not carve their own niches in Chinese society. If fitting into the host society is defined as assimilation into the host culture, it is likely these Americans would not become a part of Chinese society simply because they are not Chinese; they cannot transform themselves into Chinese people physically and culturally. Such an assimilation follows a linear bipolar model that places sojourners/immigrants and the host culture at the two extremes along a continuum. An underlying assumption of this linear bipolar model is that negotiation between these two polar ends is a zero-sum game (E. Kramer, 2000). Specific to American sojourners in this study, the linear bipolar model would suggest the Americans uproot their American cultural identity and comprehensively adapt themselves to Chinese culture, behaviorally and psychologically. However, the accounts of the American sojourners' experiences in China have shown the impossibility of the assimilation-focused linear bipolar model that ignores factors which significantly impact intercultural communication among sojourners and immigrants' entry valance and their position in the host society's power structure, for example. *Entry valance* is

defined as the attitude or emotional and cognitive trajectory that sojourners and immigrants have as they enter a new social and/or cultural milieu, and includes these migrating individual's motives and their expectations for new habitats (E. Kramer et al., 2012). American sojourners in this study initially came to China to study abroad and some of them were still working on their diplomas at Chinese universities at the time of the interviews. In addition to their enthusiasm for Chinese culture, they were also attracted by China's rising position in global political and economic systems. Most of the Americans wanted to prepare for their future careers in the United States by accumulating a first-hand and in-depth understanding of China, or they hoped to make money in China where enormous and untapped potential markets exist. Regardless of the reason, there was no necessity for these Americans to assimilate into Chinese society, as they were short-term sojourners, rather than immigrants. Moreover, American sojourners in China were endowed with superior social status based on America's dominant place in the world and the global White supremacy. Compared to sojourners and immigrants who come from less developed countries and regions to America, American sojourners in China, as well as the American immigrants in Israel, were not considered socially inferior, and thus lacked the need or desire to adapt to the host nationals and intended to uphold certain closely held values (Bloch, 1998).

In contrast to the linear bipolar model, the two-dimensional model demonstrates that ethnic ties of sojourners and immigrants must be considered separately from their ties to the host culture (Gui et al., 2012). In other words, these two types of ties of sojourners and immigrants are considered independent from each other along two dimensions, rather than assuming a zero-sum game exists. As a result, a typology of

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intercultural contact is generated that consists of four possible consequences arising

from intercultural encounters, namely assimilation (identification with the host culture),

integration (identification with both the heritage culture and the host culture), separation

(identification with the heritage culture), and marginalization (identification with

neither culture) (Berry, 1980). Albeit recognizing more of the complexities of

intercultural communication by extending possible outcomes to four, the two-

dimensional model still places co-ethnic identification of sojourners and immigrants in

dualistic opposition to their recognition of the host culture. This binary thinking

suggests sojourners' and immigrants' ethnic identity and the host cultural identity

somehow negotiate with each other in dichotomous categories such as either/or and

us/them (Liu, 2015). In this context, sojourners and immigrants are encouraged to adapt

to the host society in order to acquire and develop a bi-cultural identity, considered to be

the optimal and ultimate goal of acculturation (Berry, 1997, 2003, 2005; Gudykunst,

1985, 1995; Kim, 1988, 1991, 2001; Ting-Toomey, 2005).

However, as described, the two-dimension model fails to capture the

complexities of American sojourners' intercultural experiences in China. Although these

Americans were exoticized, stereotyped, and ostracized as the *Other* in China, their

American cultural identity did not remain unchanged, as the two-dimension model

would suggest. When exposed to the *Otherness* ascribed by both Chinese people and

themselves, these American sojourners stopped taking some of their long-held and

unquestioned values for granted. Value discrepancies provoked more appreciation for

their original cultural values and thus motivated them to hold more tightly to these

values, as argued previously. For example, Luke appreciated more his parents' support

in giving him freedom to determine the course of his own life. Frank missed the direct communication style and lower power distance in America. Sarah valued the de-emphasis of *mianzi* and *guanxi* in American culture. Given these American sojourners' stronger identification with their original cultural values, they better understood American culture and embraced their identity of being Americans more strongly. As Mochamochi mentioned, she often saw herself as a Muslim minority in America before she came to China. After her re-location, Mochamochi gradually began to identify herself as an American first, Muslim second. It is reasonable to infer that many American sojourners re-asserted their original cultural identity and national identity from *Otherness* emerging from their social interaction with Chinese people. Compared to their *Self*-concept before moving to China, these American sojourners' *Self* was also enriched by their re-confirmation of being Americans as a result of living in China.

In addition to stronger identification with American culture, the sojourners also explained that they learned values from Chinese people, such as taking more care of in-group members, paying more attention to their feelings when making decisions, maintaining traditional customs, and being modest without bragging about their achievements. As Kevin described, paying for others was a generosity and important for Americans to learn and remember. Nick and Berry mentioned that in-group members should take better care of each other. Finally Bobby expressed that humility was a virtue in Chinese culture. Even when these American sojourners described themselves as outsiders in China forever, they still absorbed the aforementioned elements of Chinese cultural values into their cognitive schemas, and implemented these elements on a daily basis outside the Chinese context. For example, Kevin helped his father out of financial

burdens by giving him money. Nick discussed giving more advice to his children in the future in order to prevent them from wasting time. Berry showed his care for his mom by frequently buying her things. Bobby was trying to learn how to be less obnoxious. These American sojourners embraced several aspects of Chinese cultural values, a nuance not captured in the two-dimensional model in two ways. One was that while American sojourners expressed disagreement with many aspects of Chinese cultural values, this did not mean that they were not influenced significantly by their intercultural experiences in China. On the contrary, they re-asserted *Self* through gaining an enriched understanding of being Americans from their experiences of being the *Other* in China. The other aspect was associated with American sojourners' absorption of the aspects of Chinese culture as described above. Although these Americans were otherized in China, they still integrated aspects of Chinese culture into both their thinking and behaviors. American sojourners' intercultural experiences in China revealed that both the ethnic culture and the host culture are neither monolithic nor bipolar concepts as these models depict. American sojourners demonstrated they would embrace and reject either of them simultaneously. The either/or binary thinking simplistically reduces two complex culture systems to homogenous concepts which are not found in the natural world.

Both the linear bipolar model and the two-dimension model are endorsed by biculturalism that adopts a binary structure, placing ethnic ties at one pole and ties to the host culture at the other (Liu, 2015). Differences between cultures are regarded by biculturalism as problems to be managed and eliminated in order to reduce and avoid misunderstanding and conflict during intercultural communication (Xu, 2013). However,

the difference-erasing binary thinking promoted by biculturalism has been challenged

by the increasing complexities brought about by global migration and the subsequent

diverse cultural encounters that bring in intercultural relations into prominence (Liu,

2015). Against this backdrop, multiculturalism is advocated, characterized by better

understanding and incorporation of mixed-up differences (Bhatia, 2007; Geertz, 1977; E.

Kramer, 2000; Liu, 2015). In other words, intercultural encounters result in a fused

identity in the form of hybridity, which is neither the original ethnic identity nor the host

cultural identity, but something new and substantially different (Bhabha, 1990; E.

Kramer, 2000; E. Kramer et al., 2012; Liu, 2015). On one hand, these American

sojourners were labeled outsiders in large part because of their non-Chinese appearance

and American cultural values, some of which were incompatible with Chinese society.

On the other, these Americans described how they lost control of the ways things

happened in China when they were exposed to a perceived permanent divide between

them and the Chinese people. As powerless outsiders, Americans sojourners in this

study did not fit into Chinese society, did not behave or think in a Chinese way, and

subsequently concluded they would never be recognized as Chinese people. Given the

purpose of their sojourn in China, some American sojourners disclosed they felt there

was no need to fit in because they only planned to be in China for a short time. In this

context, American sojourners behaved as outsiders in China in an appropriate way.

When cultural differences were brought to light, the Americans attempted to

accommodate Chinese cultural values, norms, rules, and customs as long as the

differences were negotiable. Describing themselves as guests in China, these American

sojourners considered accommodation to be a way to show respect for the Chinese, and

avoided imposing their own values on Chinese people. When cultural differences were irreconcilable, the Americans passively accepted the reality in China and indicated they would not and should not believe they were eligible to make changes in China. The disqualification, according to their own explanation, came from their identity of being a powerless out-group in China as well as their limited understanding of China. Being powerless outsiders in China implied that the sojourners had no right to interfere in Chinese people's lives. Given their incomplete understanding of China, the Americans did not know whether they understood China well enough to know how or if to change it. In addition to these disqualifications, American sojourners also expressed concern about their involvement in Chinese people's business. They had to abide by the laws and rules in China. Otherwise, they would be deported for their non-compliance by authorities representing institutions where they studied, organizations where they worked, or even the Chinese government that controls sojourners in China. Additionally, American sojourners were often accused of making trouble, were sometimes taken advantage of, and even attacked by Chinese people based on stereotypical perceptions of foreigners and their nationalism, as described previously.

American sojourners explained how they expanded their own horizons by living in China as the *Other*. Gadamer (1991) defined *horizon* as "the range of vision that includes everything that can be observed from a particular vantage point" (p. 301). As socialized human beings, individuals have been endowed with certain horizons by their historically-determined situatedness that is composed of their cultures and traditions. From these horizons, individuals gain understanding and develop interpretations. For instance, American sojourners highly valued autonomy, uniqueness, independence, and

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equality resulting from their socialization in American culture, which emphasized individualism and low power distance. It should be posited that individuals' horizon of understanding is not static, but dynamic. By virtue of interaction with others individuals continually expand their horizons by acquiring their interlocutors' horizons. With the expansion of horizons, individuals continually fuse new elements into their identity, which is considered to be historically-affected consciousness, grounded in horizons (E. Kramer, 2000). During this process, migrating individuals expand their horizons and gain additional perspectives from their experiences, in this case, of being the *Other* in China, and described looking more deeply at themselves, the United States, and China. Consequently, they asserted who they were by reflecting about American identity as compared to Chinese identity. Taking into account these reflections, they also fused certain aspects of Chinese culture into their own cognitive schemas. Eventually, these American sojourners said they realized the insignificance of *Self,* thereby reducing their America-centered ideology, attributable at least in part to relocating to a different culture and being positioned as the *Other*. Also due to being regarded as the *Other*, these American sojourners said they further increased their tolerance for cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic, and other differences after living in China. American sojourners' experiences in China revealed that niches and differences of migrating individuals should be embraced rather than eliminated; migrants were often a key, as shown, to making life meaningful (Callahan, 2004; E. Kramer, 2000, 2011; E. Kramer et al., 2012). Although American sojourners described losing control as outsiders in China, they nonetheless exerted direct control of how they lived their lives in China. They decided to fit into Chinese society as American sojourners, and to exert great effort to bring

changes to China by using their uniqueness to develop untapped markets in this country. For example, Bobby and Sarah were working to promote American football culture and frisbee culture in China. Will was providing intercultural business consulting services to Chinese companies. Dylan was appearing on Chinese television programs as an American singer who performed Chinese folk songs. As cultural fusion theory describes, sojourners and immigrants combine elements of two or more cultures in unpredictable ways to generate an integrated identity with numerous dimensions by fusing their past horizons with contemporary ones in an additive and integrative way (Callahan, 2004; E. Kramer, 2000, 2011; E. Kramer et al., 2012). Fusion implies the resulting identity, in this case, is dynamic and distinct from any of the parts (horizons) and larger than the sum of those parts. This growth is described by E. Kramer (2013) as an accrual and integral process rather than a zero-sum or binary situation.

### *Otherness* Emerging from Social Categorization

Previous elaborations suggest that identity results from the dialectics of the *Self* and the *Other*, the two complementing and informing each other rather than being placed in a dichotomous structure (Hecht, 1993; Xu, 2013). Different from sojourners and immigrants who migrate from the East to the West, American sojourners' *Otherness* was defined by Chinese culture. Accordingly, they were simplistically reduced to the non-Chinese *Other* by virtue of social comparison, which distinguished these Americans as the out-group, and Chinese as the national in-group. The process of generating social divisions between out-group/them and in-group/us is termed *social categorization*, which is communicative in nature (Hecht et al., 2005; Tajfel, 1981). The *Other*-identity emerged from individuals' psychological group distinctiveness made

salient by various communicative actions, as described by CTI (Hecht et al., 2005). Borrowing ideas from social identity theory, identity theory, and post-modernism, CTI's author explained that identity was formed, maintained, and modified by individuals' confirmation or validation of social categories relevant to them through communicative social interactions on multiple layers, and then, in turn, acted out and exchanged in communicative actions (Hecht et al., 1993; Hecht et al., 2005). Therefore, Hecht concluded that communication could not be separated from identity, because the former externalized the latter (Hecht et al., 2005).

Drawing upon the theoretical framework lent by CTI, it has been argued here that American sojourners were separated as the out-group in China by social categorization that uses racial and ethnic markers as primary categorizing criteria. As the result of this social categorization, American sojourners' sense of *Otherness* was nurtured through such communicative processes as exoticizing, stereotyping, and ostracizing, as elaborated in previous chapters. This process was described by Hecht et al. (2005) as internalization of communication as identity, which was accomplished in at least two ways. One was to create a social phenomenon's symbolic meanings and establish, exchange, and entrench these meanings through social interaction (Hecht et al., 2005). Specific to this study, symbolic meanings of American sojourners' *Otherness* were created and exchanged through Chinese people's exoticizing, stereotyping, and ostracizing of them. Given their non-Chinese appearance, these American sojourners were exoticized by Chinese people in three ways. The first was termed *objectification*, which was using these non-Chinese individuals as targets for observation, scenery for amusement, and status tokens. The second involved binary thinking that simplistically

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reduced American sojourners to "you foreigners" as opposed to "we Chinese," in spite of individual distinctions in terms of culture, race, or ethnicity. In this way, the American sojourners were put into a monolithic non-Chinese identity that was highly homogenous and oversimplified. The third was *alienation,* exclusively grounded in foreignness, and often based on physical characteristics alone. Placing these American sojourners on a high pedestal, Chinese people projected their occidentalized assumptions of America and typical Americans onto these non-Chinese individuals. These symbolic meanings generated by Chinese people's exoticizing of American sojourners were further transformed into the Chinese stereotypic perception of the Americans within the global structure, in which the power was unequally distributed between the Western world, dominated by the United States, and Eastern countries, such as China. Under this circumstance, American sojourners were fantasized as individuals who had traits desired by Chinese people on one hand, and underestimated as linguistically and culturally incompetent *Other*, and even physically discredited *Other* on the other. When the prejudice and bias toward American sojourners escalated into distrust, antipathy, and hostility based on Chinese in-group favoritism and nationalism, these non-Chinese individuals felt they were further ostracized as the *Other* after being separated from the mainstreamers as the exoticized *Other* and stereotyped *Other*.

In addition to phenotypical differences captured by Chinese people from the inside out, American sojourners also perceived their dissimilarities with the Chinese on the levels of linguistic proficiency and cultural values from the outside in. Learning Mandarin as a second language, American sojourners said they often felt that there were always communication barriers between them and Chinese people because they could

not fully explain their thoughts and ideas when speaking Chinese. Additionally, these

American sojourners said they felt that they were associated with a different linguistic

identity that emerged from using Mandarin. This Mandarin-speaking identity, from

these American sojourners' descriptions, was different from their *Self*, which was

fostered in American culture. In addition to obstacles in expressing themselves,

American sojourners also became aware of their limited cultural literacy in deciphering

Chinese people's culture-bound references in conversation. Because the Americans did

not grow up in China, these sojourners did not understand social artifacts such as a

classic Chinese cartoons from 20 years ago, for example, and Chinese jokes which were

also closely interwoven with childhood events. As a result of limited cultural literacy,

American sojourners often could not actively participate in communication with

Chinese people even when they spoke Mandarin. The divide between American

sojourners and Chinese people seemed even more insurmountable when it came to

value discrepancies. Coming from the highly individualistic American culture rather

than the collectivistic culture of the Chinese, American sojourners highly valued

independence over interdependence, heterogeneity over homogeneity, individual desires

and goals over in-group interests, self-managed public image over other-focused *mianzi*,

and voluntary social networking and genuine friendship over compulsory reciprocal

exchange of favors required by *guanxi*. Resulting in large part from Americans'

emphasis on egalitarianism, these sojourners preferred equality to hierarchy, acquisition

of *mianzi* by merit rather than power, and moving along the social ladder via individual

achievement rather than establishment of *guanxi* with wealthy and powerful people. As

a result of value discrepancies, American sojourners ostracized themselves as the *Other*

in China, as it was not possible for them to change their original core values. To put it differently, these American sojourners ostracized Chinese people who were dissimilar from them on cultural values. The aforementioned social interactions between American sojourners and Chinese people, as Hecht et al. (2005) described, endowed the Americans living in China with such symbolic meanings as exoticness, fantasy, linguistic and cultural incompetence, and stigma. During these social interactions, American sojourners' distinctness was "constituted and then interpreted as a form of alienness or inferiority that diminishes or makes difficult equal membership in the wider society or policy" (Modood, 2011, p. 44). Eventually, they were perceived as the exoticized, stereotyped, and ostracized *Other* by both Chinese people and by themselves.

Another way to internalize communication as identity refers to the confirmation or validation of individuals through social interactions when they are placed in socially recognizable categories (Hecht et al., 2005). As argued above, American sojourners were categorized as the *Other* in China. During the subsequent social interactions with Chinese people, American sojourners asserted their *Other*-identity. First they ignored and weakened the *Other*-identity by ignoring and being ignored by Chinese people as the exoticized and stereotyped *Other*. For example, these American sojourners tended to ignore transient exoticizing behaviors enacted by Chinese strangers, such as addressing them as *laowai* or staring at them in public. When these American sojourners were in a good mood, transient exoticizing behaviors were ignored more readily. In addition to the strategy of ignoring, American sojourners avoided becoming involved in disputes with Chinese people in public. The sojourners attributed this avoidance to their identity of being a psychologically discredited *Other* in China, explaining that they would be

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stigmatized by Chinese people as trouble makers if they did engage in a dispute. In the name of self-protection, these Americans attempted to lead Chinese people to ignore their stigmatized attributes by virtue of avoidance.

Second, American sojourners appropriately behaved as the *Other* through keeping their opinions to themselves, describing themselves as unqualified and unable to change the way things happen in China. For instance, they accommodated the label of *laowai* and Chinese people's requests to take photos with them, because these Americans said that the involved Chinese individuals were curious and amazed, given their limited exposure to Westerners, to see foreigners, and had no bad intentions toward them. These curiosity-driven and long-standing behaviors could not be changed during a short time. For this reason, American sojourners tended to accommodate these Chinese people by accepting the label of *laowai* and agreeing to take pictures with them because the Americans said they knew these were unchangeable realities in China. No matter where they went, they would be perceived as *laowai* and would draw Chinese people's attention. American sojourners' accommodation is sometimes transformed into *compensation* when offering a different opinion would activate Chinese people's stereotypes of them. *Compensation* refers to strategies used in an attempt to "get along well with the perceiver by tuning their behavior to the perceiver's behavior and rendering the flow of conversation as smooth as possible" (Klein & Snyder, 2003, p. 177). In order to avoid insulting or irritating their Chinese spouses, friends, and bosses, American sojourners engaged in compensation to ensure social interactions with these Chinese individuals were pleasant and non-argumentative, as preferred by both groups. Compensation might be further escalated into *passive conformity* when American

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sojourners were expected to follow the Chinese way in some situations involving Chinese cultural values that they did not recognize. In this context, these American sojourners had to be compelled to do things against their own will, considering their disadvantaged and powerless position in relation to the dominant group.

Third, American sojourners normalized their *Other*-identity through displaying Mandarin proficiency. Being seen as non-Chinese individuals, American sojourners were stereotyped as linguistically incompetent *Others* in China. These stigmatized individuals refused to follow the script of such non-stigmatized group members as Chinese people, and insisted on imposing their own agendas of presenting *Self* (Klein & Snyder, 2003). As a result, these American sojourners dispelled some Chinese people's exoticizing behaviors and prevented the Chinese from continuously alienating them by speaking fluent Mandarin. In order to get rid of Chinese people's concerns aroused by linguistic barriers, they showed their Mandarin proficiency to ensure Chinese people that language was not an insurmountable barrier during social interaction. When being told that Americans did not understand certain issues or topics, they requested their Chinese friends provide further explanation to help them understand more about the language and the culture. In addition to balancing their positions, creating more equity during conversations with Chinese people, American sojourners also rejected being regarded as inferior non-Chinese individuals who could be taken advantage of. Therefore, they displayed their Mandarin ability, even including some dialects to protect themselves from blackmailing and fraud enacted by Chinese people who sometimes take advantage of non-Chinese individuals with no or limited Mandarin proficiency.

Fourth, American sojourners made good use of their *Other*-identity to gain

access to advantages and opportunities in China. By virtue of their Western appearance, interpreted by many as socio-cultural superiority, American sojourners obtained jobs such as advertisement models for many Chinese companies. With a different cultural background, they could develop untapped markets such as frisbee, American football, and intercultural consulting in China, and made friends more easily with Chinese people obsessed with American culture. Conversely, they could be more easily welcomed by Chinese people as exotic non-Chinese individuals who were interested in participating in Chinese culture, such as singing Chinese folk songs and speaking Chinese dialects. In addition to their uniqueness carved into Chinese society, American sojourners also utilized their *Other*-identity to avoid conforming to some Chinese behaviors. For example, they could reject Chinese people's inquiries into private information, such as salary and pregnancy plans, by saying that such behaviors were inappropriate to discuss in American culture. They also escaped the pressure to accumulate wealth in China, given most were economically privileged. Finally, they were not expected to perform *guanxi* building or *mianzi* giving because they were assumed to be incapable of accomplishing these activities as outsiders in China.

In sum, American sojourners' *Other*-identity entailed specific expectations. From the Chinese perspective, these non-Chinese individuals were categorized as exotic, and were stereotyped, and stigmatized. Influenced by their expectations, Chinese people otherized American sojourners through objectification, generalization, alienation, fantasy, underestimation, discrediting, segregation, and rejection. In the opinions stated by the American sojourners, their *Other*-identity implied that they would never be fully accepted by Chinese society based on their marked phenotypical and cultural

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distinctiveness. As a result, they created and maintained psychological distance from mainstream society by ignoring, weakening, accommodating, normalizing, and utilizing their *Other*-identity. Hence, the *Other*-identity was internalized from social interactions between American sojourners and Chinese people, as well as externalized to these groups by such communicative and discursive acts as non-verbal cues, ethnic labels, dualistic expressions of "you American" versus "we Chinese" directives, and assertions elaborated previously.

## Theoretical Implications

### *Chinese Identity Re-Constructed by Describing the Other*

Influenced by biculturalism, intercultural exploration of sojourners' and immigrants' identity as the *Other* is described as abnormal, deviant, uncivilized, alien, marginal, and incompetent (Hegde, 1998; Shin & Jackson, 2003; Xu, 2013). This unitary view of identity, which is embedded in intercultural contexts and mainly focuses on the *Self* or the host cultural identity, has been rejected by dialogic theorists who confirm "the very possibility and capacity to have consciousness is based on the understanding of Otherness" (Xu, 2013, p. 384). Without the *Other*, the *Self* is incomplete because the two are interdependent (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984, 1986). The *Self* "becomes itself only in reference to the Other" (Xu, 2013, p. 385), and in any case, talking about the *Other* is also always talking about the *Self*. "Becoming cognizant of the Other through representation (language or visual images) is crucial in the construction of one's identity" (Coward & Ellis, 1977, as cited in Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005, p. 62). Therefore, the meaning of *Other* lies in the reconstruction of the *Self* in an asymmetric power structure in which the *Otherness* is imposed and inscribed in a

hegemonic way (Shin & Jackson, 2003).

Through describing American sojourners' *Other*-identity, this study reconstructed Chinese identity by providing an answer to the question: What is Chinese? Generally speaking, being Chinese is associated with Chinese blood and cultural values. As Liu (2015) observed, Chinese people considered themselves to be Chinese because they looked like Chinese and held Chinese values and beliefs. The blood-centered ascription is called *jus sanguinis*, which takes blood as the determinant of citizenship (Brubaker, 1992). Using Germany as an example of a *jus sanguinis* country, Brubaker (1992) argued that the qualification of blood descent did not only apply to Germans born within Germany, but also extended to ethnic Germans born and living elsewhere. Being governed by the principle of *jus sanguinis*, children at birth are automatically citizens when the parents are citizens, regardless of their place of birth. The understanding of nationhood based on the *jus sanguinis* principle is described by Brubaker (1992) as ethnocultural and differentialist, because it conferred citizenship to ethnic German immigrants rather than non-German immigrants. The *jus soli* principle, adopted by France, the United States, Australia, and others, relates to a state-centered and inclusive national identity (Brubaker, 1992; Liu, 2015). Individuals are ascribed citizenship by the *jus soli* principle according to their place of birth. Therefore, French citizenship accrues to all people who are born in France, regardless of descent. Compared to *jus sanguinis*, the *jus soli* has a much stronger element of territoriality.

Previous studies (Brubaker, 1992; Castles & Davidson, 2000; Faist, 2000) associated *jus sanguinis* with an ethnic-centered, exclusionist national identity, embodied and expressed by Chinese people's understanding of being Chinese.

Individuals are considered and accepted as Chinese as long as they have yellow skin, black hair, and black eyes. Even if they are American-born Chinese, they are still expected to know about the Chinese culture, grasp Mandarin, and conform to Chinese customs. Therefore, Mochamochi did not express her dislike of some Chinese cultural values in front of her relatives residing in China, because her non-conformity would be interpreted as betrayal of her Chinese blood. By the same token, Jack mentioned that his Asian American classmates who were learning Mandarin at a Chinese university were expected by Chinese teachers to conform to collectivism and high power distance. If they did not conform, they would encounter intolerance from the Chinese. On the contrary, American sojourners who did not look Chinese could escape expectations because their non-Chinese appearance eliminated the possibility of being recognized as part of the Chinese culture. Against this backdrop, American sojourners who did not have Chinese phenotypic features were categorized as out-group members or outsiders during social interaction with Chinese people. They were exoticized, stereotyped, and ostracized as the *Other* by Chinese society. To put it differently, they encountered rejection from the mainstream society as a result of their non-Chinese phenotypic traits. Due to the *jus sanguinis* principle adopted by Chinese people, American sojourners said they felt they would never be fully recognized as Chinese, because having a Chinese appearance was an essential requirement for being Chinese. Mochamochi, for example, would be identified as Chinese by the mainstream society because of her Chinese appearance. During subsequent social interaction, such Asian Americans as Mochamochi would confront Chinese people's expectations related to having Chinese ethnicity and blood. When value discrepancies between these Chinese-looking

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American sojourners and Chinese people were brought to light, the former would be accused of abandoning their Chinese ethnicity and betraying their Chinese blood when they refused (or were unable due to lack of knowledge) to conform. So these Asian American sojourners' non-conformity would expose them to the rejection from the mainstreamers, even though they were initially accepted as Chinese. De-emphasis on roles played by territory and boundary in shaping identity contributed to exclusion and rejection triggered by the *jus sanguinis* principle not only of American sojourners in China, a disadvantaged minority group, but exclusion and rejection also existed in America where these Americans were in the dominant position. Maroon and Bobby mentioned that Chinese students applied such binary thinking of in-group and out-group, governed by the *jus sanguinis* principle to the United States as well. Although these Chinese students were a minority in the United States, they would still address their American classmates as *laowai*. Their deployment of this ethnic label reflected their ethnocentric perception of *Self*, placing Chinese ethnicity at the center and distinguished other identities as peripheral.

Embedded in social interaction with American sojourners who were prone to *jus soli* ascription, Chinese people did not only otherize these Americans as outsiders and an out-group in China, they also re-constructed their own identity of being Chinese. As a monolithic concept, the Chinese identity is defined by both Chinese blood and cultural values. In order to be recognized as Chinese, individuals must first look Chinese, and then must behave in accordance with Chinese cultural values. Failure to meet either of these requirements is frequently followed by exclusion and rejection from mainstream society. Therefore, the Chinese identity is determined on two levels: one is phenotype,

and the other cultural values. In addition, Chinese identity becomes most evident when it is in opposition to the Occidental *Other*, in part because identity emerges from differences. However, Chinese people have fewer opportunities to construct and re-construct their Chinese identity through comparing and contrasting with people who are racially and ethnically different from them, because Chinese society is overwhelmingly of Han ethnicity. When the Occidental *Other* steps into their lives, Chinese people have a chance to establish their Chinese identity through otherizing these individuals from the Occident. Similar to European countries' Orientalism described by Said (1979), Chinese people are providing a system of knowledge about the Occident that is called Occidentalism. Various discourses are deployed by Chinese people to describe the Occident and thereby put it in the position of the *Other*. Through exoticizing, stereotyping, and ostracizing American sojourners as the *Other*, Chinese people defined their own Chinese identity as the *Self* that had nothing to do with the non-Chinese blood or cultural values. Then the Chinese identity was further normalized and legitimized as orthodox by Chinese people by objectifying, generalizing, alienating, underestimating, discrediting, excluding, and rejecting such non-Chinese individuals as the American sojourners in this study. Consequently, two concepts emerged. One was a unitary concept of Chinese as "us/*Self*" and the other a monolithic idea of foreigners as "them/*Other*." As Inokuchi and Nozaki (2005) contemplated, "the Self is, in part, constituted vis- à-vis the Other-somebody not us, somebody whom one cannot identify with" (p. 62).

### Racism as the Nature of Othering in China

*Othering* inherently involves making racial distinctions (Inokuchi & Nozaki,

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2005). Enmeshed in unequal power distribution, racism is regarded as crucially relevant to the asymmetry of power in social relations (Thompson, 1988; van Dijk, 1991). Specific to inter-racial or inter-ethnic communication, the previously elaborated discourse of *Othering* is believed to contribute to the (re)production of racism (Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005; Wodak & Reisigl, 2015), in part, because the othered group (them) is placed on the powerless and disadvantaged position compared to the dominant group (us) that possesses an edge in the same power structure. For instance, Black people are subject to White domination demonstrated when they are described as unintelligent as opposed to intelligent White people, and Muslims suffered from discrimination globally due to Islamophobia generated in large part by negative news reports (Modood, 2005b). As a result of racism enacted by discourse, such minority groups as Black people and Muslims are otherized as aggregates of unwanted and even dangerous individuals.

Drawing on the theoretical articulation of Modood (1996, 1997, 2005a, 2005b, 2011), it can be argued that American sojourners were otherized by a new racism, "based upon cultural differences, upon the natural preference of human beings for their own cultural groups, and the incompatibility between different cultures" (Modood, 1997, p. 154). Different from phenotype-centered racism that attributes the existence of cultural traits to phenotype (Miles, 1989), the new racism involves racialized images of specific groups which are not "so extensively linked to physical appearance" (Modood, 2005b, p. 7). Such cultural motifs as language, family structures, cuisine, and religion can expose minority groups to the exclusion, harassment, and discrimination inflicted by majority groups against them (Modood, 2005b). Racism on this level is termed *cultural racism*, and it is grounded in certain vilified cultural attributes that serve as the

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basis for discrimination and hostility. These cultural traits are associated with antagonistic, demeaning stereotypes (Modood, 2005b, 2011). Therefore, Modood (1996, 1997, 2005a, 2005b, 2011) argued that new racism was composed of two steps: the first step was color/phenotype racism and the subsequent step cultural racism that was also built on phenotype.

The discourse of *Othering* the American sojourners encountered in China exposed them to both color/phenotype racism and cultural racism simultaneously. Color/phenotype racism is also called biological racism, and refers to "the antipathy, exclusion and unequal treatment of people on the basis of their physical appearance or other imputed physical differences" (Modood, 1997, p. 155). Based on biological theories that distinguish inferior races from superior ones, color/phenotype racism ascribes certain cultural traits to genetic differences and visible physical forms by virtue of biological racialization (Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005; Miles, 1989; Modood, 1997, 2005b). American sojourners encountered color/phenotype racism in two ways. One was color/phenotype racism enacted by Chinese people by virtue of such expressions as "you Americans are physically different from we Chinese." As elaborated in the stereotyped *Other* description in earlier chapters, American sojourners were thought to be much stronger than Chinese people. Therefore, it was taken for granted by the Chinese that such different living habits as drinking cold water and childbirth confinement were attributed to the physical superiority of American sojourners. Although being placed in a superior position, American sojourners explained they still felt they were exposed to racism because they were assumed to be genetically different from Chinese people. Another way for American sojourners to encounter

color/phenotype racism was associated with their experiences of detecting discrimination against Black people. For example, June's Chinese colleague told her that he did not want to touch his English teacher's hand because this teacher was a Black woman. Moreover, June's other Chinese colleagues said that it would hurt their business if they put images of Black people on their English-teaching application. During the interview, Will showed the investigator a video in which a Black man was transformed into an Asian man after being thrown into a washing machine. He directly expressed his antipathy against this racist video in the interview. Claire said that Africans were "unacceptable" in China. And Thomas mentioned that his friend, who was an African American woman, was mistaken for a prostitute. Discourses embedded in social interaction depicted Black people as dirty, unattractive, scary, and an unacceptable racial group, vilified almost entirely as a result of their skin color.

Following color/phenotype racism, some cultural attributes that are part of the physical identification process function as the basis of hostility, in part, because "a set of antagonistic or demeaning stereotypes based on alleged or real cultural traits" (Modood, 2011, p. 45). Racism fostered on this level is labeled *cultural racism*, which is also built on color (Modood, 2005a). Compared to color/phenotype racism, individual defects are attributed to culture rather than biology (Modood, 2005b). In other words, cultural differences are the root of cultural racism (Modood, 2005b, 2015). Stigmatized cultural attributes that trigger cultural racism are considered "signs of a deep psychology, as signs of a spiritual inheritance rather than a biological heredity" (Balibar, 1991a, p. 24). Compared to color/phenotype racism, American sojourners, especially those with white faces, encountered cultural racism more than other forms in China.

Being classified as an out-group in China, American sojourners were not expected by Chinese people to be fluent in Mandarin, which was considered exclusive to the Chinese. Similarly, these Americans were not expected to know about Chinese culture, given their outsider status in China. Additionally, they were stereotyped as promiscuous, discredited as troublemakers, and excluded as unwelcome outsiders in China. Consistent with cultural racism, these social interactions were initiated and enacted by Chinese people based on their assumption that these Americans were not Chinese. As Balibar (1991a) formulated, the absence of Chinese looks worked as a sign to trigger Chinese people's deep psychology that framed as impossible the idea that non-Chinese people would be capable of grasping Mandarin and understanding Chinese culture and history. In this context, American sojourners' Western appearance functioned as a marker of their cultural defects, rather than being biologically determined. Modood (2005b) warned that "one can have racism without nationalism, and nationalism without racism, but their combination can be lethal" (p. 8). This study revealed that cultural racism against American sojourners in China could escalate to xenophobia among Chinese people when nationalism was present. The Americans were ignored, suspected, rejected, excluded, and occasionally attacked by Chinese people, in part, due to the fusion of their past and present collective memories that rested on their particular histories and social structures. Balibar (1991b) argued that nationalism was a primary determinant of the broad structure of racism, which constituted the fictive ethnicity of a given nation. In order to defend the fictive ethnicity inscribed by a collective psychology, national in-groups exclude and even attack specific out-groups. This defense is enacted "[first as] a network of phantasies and second through discourses and

behaviors" (Balibar, 1991b, p. 49).

Racism is discussed far less in China than in the West (Y. Cheng, 2016). Current elaborations of China-relevant racism tend to position Chinese as victims of racism enacted by Japan and Western countries, or argue that racism as a Western concept is only associated with modernity in the West (Y. Cheng, 2016). Products of these assumptions include beliefs that China is immune to racism, and that racism is rooted in the Western world. Further, an introduction to the notion of racism and filtering that notion into explorations of ethnic issues in China is discredited as catering to Western academia (Y. Cheng, 2016). Additionally, the Chinese government denies the existence of any form of racism in China, and publically advocates multi-ethnicity in propaganda touting political unity originally formulated in Mao's era (Hung, 2014). However, racism does exist in China; it is a global and historical phenomenon (Y. Cheng, 2016; Keevak, 2011; Modood, 1997). As demonstrated in this study, antipathy against Chinese people's exclusion and their rejection of such non-Chinese individuals as American sojourners has taken shape and spread among various diasporas in China. Against this backdrop, Chinese people, in general, especially those of Han ethnicity, did not realize the nature of their subconscious *Othering* of non-Chinese individuals. The subconscious *Otherness*, as Balibar (1991a) illustrated, lies in Chinese people's deep psychology. This psychology is grounded in Chinese unitary racial and ethnic understanding, ascribed both by their long-held dominant position as majority in a monolithic society, and their specific place within the global racial hierarchy, constructed in large part by the West (Y. Cheng, 2016; Keevak, 2011).

*Ethnocentric Perspective Possessed by the Other*

As emic research, this study was an exploration of American sojourners' interpretations of their intercultural experiences in China. Although there are no right-and-wrong answers in emic studies, actors who provide answers may expose blind spots or be deluded on some issues, because their actions are overwhelmingly based on what is salient and important for them (Kottak, 2006). In other words, actors are limited by their perspective in emic studies. Specific to American sojourners, their emic angle, which was presented in previous chapters, also revealed their ethnocentric perspective. This phenomenon is labeled by the investigator as *mutual ethnocentrism*, occurring during intercultural communication. The term *ethnocentrism* was defined by Sumner (1906) as holding the view that one's ethnic group was the best, the center of everything, and the group to which all other groups were compared and evaluated. As a result of ethnocentrism, one group believes they are superior to their out-groups and thus condemn these outsiders (Sumner, 1906). As a result, ethnocentrism becomes one of the most important concepts in intergroup relations studies focusing on in-group bias, considered to be "the laboratory analogue of real-world ethnocentrism, an important concept in intergroup relation studies" (Tajfel & Turner, 1986a, p. 13). Therefore, Tajfel (1982) claims that "Sumner (1906) was the first to use …[ethnocentrism] … with …ingroup and outgroup" (p. 7).

This study illustrated in numerous ways Chinese people's *Othering* of American sojourners stemmed from Chinese ethnocentrism. The *jus sanguinis* attribution held by Chinese people had prompted them to distinguish these Americans living in China as the *Other* by using labels such as *laowai*, and "you Americans." In using certain

discourse, the sojourning individual was positioned in a certain location within the social structure from which he/she viewed and interpreted the world (Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005). For this reason, the discourse that put emphasis on American sojourners' non-Chineseness revealed Chinese people's self-centered perspective, that contributed to the ostracizing of these Americans as out-group members, or outsiders, and exposed them to new racism in China. However, ethnocentrism is a two-way process. American sojourners also judged Chinese people from their American perspectives when they became victims of Chinese ethnocentrism. This mutual ethnocentrism was delineated by Bloch (1998) in her study that described American immigrants' intercultural experiences in Israel. The term *freier* was commonly used by the Israelis to refer to people who conformed to the rules and took people at their word (Bloch, 1998). Considering the fact that these people were seen as losers in Israel, the expression *freier* was endowed with a negative connotation from the Israelis' perspective and was typically used to separate non-Israelis from mainstream society (Bloch, 1998). Nevertheless, the negative connotation of the term was removed by American immigrants in Israel, who instead were proud to take this label, viewing it as a symbol of their respect for and pursuit of order in a chaotic society (Bloch, 1998). Unlike the Israelis who took disobeying rules and orders for granted, American immigrants condemned such behaviors in dealing with authorities, describing them as wrong and backward when compared to their Western standards (Bloch, 1998). Danet (1989) asserted that individuals from the Middle East, North Africa, and socialist nations in other places tended to adopt methods such as bribes, barter, and networks of patronage to deal with authorities, but these methods were most frequently deemed

unconventional, or worse, by Western standards. As a result, American sojourners attempted to uphold their respect for and pursuit of order, and, therefore in their view, made efforts to correct the Israelis' behaviors (Bloch, 1998). Such remedial attempts made by American sojourners were interpreted by the Israelis as condescending, in large part because the Americans attempted to impose their values upon the Israelis (Bloch, 1998).

Miscommunication emerging from mutual ethnocentrism partially disclosed the Eurocentric perspective held by many American sojourners. This perspective, according to Shin and Jackson (2003), assumed "Eurocentric communicative effectiveness and competence is normative, thus locating other cultural communication styles as abnormal and marginal" (p. 224). Discrepancies in interpretations given by host nationals and sojourners arising from their unique, differing perspectives were found in this study as well. Similar to the term *freier*, the label *laowai* was a distinctively indigenous and highly common phrase in contemporary China. As American sojourners in this study described, if you were a Western sojourner in China, you were likely to hear the term *laowai* frequently, which surfaced in almost every interview conducted for this study. From the Americans' perspectives, *laowai* denoted the identity of being outsiders in China by making their foreignness more salient than other features. Based on its association with the word *foreign* via translation, *laowai* was considered by these American sojourners to convey a negative meaning in that it was rude to describe people as "foreign" in American culture. Akin to *laowai*, such expressions as *wai guoren* and "you American" garnered similar comments from American sojourners, although they confided that these two were a bit more acceptable than *laowai*. American

sojourners' interpretations of these ethnic labels reflected their positions in the world, and overall notions about effectively managing racial and ethnic issues. Their caution was formed by their American perspective that was grounded in American history and culture. When they heard Chinese people address them by their outsider identity or nationality, they automatically applied the knowledge they had accumulated in the context of their own culture to explain Chinese people's behaviors and the motives behind them. However, it was highly possible that many Chinese people did not intend to imply any bad connotations when using these labels. They were just too accustomed to referring to others according to their social identities emerging from social categories such as occupations, titles, and origins of place. Y. Cheng (2016) attributed this Chinese way of addressing others to collectivism's impacts on Chinese people, who preferred to rely on group categories rather than on unique individuality to address others. In a similar vein, American sojourners used Western standards to judge some Chinese cultural values. For example, Americans indicated they could not bear the intense care shown by Chinese people toward them and felt their autonomy was challenged. They could not accept Chinese people's judgment on the changes of their weight, for example. American sojourners' reactions were deeply embedded in the American culture that valued independence and advocates forgiving and affirming attitudes toward people's bodies. However, from the Chinese perspective, individuals sometimes said it was their obligation to make sure their friends were well looked after. In terms of pointing out somebody's weight change, it was feasible to be associated with these Chinese people's hidden assumption that "you are living a good life recently."

Therefore, it can be argued that American sojourners otherized Chinese people

from their ethnocentric perspective, at the same time they were otherized in China. As a result of ethnocentrism, prejudice is generated and is believed to be closely linked to specific individual's interpretation (Gadamer, 1991). These prejudiced pre-agreements are affected by individuals' situation in history; this history influences interpretations by providing them a particular horizon, which endows them with a particular perspective, but limits it as well (Gadamer, 1991). Individuals could not escape from their limited perspectives inscribed by their original cultures, Gadamer (1991) said, because they constituted their horizon of a particular present. Therefore, people could continue to gain new horizons by interacting with a variety of people and testing their prejudices in the future (Gadamer, 1991). Eventually, people's understanding and interpretation of a certain event or phenomenon is the product of fusion of the past and the present horizons. Specific to American sojourners in China, it is true that they could not escape their ethnocentrism, but they had realized their limited and unitary perspective more or less before coming to China. Study abroad exposed these Americans to their *Other*-identity, and at the same time, expanded their horizons. Based on their expanded horizons, these American sojourners realized their insignificance in the world, became clearer about the meaning of being Americans, reconsidered American culture in profound ways, and adopted some Chinese perspectives. Eventually, they integrated their *Other*-identity into their *Self*-concept in an additive manner, and fostered a global citizenship, characterized by an understanding of one's *Self* in the world and concern for others, without being bound by group boundaries (Tarrant, Rubin, & Stoner, 2014).

## Concluding Remarks

### *Limitations of the Study and Future Directions of Research*

This study is limited; three of these limitations are discussed below. First, this study has limited geographical and demographical coverage. Ideally American sojourners would come from both big cities and remote areas. In addition to Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, and Guangzhou, other cities on lower tiers or in remote areas (e.g., Chengdu, Shenzhen, Harbin, and Kunming) are also destinations of Americans in China. However, financial constraints, lack of a social network, and limited time prevented gathering data in these cities. In addition to this geographic limitation, this study is also limited in demographic diversity. For example, American sojourners who have lived in China for a long time, especially those with Chinese spouses, should be recruited to add to the diversity and richness of their long-term intercultural experiences in China. American sojourners who do not come to China to study abroad should also be included. For example, many Americans who came to China before the establishment of the People's Republic of China (P.R.C.) in 1949 came to China for their belief in Communism and hoped to help China fight against Japan and the *Kuomintang* (KMT) in succession. When China joined the World Trade Organization, an increasing number of Americans transferred or were assigned to branch offices in China. Frequently moving with their spouses and children, these Americans overwhelmingly had no Mandarin proficiency. With strong enthusiasm for Chinese culture, some Americans exerted great effort to assimilate into the host culture by limiting the time spent interacting with their co-ethnics, speaking Mandarin all day, and learning traditional Chinese skills. Given the constraints mentioned above, accessing these American

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sojourners was not possible. Future studies should focus on the impacts of such factors as geographic distribution, length of sojourn, purposes of sojourn, and intercultural marriage on American sojourners' *Other*-identity because these factors had been found to influence these Americans' interpretation of their intercultural experiences in China.

A second limitation lies in underrepresented non-White ethnicities. The sample in this study is appropriate for providing valuable insights into *Otherness* experienced by American sojourning students in China. Yet, the majority of American sojourners in this study were White Americans who possessed high status in China. Compared to privileged White Americans in China, African Americans could encounter more discrimination, segregation, and rejection from the Chinese people, as some white American sojourners disclosed in previous chapters. For example, some participants shared their African American friends' experiences in China. They were rejected by some Chinese taxi drivers for rides, banned by some Chinese graphic designers from appearing on advertisements, and refused by an educated Chinese person for a hand-shake. These ostracizing behaviors, according to the White American sojourners' descriptions, were attributed to the Chinese people's negative attitude toward individuals with darker skin colors, especially those who are black. As Y. Cheng (2016) argued, Chinese people self-positioned themselves inferior to white people and superior to black people in the whole global system of White Supremacy. Consequently, many Chinese people ostracize blacks, even without realizing the nature of their actions. As victims of color/phenotype racism implemented by the Chinese, African Americans may feel more powerless than their white compatriots in China. Surprisingly, Chinese racism targeting black people was exclusively disclosed by White Americans. The only two

African Americans in this study did not mention anything in this regard. It is possible that they were unwilling to talk about their unfair treatment by some Chinese people in front of a Chinese investigator. Under this circumstance, the lack of African Americans' self-reported experiences on racism in China can set a direction for the future research, which should focus on how African Americans and members of other, non-White ethnic groups, are otherized in China.

A third limitation is rooted in the nature of an emic study. This study was conducted from an emic angle with the hope of developing a comprehensive picture of American sojourners' intercultural experiences in China. As emic research, this study is focused on the ways in which American sojourners described their thoughts, their perceptions of their experiences, and their interpretations of these experiences. Salient themes that emerged from interviews and served as the foundation of this study were grounded in interviewed American sojourners' ideas about issues they considered important and their perspectives about events occurring during their time in China. As illustrated earlier, such a perspective is ethnocentric in nature, a normal condition given everyone is controlled by his or her horizon. In this context, it is important to explore what Chinese people think about their behaviors that otherized American sojourners. Future studies should involve interviewing Chinese people about their interpretations of their interactions with American sojourners. A subsequent comparison of those findings with this study would likely be useful in detecting consistencies and incongruities between these two perspectives, with the hope of better overcoming intercultural communication barriers and enhancing the quality of intercultural encounters.

*Practical Suggestions*

As intercultural communication research focused on sojourners' *Other*-identity emerging from intercultural encounters, this study did not include to any great degree ideas related to ways in which China, especially Chinese universities and other education institutions, might deal more effectively with the *Othering* of sojourners. However, it is possible to identify some urgent needs to improve China's communication with the rest of the world. Liu (2007) argued that smooth and constructive intercultural communication was based on reciprocal attitudes of both the ethnic minority and the majority group members; the absence of such attitudes "may hamper the realization of a positively diverse and equal society" (p. 770). However, mainstream Chinese may not be "well-prepared to accept or adjust to various changes in their lives brought about by the immigrant population" to the same degree as sojourners and immigrants are–the sojourners and immigrants are already aware of the need to adjust to the host countries before arriving (Liu, 2007, p. 770). This argument is supported by this study, which claimed that China had not fully realized the necessity of adjusting its communication style to sojourners in China. Therefore, the following suggestions are offered, with the hope of facilitating intercultural communication among sojourners and Chinese people.

First, intercultural communication training is necessary for universities and other institutions that are the first stop for sojourners in China. It is strongly recommended that Chinese teachers and staff working in educational organizations, for example, take intercultural communication courses that focus on the limitations of individuals' own perspectives and offer accurate illustrations of Americans and American culture. In

doing this, it is hoped that Chinese people will realize their bias and prejudice at work

when they judge American sojourners, and come to more accurate conclusions about

Americans and other out-groups based on both self-reflection and learning new

information. Additionally, courses about Chinese culture are also recommended to

complement the intercultural communication trainings just mentioned. During the

interviews, it was revealed that some miscommunication between American sojourners

and their Chinese teachers was attributed to the teacher's inability to accurately explain

Chinese customs. After consulting Chinese professors in the field of cultural

anthropology, the professors indicated the lack of sufficient understanding of their own

culture was not uncommon among Chinese teachers. Courses that address cultural

artifacts such as *mianzi* and *guanxi* should be learned by Chinese teachers and others

involved in welcoming sojourners, for example, with the hope of reducing

miscommunication during intercultural encounters.

Second, ethnic labels such as *laowai*, *wai guoren* and "you Americans" should

be avoided by Chinese teachers, staff, and others who have direct contact with

American students, sojourners, and immigrants. As described above, American

sojourners said they had negative feelings about these labels because of their emphasis

on these Americans' identity as outsiders or out-group members in China. As powerful

social acts, these terms served to separate American sojourners from mainstream society,

and ostracized them as an abnormal, atypical group. However, it is highly possible that

Chinese people who used these labels did not intend to imply any derogatory

connotations of the terms, nor did they intend to separate or deride the sojourners. In

order to reduce miscommunication, counter-discourse or alternative narratives "are

needed to reconstruct identity of the *Self* through cultural practices while rejecting the ambivalence and hybridity of the other *Self*" (Bhabha, 1983, 1984, 1985, as cited in Shin & Jackson, 2013, p. 226). For example, such forms of address as *guoji xuesheng* (国际学生 in Mandarin, "international students" in direct translation) and *meiguo xuesheng* (美国学生 in Mandarin, "American students" in direct translation) are ideal terms because they de-emphasize the generalized *Other*.

Third, intergroup cooperation, given the global nature of our world, should be advocated on campuses everywhere. This study has shown that segregation deepens misunderstandings between American students and Chinese students. In contrast, intergroup cooperation reduces intergroup bias (Gaertner et al., 1999; Gaertner, Mann, Dovidio, & Murrell, 1990). Specific to the American students in China, project-based courses should be encouraged by Chinese universities that have study abroad programs. Chinese teachers should actively engage in mixing students of different nationalities together, helping them to overcome intercultural communication barriers, and guiding them on accommodating one another. Outside the classroom, group-based competitions could be organized from time to time on campus. With each group composed of students from different countries, it is hoped that the attractiveness of each side will be enhanced, and intergroup bias reduced in the process of their preparation for these competitions as a group. With regard to communication channels on campus, it is strongly recommended that one official channel, one open to both Chinese and Americans, is adopted and maintained by Chinese universities that admit American sojourning students. Students from both countries can work together to improve this channel over time, and to discuss ways to solve miscommunication arising from

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intercultural encounters and other issues.

A hundred years ago, Du Bois predicted "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line" (as cited in Modood, 2015, p. 23). One hundred years later, such an interpretation of racism still sheds light on interracial conflicts and riots globally manifested by friction between racial, ethnic, and national groups, including racial violence in the United States, refugee and immigrant problems in the European Union, and contemporary Islamophobia that exists in France, Britain, the United States, and elsewhere. For a long time, the divide between racial and ethnic groups has been concealed barely under the surface illusion of equality advocated by Western democracies. Some forms of verbal *Othering* are prohibited by law in the United States, however, the *Othering* by virtue of non-verbal actions and even institutional policies are still prominent in many situations. The 2016 presidential election in the United States, and the refugee crisis in the European Union rip the veil off racial and ethnic inequality. People otherize each other in aggressive ways, sometimes to the point of vilification and rejection. Terrorism attacks launched by ISIS are associated with the *Othering* of Muslims globally that contributes to contemporary Islamophobia, as mentioned. Against this backdrop, it is undeniable that *Othering* impairs intercultural and international relations among racial, ethnic, and national groups. As Liu (2007) claimed, "the presence of visible multicultural symbols (e.g., ethnic shops) alone is not necessarily an indicator of a true multicultural society unless there are mutual acceptance and equal societal participation of all cultural groups" (p. 771). With increasing numbers of people sojourning in China, representing a variety of nationalities, and coming for study, work, and other purposes, it is more urgent than ever that China face head on the *Othering* of

sojourners, fully realize its detrimental effect on China's communication with the rest of the world, and rapidly remedy problems exacerbated by otherizing sojourners.

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**Online Consent to Participate in Research**

**Would you like to be involved in research at the University of Oklahoma?**
I am Yang Liu from the Department of Communication and I invite you to participate in my research project entitled Integral Perception of China and Self: American Students' Intercultural Experiences in China. This research is being conducted in China. You were selected as a possible participant because you are qualified for the criteria of this research project which focuses on intercultural experiences of American students in China. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study.

**Please read this document and contact me to ask any questions that you may have BEFORE agreeing to take part in my research.**

**What is the purpose of this research?** The purpose of this research is to explore how American students make meaning of their intercultural experiences in China.

**How many participants will be in this research?** About 40 American students who have been in China for at least six months will take part in this research.

**What will I be asked to do?** If you agree to be in this research, you will take part in a 15-minutes survey first and then a follow-up individual interview which will last for one to two hours. All interview questions attend to your intercultural experiences in China and they have been reviewed to ensure the cultural appropriateness.

**How long will this take?** Your participation will take one or two hours, depending on your willingness to share your intercultural experiences.

**What are the risks and/or benefits if I participate?** There are no risks and no benefits from being in this research.

**Who will see my information?** In research reports, there will be no information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be stored securely and only approved researchers and the OU Institution Review Board will have access to the records.

**Do I have to participate?** No. If you do not participate, you will not be penalized or lose benefits or services unrelated to the research. If you decide to participate, you don't have to answer any question and can stop participating at any time.

**Who do I contact with questions, concerns or complaints?** If you have questions, concerns or complaints about the research, contact me at (+86)18611012230 or vivian.liu@ou.edu. You can also contact my advisor, Dr. Eric Kramer at (405) 325-3111 and kramer@ou.edu.

You can also contact the University of Oklahoma – Norman Campus Institutional Review Board (OU-NC IRB) at 405-325-8110 or irb@ou.edu if you have questions about your rights as a research participant, concerns, or complaints about the research and wish to talk to someone other than the researcher(s) or if you cannot reach the researcher(s).

Please print this document for your records. By providing information to the researcher(s), I am agreeing to participate in this research.

**I have read the above information.**
☐ I agree to participate
☐ I do not want to participate

This research has been approved by the University of Oklahoma, Norman Campus IRB
IRB Number: 5547        Approval date: 09/29/2015

Please enter the pseudonym you prefer to use during the research (Pseudonym will be used to link your response to our subsequent interview. So please carefully pick up a pseudonym which cannot be related to your real name.)

Please enter the scheduled interview date (mm/dd/yy)

How old are you?

What's your gender?
☐ Male
☐ Female

How long have you been in China? (for example: 3 years)

Which city are you living now?
☐ Beijing
☐ Shanghai
☐ Nanjing
☐ Ningbo
☐ Others

What is the nature of your study in China?
☐ Participation in exchanges between U.S. and China
☐ Full-degree study (i.e. enrollment in a BA, MA, or PhD program)
☐ Chinese language courses taken in China
☐ Dual and joint-degree programs between U.S. and Chinese institutions

☐ Others

What is highest educational level you have attained?
☐ Bachelor
☐ Master
☐ Ph.D
☐ Others

What is your major?

|  |
|---|

What is your current status?
☐ I am still a student
☐ I have already started to work in China

What is your job in China?

|  |
|---|

**Self-direction—Action** (Abbreviation: SDA) is defined as freedom to determine one's own actions. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:

▫ It is important to him (her) to make his (her) own decisions about his (her) life;
▫ Doing everything independently is important to him (her); Ÿ
▫ Freedom to choose what he (she) does is important to him (her).

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Self-direction--Action is like you before you came to China?

|  | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SDA-Freedom to determine one's own actions | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Self-direction--Action is like you right now?

|  | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SDA-Freedom | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

| | to determine one's own actions | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Self-direction--Action is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SDA-Freedom to determine one's own actions | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**Self-direction—Thought** (Abbreviation: SDT) is defined as freedom to cultivate one's own ideas and abilities. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:     Ÿ
▫ Being creative is important to him (her);
▫ It is important to him (her) to form his (her) own opinions and have original ideas;
▫ Learning things for himself (herself) and improving his (her) abilities is important to him (her).

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Self-direction--thought is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SDT-Freedom to cultivate one's own ideas and abilities. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Self-direction--thought is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | | like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SDT-Freedom to cultivate one's own ideas and abilities. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Self-direction--thought is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SDT-Freedom to cultivate one's own ideas and abilities. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**Stimulation** (Abbreviation: ST) is defined as excitement, novelty and change. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:
▫ He (she) is always looking for different kinds of things to do;
▫ Excitement in life is important to him;
▫ He (she) thinks it is important to have all sorts of new experiences;

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Stimulation is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ST-Excitement, novelty and change | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Stimulation is like you right now?

| | Not like me at | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | all | | | | | like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ST-Excitement, novelty and change | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Stimulation is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ST-Excitement, novelty and change | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ |

**Hedonism** (Abbreviation: HE) is defined as pleasure and sensuous gratification. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:
▫ Having a good time is important to him (her);
▫ Enjoying life's pleasure is important to him (her);
▫ He (she) takes advantage of every opportunity to have fun.

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Hedonism is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HE-Pleasure and sensuous gratification | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Hedonism is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HE-Pleasure and sensuous gratification | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Hedonism is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HE-Pleasure and sensuous gratification | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ |

**Achievement** (Abbreviation: AC) is defined as success according to social standards. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:

- He (she) thinks it is important to be ambitious;
- Being very successful is important to him (her);
- He (she) wants people to admire his (her) achievement.

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:

(1) How much that person who holds the value of Achievement is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AC-Success according to social standards | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Achievement is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AC-Success according to social standards | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Achievement is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AC-Success according | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| to social standards | | | | | | |

**Power--Resources** (Abbreviation: PR) is defined as power through control of material and social resources. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:
▫ Having the feeling of power that money can bring is important to him (her)
▫ Being wealthy is important to him;
▫ He (she) wants people to admire his (her) achievements

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Power-Resources is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PR-Power through control of material and social resources | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Power-Resources is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PR-Power through control of material and social resources | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Power-Resources is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PR-Power through control of material and social | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ | ❍ |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| resources | | | | | | |

**Power-Dominance** (Abbreviation: PD) is defined as power through exercising control over people. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:

- He (she) wants people do to what he (she) says;
- It is important to him (her) to be the most influential person in any group;
- It is important to him (her) to be the one who tells others what to do.

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Power-Dominance is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PD-Power through exercising control over people | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Power-Dominance is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PD-Power through exercising control over people | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Power-Dominance is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PD-Power through exercising control over people | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**Face** (Abbreviation: FA) is defined as security and power through maintaining one's public image and avoiding humiliation. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:

▫ It is important to him (her) that no one should ever shame him (her);
▫ Protecting his (her) public image is important to him (her);
▫ He (she) wants people always to treat him (her) with respect and dignity.

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Face is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FA-Security and power through maintaining one's public image and avoiding humiliation | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Face is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FA-Security and power through maintaining one's public image and avoiding humiliation | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Face is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FA-Security and power through maintaining | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| one's public image and avoiding humiliation | | | | | |

**Security-Personal** (Abbreviation: SP) is defined as safety in one's immediate environment. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:
▫  He (she) avoids anything that might endanger his (her) safety;
▫  His (her) personal security is extremely important to him (her);
▫  It is important to him to live in a secure surrounding.

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Security-Personal is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SP-Safety in one's immediate environment | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Security-Personal is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SP-Safety in one's immediate environment | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Security-Personal is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SP-Safety in one's immediate environment | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**Security- Societal** (Abbreviation: SS) is defined as safety and stability in the wider society. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:
▫  It is important to him (her) that his (her) country protect itself against all threats;

- □ He (she) wants the state to be strong so it can defend its citizens;
- □ Having order and stability in society is important to him (her).

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Security-Societal is like you before you came to China?

|  | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SS-Safety and stability in the wider society | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Security-Societal is like you right now?

|  | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SS-Safety and stability in the wider society | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Security-Societal is like Chinese people around you?

|  | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SS-Safety and stability in the wider society | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**Tradition** (Abbreviation: TR) is defined as maintaining and preserving cultural, family or religious traditions. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:
- □ It is important to him (her) to maintain traditional values or beliefs;
- □ Following his family's customs or the customs of a religion is important to him (her);
- □ He (she) strongly values the traditional practices of his (her) culture.

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Tradition is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TR- Maintaining and preserving cultural, family or religious traditions | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Tradition is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TR- Maintaining and preserving cultural, family or religious traditions | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Tradition is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TR- Maintaining and preserving cultural, family or religious traditions | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**Conformity-Interpersonal** (Abbreviation: CI) is defined as avoidance of upsetting or harming other people. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:
▫ It is important to him (her) to avoid upsetting other people;
▫ He (she) thinks it is important never to be annoying to anyone;
▫ He (she) always tries to be tactful and avoid irritating people.

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Conformity-Interpersonal is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CI-Avoidance of upsetting or harming other people | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Conformity-Interpersonal is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CI-Avoidance of upsetting or harming other people | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Conformity-Interpersonal is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CI-Avoidance of upsetting or harming other people | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**Conformity-Rules** (Abbreviation: CR) is defined as compliance with rules, laws and formal obligations. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:
▫ He (she) believes he (she) should always do what people in authority say;
▫ It is important to him (her) to follow rules even when no one is watching;
▫ Obeying all the laws is important to him (her)

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Conformity-Rules is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CR- Compliance with rules, laws and formal obligations | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Conformity-Rules is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CR- Compliance with rules, laws and formal obligations | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Conformity-Rules is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CR- Compliance with rules, laws and formal obligations | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**Humility** (Abbreviation: HU) is defined as recognizing one's insignificance in the larger scheme of things. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:
▫ He (she) tries not to draw attention to himself (herself);
▫ It is important to him (her) to be humble;
▫ It is important to him to be satisfied with what he has and not to ask for more.

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Humility is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like | Not like | A little | Moderately | Like me | Very |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | me at all | me | like me | like me | | much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HU- Recognizing one's insignificance in the larger scheme of things | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Humility is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HU- Recognizing one's insignificance in the larger scheme of things | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Humility is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HU- Recognizing one's insignificance in the larger scheme of things | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**Benevolence—Dependability** (Abbreviation: BD) is defined as being a reliable and trustworthy member of the in-group.  A person who holds this value has the following portraits:
▫    It is important to him (her) to be loyal to those who are close to him (her).
▫    He (she) goes out of his (her) way to be a dependable and trustworthy friend.
▫    He (she) wants those he spends time with to be able to rely on him (her) completely.

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:

(1) How much that person who holds the value of Benevolence-Dependability is like you before you came to China?

|  | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BD-Being a reliable and trustworthy member of the in-group | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Humility is like you right now?

|  | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BD-Being a reliable and trustworthy member of the in-group | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Benevolence-Dependability is like Chinese people around you?

|  | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BD-Being a reliable and trustworthy member of the in-group | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**Benevolence—Caring** (Abbreviation: BC) is defined as devotion to the welfare of in-group members. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:
▫ It is very important to him (her) to help the people dear to him;
▫ Caring for the well-being of people he (she) is close to is important to him (her);
▫ He (she) tries always to be responsive to the needs of his (her) family and friends.

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Benevolence-Caring is like you before you came to China?

|  | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BC-Devotion to the welfare of in-group members | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Benevolence-Caring is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BC-Devotion to the welfare of in-group members | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Benevolence-Caring is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BC-Devotion to the welfare of in-group members | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**Universalism--Nature** (Abbreviation: UN) is defined as preservation of the natural environment. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:
▫ He (she) strongly believes that he (she) should care for nature;
▫ It is important to him (her) to work against threats to the world of nature;
▫ Protecting the natural environment from destruction or pollution is important to him (her).

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Universalism-Nature is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UN-Preservation of natural environment | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Universalism-Nature is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UN-Preservation of natural environment | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Universalism-Nature is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UN-Preservation of natural environment | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**Universalism—Tolerance** (Abbreviation: UT) is defined as acceptance and understanding of those who are different from oneself. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:
▫ He (she) works to promote harmony and peace among diverse groups;
▫ It is important to him to listen to people who are different from him;
▫ Even when he disagrees with people, it is important to him to understand them.

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Universalism-Tolerance is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UT-Acceptance and understanding of those who are different from oneself | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Universalism-Tolerance is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UT-Acceptance and understanding of those who are different from oneself | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Universalism-Tolerance is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UT-Acceptance and understanding of those who are different from oneself | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**Universalism—Concer**n (Abbreviation: UC) is defined as Commitment to equality, justice and protection for all people. A person who holds this value has the following portraits:
▫ Protecting society's weak and vulnerable members is important to him;
▫ He (she) thinks it is important that every person in the world have equal opportunities in life;
▫ He (she) wants everyone to be treated justly, even people he doesn't know.

Please read each description aforementioned and indicate:
(1) How much that person who holds the value of Universalism-Concern is like you before you came to China?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UC-Commitment to equality, justice and protection for all | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

| people | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

(2) How much that person who holds the value of Universalism-Concern is like you right now?

| | Not like me at all | Not like me | A little like me | Moderately like me | Like me | Very much like me |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UC-Commitment to equality, justice and protection for all people | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

(3) How much that person who holds the value of Universalism-Concern is like Chinese people around you?

| | Not like them at all | Not like them | A little like them | Moderately like them | Like them | Very much like them |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UC-Commitment to equality, justice and protection for all people | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

## Appendix B: An Example of Intercultural Changes Table

| Not like me (them) at all | Not like me (them) | A little like me (them) | Moderately like me (them) | Like me (them) | Very much like me (them) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

**A**

| Category | Value | Intercultural Changes | Other Chinese |
|---|---|---|---|
| Hedonism | Hedonism | 4 to 3 | 3 |
| Conformity | Conformity-Rules | 5 to 3 | 3 |

▫ *Hedonism: Pleasure and sensuous gratification*
▫ *Conformity -Rules: Compliance with rules, laws and formal obligations (Rules)*

**B**

| Category | Value | Intercultural Changes | Other Chinese |
|---|---|---|---|
| Self-direction | Self-direction-Action | 6 to 5 | 2 |
| | Self-direction-Thought | 6 to 4 | 2 |
| Stimulation | Stimulation | 4 to 2 | 3 |
| Achievement | Achievement | 4 to 3 | 6 |
| Security | Security-Personal | 5 to 4 | 5 |
| Universalism | Universalism—Tolerance | 5 to 6 | 2 |

▫ *Self-direction: Freedom to cultivate one's own ideas and abilities (Thought); & Freedom to determine one's own actions (Action)*
▫ *Stimulation : Excitement, novelty and change*
▫ *Achievement: Success according to social standards*
▫ *Security—Personal: Safety in one's immediate environment*
▫ *Universalism-Tolerance: Acceptance and understanding of those who are different from oneself*

**C**

| Category | Value | You | Other Chinese |
|---|---|---|---|
| Power | Power-Resources | 3 | 6 |
| | Face | 5 | 6 |
| Security | Security-Societal | 2 | 5 |
| Tradition | Tradition | 4 | 6 |
| Conformity | Conformity-Interpersonal | 6 | 3 |

| Humility | Humility | 5 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Benevolence | Benevolence—Dependability | 4 | 2 |
| | Benevolence—Caring | 6 | 5 |
| Universalism | Universalism--Nature | 4 | 2 |
| | Universalism—Concern | 5 | 1 |

▫ *Power: Power through control of material and social resources (Resources) & Security and power through maintaining one's public image and avoiding humiliation (Face)*

▫ *Security—Societal: Safety and stability in the wider society*

▫ *Tradition: Maintaining and preserving cultural, family or religious traditions*

▫ *Conformity-Interpersonal: Avoidance of upsetting or harming other people*

▫ *Humility: Recognizing one's insignificance in the larger scheme of things*

▫ *Benevolence: Devotion to the welfare of in-group members (Caring); & Being a reliable and trustworthy member of the in-group (Dependability)*

▫ *Universalism-Nature: Preservation of the natural environment*

▫ *Universalism-Concern: Commitment to equality, justice and protection for all people*

**D**

| Category | Value | You | Other Chinese |
|---|---|---|---|
| Power | Power-Dominance | 2 | 2 |

▫ *Power: Power through exercising control over people (Dominance)*

## Appendix C: Informed Consent Before Interview

### Signed Consent to Participate in Research

**Would you like to be involved in research at the University of Oklahoma?**
I am Yang Liu from the Department of Communication and I invite you to participate in my research project entitled Integral Perception of China and Self: American Students' Intercultural Experiences in China. This research is being conducted in China. You were selected as a possible participant because you are qualified for the criteria of this research project which focuses on intercultural experiences of American students in China. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study.

**<u>Please read this document and contact me to ask any questions that you may have BEFORE agreeing to take part in my research.</u>**

**What is the purpose of this research?** The purpose of this research is to explore how American students make meaning of their intercultural experiences in China.

**How many participants will be in this research?** About 40 American students who have been in China for at least six months will take part in this research.

**What will I be asked to do?** If you agree to be in this research, you will take part in an individual interview which will last for one to two hours. All interview questions attend to your intercultural experiences in China and they have been reviewed to ensure the cultural appropriateness.

**How long will this take?** Your participation will take one or two hours, depending on your willingness to share your intercultural experiences.

**What are the risks and/or benefits if I participate?** There are no risks from being in this research. Each participant will be financially awarded for their participation.

**What do I do if I am injured?** If you are injured during your participation, report this to a researcher immediately. Emergency medical treatment is available. However, you or your insurance company will be expected to pay the usual charge from this treatment. The University of Oklahoma Norman Campus has set aside no funds to compensate you in the event of injury.

**Will I be compensated for participating?** You will be reimbursed for your time and participation in this research. A gift card worth 100 RMB will be provided at the end of the interview.

**Who will see my information?** In research reports, there will be no information that will make it possible to identify you without your permission. If you want to report names or use direct quotes or attribution to individuals, retain contact information, you must include all appropriate check-offs under Waivers of Elements of Confidentiality.

Research records will be stored securely and only approved researchers and the OU Institution Review Board will have access to the records.

You have the right to access the research data that has been collected about you as a part of this research. However, you may not have access to this information until the entire research has completely finished and you consent to this temporary restriction.

**Do I have to participate?** No. If you do not participate, you will not be penalized or lose benefits or services unrelated to the research. If you decide to participate, you don't have to answer any question and can stop participating at any time.

**Will my identity be anonymous or confidential?** Your name will not be retained or linked with your responses <u>unless you specifically agree</u> to be identified. The data you provide will be retained in anonymous form unless you specifically agree for data retention or retention of contact information at the end of the research. Please check all of the options that you agree to:

I agree to being quoted directly.                              ___ Yes ___    No
I agree to have my name reported with quoted material.      ___Yes ___      No
I agree for the researcher to use my data in future studies.   ___Yes ___      No

**Will my personal records be accessed?** If you approve, your confidential records will be used as data for this research. The records that will be used include filed notes, interview transcript and audio recording. These records will be used for the following purpose(s): (1) transcription and (2) data analysis.

I agree for my records to be accessed and used for research purposes.___Yes ___   No

**Audio Recording of Research Activities** To assist with accurate recording of your responses, interviews may be recorded on an audio recording device. You have the right to refuse to allow such recording without penalty.
I consent to audio recording.                          ___Yes            ___ No

**Will I be contacted again?** The researcher would like to contact you again to recruit you into this research or to gather additional information.
_____  I give my permission for the researcher to contact me in the future.
_____ I do not wish to be contacted by the researcher again.

**Who do I contact with questions, concerns or complaints?** If you have questions, concerns or complaints about the research or have experienced a research-related injury, contact me at (+86) 18611012230 and <u>vivian.liu@ou.edu</u>. You can also contact my advisor, Dr. Eric Kramer at (405) 325-3111 and <u>kramer@ou.edu</u>.

You can also contact the University of Oklahoma – Norman Campus Institutional Review Board (OU-NC IRB) at 405-325-8110 or <u>irb@ou.edu</u> if you have questions about your rights as a research participant, concerns, or complaints about the research and wish to talk to someone other than the researcher(s) or if you cannot reach the

researcher(s).

*You will be given a copy of this document for your records. By providing information to the researcher(s), I am agreeing to participate in this* research.

| Participant Signature | Print Name | Date |
|---|---|---|
| Signature of Researcher Obtaining Consent | Print Name | Date |
| Signature of Witness (if applicable) | Print Name | Date |

## Appendix D: Interview Protocol (English)

- Why did you choose to study in China?

- According to your answers, you have changed on values in the first table. Now please recall your intercultural experiences in China and tell me how these experiences affected your values.

  - ▫ Did you feel happy to accept change or did you feel compelled to change?

  - ▫ Did you struggle with change or was easier (than what?) to adjust to?

  - ▫ There is no distance in numbers between you and other Chinese people around you on this value. Do you think you have adopted (at least to some degree) Chinese culture on these values?

  - ▫ How are these changes influenced by Chinese people?

- According to your answers, you have changed on values in the second table.

  - ▫ First, please recall your intercultural experiences in China and tell me how these experiences bring the values changes to you.

  - ▫ Second, after change, there is still difference between you and other Chinese people around you.

    - ◆ Why you think they are different from you on these values?

    - ◆ How do these changes affect your interaction with them?

    - ◆ How did you adjust to differences?

    - ◆ Have you encountered conflict that you attribute to the difference? If you have, what kind of cultural conflicts? How did you deal with them?

- According to your answers, you did not change on values in the third table. Why? Do you (still) feel different from Chinese people around you?

- ▫ Why you think they are different from you on these values?

- ▫ How have these changes affected your life in China?

- ▫ How did you adjust to differences?

- ▫ Have you encountered conflict that you attribute to the difference? If you have, what kind of cultural conflicts? How did you deal with them?

- According to your answers, you have changed on values in the fourth table and there is no difference between you and Chinese people around you. Why?

- Do you often hang out with Chinese or Americans in China? Why?

- What is your understanding of fitting into Chinese society?

- Have you ever considered overcoming the distance, and attempt to think and behave as Chinese people do some day? Why/Why not?

- When you contact your family or friends back in the U.S., have they ever mentioned that you have changed? If they have, could you please specify? Did you benefit from these changes?

- Have you already adopted Chinese culture in some ways, to some extent? Did you benefit from these changes?

- In conclusion, in what ways have your intercultural experiences in China changed your perception of China? Of the U.S.?