

2015-09-25

Mosaic of Spaces: Social Integration of Chinese Immigrant Women in Toronto

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Lee, B. (2015). Mosaic of Spaces: Social Integration of Chinese Immigrant Women in Toronto (Master's thesis, University of Calgary, Calgary, Canada). Retrieved from

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Mosaic of Spaces:

Social Integration of Chinese Immigrant Women in Toronto

by

Bonnie K. Lee

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN SOCIAL WORK

CALGARY, ALBERTA

SEPTEMBER, 2015

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how Chinese immigrant women subjectively experience their social integration in Canada and the way it is constituted socially and symbolically, based on a secondary qualitative data analysis. Spatial and social constructionist theories inform the analysis of five in-depth interviews with Chinese immigrant women in Toronto. Social integration is a process built through a myriad of social interactions in a gender-related mosaic of spaces. An initial typology of spaces is thematically characterized by its cast of actors, power relations and differences in social, cultural and multiple forms of capital. The functions of each space in increasing the immigrants' set of capital to become participants and contributors in Canadian society are illustrated. Viewing physical and social spaces as mutable with creative potential, implications of a spatial typology in facilitating immigrant social integration are discussed in terms of social work theory, practice, and education.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My first acknowledgement goes to Dr. Daniel Lai whose expertise on immigrant issues and sound supervision guided my process of completing this thesis in a timely manner. It was a pleasure to work with him who balanced prompt and astute advice with a respect for my academic freedom in framing and interpreting the findings of this study.

I also wish to thank my friends, in particular, Tom Davis, and my family who sacrificed their leisure and bonding time with me, respecting my absorption in my graduate study and thesis towards my Master of Social Work. They recognize that joining the ranks of social workers represents another important milestone in my career, one that will open new doors and collegial collaboration in furthering the goals of social justice in our society.

I wish to acknowledge the generous support provided by the University of Lethbridge Interdisciplinary Research Development Fund for the original project, on which this secondary analysis is based. I am confident that this thesis has expanded upon the contribution of the original project, and has the potential to further the goals of creating interdisciplinary, cross-sector perspectives to transition into future research and knowledge application.

My sincere thanks to Florence Loh, (M.S.W.), research assistant who capably helped with translating the research ethics documents, recruiting participants and conducting the interviews, and the fine job of the transcriptionists cum translators, Ling Ling Fan (M.Sc.) and Mary Fong (M. Phil.).

Last but not least, my deep gratitude goes to the Chinese immigrant women in Toronto who so enthusiastically supported this study in sharing their journeys and

experience of immigration in such rich and candid ways. It was clear each and every one of them wanted to contribute to achieve the goals of Canadian multiculturalism, a country they have grown to love and whose values of equality, tolerance, openness and inclusion they want to extend to others in their own creative ways. It is our shared hope that this project is the beginning of future social initiatives in opening up new spaces for social integration of immigrants from all ethnic groups and countries of origin into the land and nation that is Canada.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Migration and immigration is a global phenomenon of the 21st century (Castles & Miller, 2003; Morawska, 2009). Along with this global trend is the formidable challenge of countries integrating immigrants into their midst. How successfully integration takes place has implications for social cohesion (Aizlewood & Pendakur, 2005), immigrants' mental and physical health (Chandrasena et al., 1991; Leu, Walton & Takeuchi, 2011; Newbold & Danforth, 2003), and workforce and economic development (CIC, 2014).

Immigrants in Canada

Canada has had one of the highest rates of immigration worldwide and continues to be a preferred destination for immigrants (CIC, 2014). Visible minorities accounted for 78.0% of the immigrants who arrived in Canada between 2006 and 2011, according to the National Household Survey (Statistics Canada, 2011). The People's Republic of China was the top source country of immigration to Canada in 2013 (CIC, 2014). Chinese constituted the second largest visible minority group in Canada, after South Asians, making up 21.1% of the visible minority population and 4.0% of the total population.

Women Immigrants

A trend of feminization of migration since the 1960s has been observed, with an increasing number of women contributing to recent waves of immigration to Canada (Chiu, 2011). Hence a focus on women is of particular interest. Recognizing that gender is a discriminant variable in immigration, Citizenship and Immigration Canada has incorporated gender-based analysis in recent years to assess the differential impact of policies and programs, legislation and services on gender (CIC, 2011). Gender analysis

revealed that women immigrants' countries of origin have shifted over time from Europe with increasing numbers originating from Asia and the Middle East (Statistics Canada, 2011). The largest proportion of immigrant women reside in Toronto, home to 54 % of immigrant women (Chiu, 2011). Immigrant women are more likely to be university graduates than Canadian-born women, but less likely to have a degree compared to immigrant men (Statistics Canada, 2011). Finding employment that reflects the training and education of immigrant women remains a challenge. Immigrant women with university degrees working in the sales and services sector (23%) were three times that of their Canadian counterparts (7.4%). Not surprisingly, newly arrived women were more likely to be unemployed compared to those who have been in Canada longer (Statistics Canada, 2011).

Settlement and Integration of Newcomers

Integration is held up as a policy objective and a strategic outcome for immigrants (CIC, 2011). It is germane to the goal of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act to build a “cohesive society, improve the responsiveness of institutions to the needs of a diverse population, and engage in discussion on multiculturalism, integration and diversity at the international level” (CIC, 2014, p. 23). Canada is one of the few countries in the world with a “managed immigration program” towards integrating new immigrants into becoming full citizens (CIC, 2014, p.23).

Historically, the primary focus of government programs has been on settlement services targeted at recent immigrants in their first 3-5 years of their adaptation in Canada (CIC, 2014). Such services include language training, community and employment bridging services, and settlement information.

Integration, characterized as a “two-way street”, requires an ongoing process of mutual accommodation between newcomers and long-time Canadians (CIC, 2011). This principle is reflected in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA, 2002) with the objective of not only assisting newcomers to adapt to Canadian values, customs, rights and obligations but also requiring Canadian society to grow and evolve to respond to immigrants’ needs. Integration involves “mutual obligations” for new immigrants and Canadian society (IRPA, 2002, p.2).

Integration services have been expanded in recent years to enable prospective economic immigrants to meet foreign credential recognition requirement and accelerate their labour market integration. For example, a federal internship for newcomers program is a new initiative that provides newcomers with opportunities to gain Canadian work experience with the federal government and in the private sector (CIC, 2013).

Rationale

Notwithstanding its liberal use in academic and policy literature, social integration as a concept has not been given rigorous and cogent theoretical explication, nor is the term consistently and clearly defined (Ager & Strang, 2008; Li, 2003; Lai, 2014). Employing discourse analysis, Li (2003) contends that despite the official rhetoric of a “two-way street approach” of policy-makers, immigration critics and academics, Canada in reality subscribes to a conformity model of integration. He observes that immigrants’ integration is assessed based on their convergence to “the average performance of native-born Canadians and their normative and behavioural standards” (Li, 2003, p.316). The extent to which the “two-way” principle is reflected in reality is a subject for examination.

It has been proposed that integration can be viewed in two different dimensions: structural and socio-cultural (Erdal & Oeppen, 2013; Korac, 2003). The structural dimension concentrates on functional aspects of integrating immigrants into the social structure, such as participation in the labour market and education, health, housing, and politics. It reflects a top-down approach by the government and social institutions to integrate immigrants into the system.

The socio-cultural dimension requires a bottom-up approach that involves the more complex aspects of integration related to immigrant participation in social networks, feelings of belonging and being at home, and how they relate to the majority population (Erdal & Oeppen, 2013; Korac, 2003). Empirical studies dedicated to the structural dimension of integration far outnumber those on the socio-cultural side, pointing to the need for research on integration that relies not only on the point of view of policy implementation, but features the subjective experience and voices of the immigrants themselves about their sense of being integrated and how that is accomplished. Admittedly, this socio-cultural aspect of integration is less well researched and understood. Nonetheless, the two dimensions of integration --- functional and socio-cultural, may not be as distinctly separated as they are purported to be.

Research Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study is to understand how social integration takes place through the lens and narratives of five Chinese immigrant women living in Toronto captured in five in-depth interviews. Their years of arrival in Canada spanned the period 1970-2005 with an average of 21 years of their living in Canada (range: 7-39 years). These women reported a moderate to high level of life satisfaction in Canada and were

deemed by themselves or others to have made an impact in Canadian society. The findings from these in-depth interviews will inform our understanding of the immigrants' complex process of social integration from their own perspective. The findings of this study are aimed to further the discussion of how societal resources can be strategically deployed to support and advance the goal of integration and multiculturalism in Canada.

Research Question

How do Chinese immigrant women socially integrate into Canadian society?

Overview of the Thesis

Following this introductory chapter to the thesis, Chapter 2 will present a focused literature review of the empirical literature on the key areas that intersect with this research, namely, social integration, social capital, and issues of gender affecting immigrant women. Chapter 3 will discuss two sets of social science theories that inform the analysis and interpretation of the data from this study, namely, spatial theories from sociology, anthropology, urban studies, philosophy, and German social work as well as the theory of social constructionism. Chapter 4 lays out my methodology for this study which is a secondary analysis of a set of data from an interdisciplinary team comparative study on women's creative appropriations of government and non-government organizations resources. I was a member of the original study with colleagues from other disciplines. Chapter 5 will go into thick descriptions of the typology of spaces that I thematized from the analysis and how these spaces provide the sites and spheres of social interactions for Chinese immigrant women's social integration. Lastly, Chapter 6 will pull together the various strands from this study, tying together the different spaces with social integration, social capital, and gender differences. I will conclude the thesis with a

discussion of the implications of the findings for social work theory, practice and education at three different levels.

CHAPTER 2

FOCUSED LITERATURE REVIEW

A focused literature review bearing on key concepts in the social integration of Chinese immigrant women is presented in this chapter. The review concentrates on literature relevant to two main areas. First, the concept of integration and its multiple dimensions and indicators is discussed. Its relationship to acculturation, belonging, social capital, and cultural values and beliefs is reviewed. Second, research findings that support gender as a critical factor in immigration are considered to reveal patterns of how gender informs the reality, needs and challenges of immigrant women. The discussion brings to light how gender impacts two areas most pertinent to this research: the formation of social capital and implications for employment and income.

Integration

Integration was traditionally viewed as a unidimensional concept that places the onus on immigrants to adapt to the receiving country's norm and culture, an assumption that is implied in a large number of research studies (Brotto et al., 2008; Woldemikael, 1987; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). Assimilation of immigrants into the host society is a view that requires immigrants to identify completely with the institutions and values of that society. Immigrants become absorbed into the host society and abandon their own culture and language to conform to culture and values of the dominant group that constitute the core of the nation state (Berry, 1997).

The meaning of integration as assimilation and as a uni-dimensional acculturation has been contested in the literature (Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, & Senecal, 1997; Li, 2003; Sakamoto, 2007). This has led to an expanded view of acculturation as a bi-dimensional

concept that reflects the values and attitudes of both the existing culture in the receiving country and the immigrant heritage culture, with the willingness for both to mutually meet and be transformed (Berry 1974, 1980; Chia & Costigan, 2006; Bourhis, et al., 1997). However, it is helpful to keep in mind that mutual adaptation does not necessarily mean symmetrical adaptation and one party may have to adapt to a larger degree (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003). A country's national immigration and citizenship policy and ideology, such as multi-culturalism vs assimilation, plays an important role in shaping attitudes and values of host and immigrants (Bourhis, et al., 1997).

Some theorists have separated structural from cultural dimensions of integration in the European context to “benchmark” integration with indicators (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003). Structural integration encompasses institutional participation in the socio-economic, legal and political dimensions whereas policies of multiculturalism vs assimilation fall under the cultural dimension. An indicator that is less commonly examined in relation to integration is attitudes of recipient societies, which would reinforce the idea that the onus of integration is not on the immigrant only. Examples of host society attitudes are registered in an atmosphere of “welcome” in the receiving country, racism and discrimination, accessibility of major institutions and services, changing competencies in practices to reflect immigrant values and culture, role-models of immigrant origin, representation of diversity in different occupations and media portrayals and representation (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003).

Entzinger and Beizevle's typology posits that integration can be viewed as functional and socio-cultural. A functional view of integration places the emphasis on immigrants' performance that converges with standards of the receiving country, which

can be measured in domains such as employment rates, income, access to resources, education, housing compared to Canadian norms as well as activities considered as bonding or bridging (Ager & Strang, 2008; Enns, Kirova & Connolly, 2013; Ethnic Diversity Survey, 2002).

Compared to structural indicators of integration, mechanism and process of integration at a socio-psychological level has been less studied and reported in the literature. Integration is a multi-faceted, dynamic phenomenon and not a one-dimensional event. It occurs in different spheres or spaces and includes actions and dispositions of both immigrant and non-immigrant groups. One of the few studies on social integration at a micro-level uses interviews and participant-observations of how Norwegian immigrants negotiate identity management and stigma in their social networks (Valenta, 2009). Social cohesion results when individuals and groups as constituent parts in society relate to each other closely and intensely (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003). Integration can then be measured in terms of the *frequency* and *intensity* of relating – frequency refers to the number of ties an individual or group maintains with the surroundings; intensity to the nature of these contacts that create feelings of belonging and familiarity.

Social Capital

Social capital has become a fashionable term since the 2000s with Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (2000), although its origins dated back to the 19th century with observations by sociologists that democracy and society function by virtue of people's participation and the operations of social networks (Farr, 2004). The key premise of social capital is that social networks have value with the benefits of trust, reciprocity, information and cooperation towards collective goals. Social capital creates value for

those who are connected. Social capital has been conceptualized variously by Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988, 1990), Putnam (2000) and with elaborations by other economic sociologists (Lin, 2001; Portes, 1995). I will discuss mainly social capital as presented by Putnam and Lin here, while Bourdieu's theory will be discussed in the next chapter relating it to his concepts of social and symbolic spaces.

Putnam separated social capital into bonding and bridging capital (Putnam, 2000). Bonding capital refers to social networks among people from homogeneous groups, while bridging capital refers to social networks of people from heterogeneous groups. Social capital has been measured by levels of trust, belonging, national identity, social connections and activities associated with social integration (Ager & Strang, 2008; Banting & Soroka, 2012; Enns et al., 2013; George & Chaze, 2009a). Ager and Strang (2008) developed a model for immigrant integration that identifies facilitators of integration as language and cultural knowledge and a sense of safety and stability. Social connections characterized as bridging, bonding or linking are also instrumental towards integration (Ager & Strang, 2008; Enns, Kirova, & Connolly, 2013). Similar to Putnam's definitions, bonding behaviours among immigrants are directed within one's own ethnic group; bridging connections involve lateral relationships outside of one's ethnic group; and linking behaviours indicating relationships with civic and government structures (Ager & Strang, 2008).

In Putnam, social capital refers to the actual or potential resources accrued from social networks of connections, loyalties and mutual obligations that encourage people to be of mutual assistance to each other to attain social and economic goals. These networks can range from extended kinship networks, community groups, to religious organizations.

Implicit in the concept of social capital is the operation of trust, norms, values, flow of information and reciprocity. Social capital theories imply that face-to-face deliberative activities in associations, such as volunteer and community groups, promote interpersonal trust. Trust in turn is the glue of social life and cements the foundation of communities and civil society. Civic participation produces benefits to immigrants such as career opportunities, support networks and the capacity of people to work together to solve local problems.

Putnam's theory uses examples of social capital largely in relation to associations and community groups (Putnam, 2000). Measurement of social capital issuing from Putnam's theory has therefore concentrated on structural elements (Norris & Inglehart, 2003), e.g. formal associational membership as in churches and unions, with the neglect of more informal social relationships, such as mentorships and friendships. The operation of social capital in Putnam's work was primarily directed toward its benefits in advancing political and economic goals, with a relative lack of consideration to the power dynamic of social hierarchies that differentially constrain and promote its accumulation (Portes, 1998).

Research of social capital on immigrants reveals that there are two sides to the coin of social capital that can work for and against immigrants. A few studies highlight the downside of social capital, arguing that social capital depends on social position and connections to different networks which are gender and class related. Not all social capital is equal, for example, people in lower socio-economic status only have access to social capital and networks in that social stratum (Yan & Lam, 2013; Li, 2004). Women have access to social capital that is different than men and may benefit less and can even

be limited by their kind of social network in terms of employment (Livingston, 2006), which will be further discussed in the gender section.

Ethnic attachment and kinship networks function as a resource to help immigrant find jobs, but could also become a form of entrapment that compels immigrants to remain in low-paying jobs out of obligation to their employers and network connections (Li, 1977). The development of a sheltered economy where immigrants are limited by their language skills could make newcomers susceptible to exploitation. Immigrants could also become isolated in their ethnic enclave and thus have reduced access to employment information from mainstream society. Therefore social capital can have unequal effects with the already advantaged, such as investors and financiers having more to gain, but could result in short-term benefits and prolonged costs in the case of resource-deprived groups (Li, 2004). Hence, informal social capital within ethnic groups, i.e. bonding capital, needs to be balanced by connections with outside structures that are more influential and powerful, such as social mentorship programs, co-op programs in mainstream society that give dignity to newcomers in keeping with their skills and qualifications (George & Chaze, 2009a).

Informal social networks of friends and relatives were found to be the most exhaustive and specific sources of information and orientation for employment during the settlement phase (George & Chaze, 2009b) and has a positive effect on belonging to one's ethnic group and greater likelihood of trust in people at work and school (Enns et al., 2013). However, the relationship between bonding activities to Canadian identity varied among ethnic groups (Enns et al., 2013). Bridging activities increase trust with people at work and in school and increase likelihood of reporting a strong Canadian

identity (Enns et al., 2013). Social support from networks in the receiving country in the form of bridging capital has a significant main buffering effect on perceived discrimination and psychological well-being in immigrants (Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, Jaakkola, & Reuter, 2006).

In contrast to Putnam, Lin's (2001) conceptualization of social capital has been found to take into account the structural limitations in social capital acquisition, hence especially appropriate to social work because of its implicit structural analysis. Although often used interchangeably, social network and social support are not synonymous with social capital (Hawkins & Maurer, 2012). Social capital is a by-product of social networks and social support. Social network is defined as a set of socially linked and interconnected individuals or groups and can be measured by size, density, reciprocity, frequency of contact. Social support is accessed through social networks in the form of emotional, informational and instrumental support. Social support and social network situate social interactions that have the capacity to generate social capital that changes the quality and availability of resources to individuals (Lin, 2001).

It is important to note that social capital is not a static entity (Lee, Fong, & Solowoniuk, 2007). The amount of social capital for immigrants fluctuates over time with bonding capital dwindling for immigrants because of Canada's geography and distance, changing norms about the family from extended to nuclear to single parents, dilution of cultural values and beliefs, demand on immigrants' time between work and family, and family discord (Lee, Solowoniuk, & Fong, 2007). It is also important to bear in mind that social capital could have been pre-existing even before the immigrants' arrival, or self-

created through connections the newcomer developed through volunteer work, hobby classes or co-op programs (George & Chaze, 2009b).

What constitutes social capital for immigrants and its reserve requires a longitudinal lens that can track its fluctuations over time and the life course.

Belonging

Integration is related to the concepts of belonging (Banting & Soroka, 2012) and identity with the understanding that an individual's identity is part and parcel of groups among which he/she finds affiliation and belonging (Cardu, 2007). Belonging is shaped by interaction of an individual with a multitude of community boundaries that are spatial, symbolic and social (Caxaj & Berman, 2010) that fulfill the human need for strong, stable interpersonal relationships that are non-aversive within ongoing relational bonds (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Belonging and identity are interactive, hence identity is a process that is socially regulated as well as personally negotiated (Caxaj & Berman, 2010). Belonging is seen as a valuable social resource for well-being and is a form of social capital (Caxaj & Berman, 2010).

Cultural Values and Beliefs

Cultural values and beliefs are an important factor in the immigrant negotiation of their relationship with their receiving country. They are mostly discussed as barriers to utilization of health services and health practices (Dong, et al., 2007; Lessa & Rocha, 2012; McDonald & Kennedy, 2007; O'Mahoney & Donnelly, 2013). However, studies of the role of values and beliefs as contribution or detriment to immigrants' attempts at integration are a gap in the literature.

Studies indicating that cultural values and beliefs can act as both protectors to immigrant women's mental and physical health are not prominent in the literature. One qualitative study of elder English-speaking Indian immigrant women reveal that very few Indian elders claim to have experienced mental distress although they have encountered emotional problems in their lives. The women described a number of culturally prescribed ways to stay busy and exercise "control over inner self" and view their culture as a kind of "moral medicine" (Acharya & Northcott, 2007, p.630). Finding a role that is consonant with their culture, elderly immigrant women reported staying engaged and contributing to familial, household, financial and community affairs an important resource to maintaining their strong inner self. The finding shows the cultural values and traditions can have a protective value, while other studies have shown cultural traditions pose a risk factor for immigrants in adopting health and practices in the mainstream society. The role of cultural values and beliefs in social integration is clearly an area that invites more examination.

Women and Integration

Gender as a critical principle in migration theory became increasingly recognized only as we moved into the 21st century, undergirded by developments in feminist theory in the 1990s (Boyd & Grieco, 2003; Curran, Shafer, Donato & Garip, 2006). The study of immigration had historically embedded a male bias in that the principal applicant or head of household in immigration was male and their views were represented in most studies (Curran et al., 2006). Women were obscured when they immigrated as part of the family category as a dependent.

It was the insights gained from qualitative studies such as ethnography in the mid-1990s that revealed that immigration was inherently different for men and women (Curran et al., 2006). These differences were influenced by gendered interactions, roles and practices in both sending and receiving countries and their organizations and institutions. Gender needs to be seen as a core organizing principle in migration that accounts for “why people move, where they went, and how they integrated” (Boyd & Grieco, 2003, p.2). A gendered lens illuminates the cause of migration, who migrated, and how integration took place, and what changes in the power differentials between men and women were the results of immigration. Gender relations within the family context affect the migration experiences of women because of family hierarchy, roles, distribution of information and resources that can serve to motivate, support or discourage the different stages of the immigration process (Boyd & Grieco, 2003). Although the present study does not adopt feminist theory as an interpretive framework, it does benefit from a sensitivity to gender issues in its analysis of the immigration process and women’s social integration.

Gender differences hold implications for a few key areas of consideration in this study. Two of these areas are social capital and employment and income. We will look at each of these areas in turn.

Social Capital

Gender influences social capital formation (Hagen 1998; Hondagneu-Soleto 1994; Norris & Ingelhart, 2003). Women’s membership in civic activism and organizational membership differs from men’s due to unequal distribution of resources in terms of time, money, knowledge and skills (Norris & Ingelhart, 2003). One could argue that men have

less discretionary use of time since their schedules in the workforce are likely less flexible than women who stay home. However, many women who have entered the workforce still assume family responsibilities and care of dependents. If women work double duty in their career and home, they are certain to be overtaxed with less time for civic and social engagements. Leisure time and flexibility of schedules influence levels of men and women development of social capital.

Furthermore, the social circles in which men and women move in also differ. Women rely more on informal networks of friends and relatives as sources of information and orientation but these networks are largely within their ethnic group, and may be less useful for economic mobility (George and Chaze, 2009a; Hagen, 1998). Social and cultural roles that keep women more in the domestic sphere could limit women's access to opportunities in the public sphere and reinforce their domestic status and role, thus reducing their opportunities in forming bridging capital and integration into expanding spheres (Livingston, 2006; Norris and Ingelhart, 2003). Men, on the other hand, benefit from social relations of work, neighbourhood and recreation that open up contacts with other long-term immigrants that can have far-reaching implications. Women immigrants do not benefit as much from network-based job searching and their networks reduced their likelihood of finding jobs in the formal sector, while men's networks produced significant and positive results (Livingston, 2006). This in turn has implications for wages and benefits.

Men suffer more economic penalties than women when having less social capital in terms of trust and participating in community organizations (Raza, Beaujot & Woldemicael, 2013). A caveat here is that although social networks are gendered, it does

not necessarily always favour men's integration, depending on the ethnic group and the locale and the demographics composition of a place. The creation, utilization and outcomes of immigrant women's social networks and associations will be an important inquiry in this Toronto-based study.

The lack of control of family income by women is also believed to inhibit their civic engagement (Norris & Ingelhart, 2003). Other factors including formal education, cognitive, social and organizational skills, and self confidence play into their civic participation as well. Civic and volunteer involvement, usually how social capital is measured, requires skills in communication and organization. Knowledge about certain sectors is also necessary in some cases as well as an ability to work with others and win their trust and confidence, depending on women's existing set of skills and education. Hence, a complex set of factors contribute to how gender affects civic involvement.

Immigrant women compared to Canadian women are less likely to participate in volunteer parenting related activities, such as parent-teacher association, school activities and coaching in organized sports (Couton & Gaudet, 2008). Their lower participation may be a factor of language and culture. Immigrant women could be constrained by attitudes and habits of volunteerism (Coutono & Gaudet, 2008), and lower family income level that requires them to work more. These findings on volunteering are consistent with Canadian statistics on lower level of volunteering among immigrants compared to Canadian-born, likely impeded by deficiencies in language, Canadian experience and social networks (Thomas, Statistics Canada 2012).

Although not broken down by gender, immigrants were found to donate more money than Canadian-born, even among those immigrants with lower household income

(Thomas, Statistics Canada, 2012). Immigrants tend to donate to religious organizations and charities whereas Canadian-born give to health-related organizations, sports and recreation (Thomas, Statistics Canada, 2012). They were also slightly more likely to mention “compassion for those in need” as a reason (92%) for giving compared to the Canadian born (89%). These patterns of volunteerism and giving are of interest because they can be considered indicators of immigrant integration and adjustments (Osili, Okonkwo & Du, 2005) although they lack a gender analysis to date.

Employment and Income

For women, the gap in employment rate between immigrant and Canadian-born is higher than the gap between men immigrant and their counterparts (Yssaad, 2013). In a Quebec City area study (Cardu, 2007), African and Asian women have a higher unemployment rate (18-21%) compared with European immigrants (9%). More women hold part-time and precarious ‘atypical’ jobs (non-permanent contract, temporary, casual, or flexible contract) than men and are more often unemployed (Cardu, 2007; Ferrao, Statistics Canada, 2010). Women’s income in the Quebec study is 66% that of male immigrants. On the whole, rate of unemployment among immigrant women was higher than their male immigrant counterparts and women have less job security (Cardu, 2007; Ferrao, Statistics Canada, 2010). However, university degrees carry greater advantages to women’s earnings than men’s earnings (Raza, Beaujot & Woldemicael, 2013).

In terms of work, immigrant women face obstacles of not knowing the verbal and non-verbal “communication codes” and lack networks to integrate into the work organization in order to advance in their careers (Cardu, 2007). This is in addition to a lack of recognition of their professional credentials from former countries, ‘de-skilling’,

discrimination both in terms of their gender and race (Cardu, 2007, p.432; Man, 2004).

Their entry into the job market and career progression often take second place as they put their spouse's and children's education and advancement before their own (Cardu, 2007).

Race, gender and class intersect in how women integrate in Canada. The plight of working class and refugee women after immigration is likely to differ from that of skilled, highly educated immigrant women despite their commonality as women immigrants. Since the immigrants interviewed in this study represent the independent, skilled and investment classes, we will focus on the challenges identified in the literature for this particular group.

According to Man (2004), neoliberal policies, economic conditions combined with the protectionism of professional organizations and regulatory bodies and gendered and racialized discriminatory practices embedded in Canadian society ruptured the careers of many educated and skilled Toronto Chinese immigrant women. The neo-liberal ideology in favour of privatization and deregulation has led to the restructuring of government services. Downsizing of state-subsidized programs has relegated the work of healthcare, childcare and elder-care into the home, borne mostly by women as unpaid labour. As a result, many women are required to work part-time in the labour force and settle for lower income to meet the caring needs on the home front. This retreat of educated women into the private sphere undermines their ability to integrate into the host society (Man, 2004).

Recent statistics continue to show that immigrant women attain a higher education level than Canadian born women but the proportion of recent immigrant women with a university degree working in sales and services (23%) was three times

higher than their Canadian-born counterparts (7.4%) (O'Donnell et al., Statistics Canada, 2006). In 2011 the employment rate of university educated immigrants was 78.7% compared to 90.2% of Canada-born (Chui, Statistics Canada, 2011).

The results of these post-migration employment barriers engender a deep sense of frustration and rejection among educated Chinese immigrants, leading some to abandon their job search (Man, 2004). Many well-trained immigrant women settled for genderized jobs like babysitting, or went into retail and service jobs or work in the restaurant and garment industries. Work was more readily found within their ethnic enclave (Man, 2004). Some were exploited and unfairly treated by employers, others experienced discrimination. Immigration policy to enhance the state economy through recruiting skilled immigrants thus worked against other policies and practices in Canada.

The economic downturn affecting the labour market in 2009 showed that women were less affected than men in unemployment. The sectors hardest hit by the recession were manufacturing, construction and natural resources, industries that are largely male-dominated. Women were cushioned as more were employed in health and social care, education, finance and real estate (Ferraio, Statistics Canada, 2010).

In sum, women and men are differentially affected in the areas of social capital formation, employment and income after immigration. A body of qualitative and quantitative data now support the contention that gender is a key variable that must be taken into account when considering the integration of immigrants in the receiving society.

Summary

In comparison to literature that measures social integration in structural terms, such as trust, voting, education and income levels, health, subjective reports by immigrants on the process of how socio-cultural integration takes place over time are under-represented in the literature. Gender is a critical factor in immigration and social integration as it has differentiating effects on the type and impact of social capital available among men and women affecting employment and income. Based on the literature, social integration, although not rigorously conceptualized or defined, consists of immigrants' participation in the receiving society in multifarious ways through employment, education, income, volunteering, civic engagement, health care utilization, and voting. Whether social integration is indeed a two-way street as espoused in Canada's multiculturalism policy is yet to be determined through empirical studies.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTS

The consideration of space in the social sciences is a relatively new development compared to the preoccupation with time, history and development. The ‘spatial turn’ occurred around the 1990s across a number of disciplines – geography, sociology, urban studies – when the focus of interest shifted from history to space as sites of simultaneity, juxtaposition, relations, and networks that connect points that intersect (Foucault, 1967, 1986). Space as a construct is under-developed in the field of social work and its exploration was conducted by mainly German social work scholars. In this chapter, I will delineate a few key theories and concepts of space in the social sciences and in social work and discuss its significance as a theoretical background in this thesis.

After discussing the spatial theories that inform the analysis and interpretation in this thesis, I will devote a section to the sociological theory of “social construction of reality” that undergirds the significance of social interactions and conversations within social spaces.

Michel Foucault: Space and Heterotopias

Perhaps one of the most engaging texts on space is presented by French philosopher and historian of ideas, Michel Foucault (1926-1984) in “Of Other Places” (1967, 1986). Foucault reminds us that we do not live in a void, but inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another. Sites can be defined by a set of relations that gives each of them certain properties, such as sacred vs de-sanctified space, private vs public space, family space vs social space, space of leisure vs that of work. In other words, “the space in which we live, which draws us out of

ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and gnaws at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space” (Foucault, 1967, 1986, p. 23). Hence, space is heterogeneous, and imbued with meaning, affect, and relations that has the power to shape our lives and its progression.

Then Foucault calls our attention to “heterotopias,” a kind of “counter-sites” in which the real sites in culture are contested and inverted (p. 24). It exerts a kind of counteraction to the position one occupies in real sites. Every society has its heterotopias of hidden, privileged or forbidden places. Some examples are the cemetery, prison, rest home and psychiatric hospital, cinema and theatre, oriental garden, museums and libraries. Heterotopias have a way of opening and closing that isolates them and makes them impenetrable to those on the outside. They function counter to regular space through an illusion that exposes every real space or conversely, as orderly and meticulous as the real space is messy, ill constructed and jumbled. Heterotopias are essential to regulated space just as dreams are essential to civilization. They are found in all civilizations.

Victor Turner: Structural and Anti-structural Space

Foucault’s description of heterotopias come indiscernibly close to what Victor Turner calls liminal space. Turner (1920-1983) was a British cultural anthropologist who studied the Ndembu tribe in Africa and their rituals. He developed the concept of liminal space to refer to a “betwixt and between” zone that is marked separately from structural, ordinary or quotidian space (Turner, 1969). Hence liminal space as a kind of anti-structural space, is qualitatively different from mundane, structural space with its hierarchies and ordering (Turner, 1969, 1974). Liminal space is fraught with potential

and danger in that the normal rules that govern institutional and structural life are suspended, and the human being is shed of its customary roles and performance. The entry and exit into the liminal space is guarded and signaled by symbols and gestures and an altered state of consciousness occurs in this zone. Theatre, rituals, play and even vacations are examples of the liminal spaces that occur on a continuum of degrees of symbolic and physical departure from ordinary space (Turner, 1967).

Turner observes that in liminal spaces there is a sense of universal humanity where human beings can appear to each other in their “naked” human condition, which creates a human bond called *communitas* (Turner, 1969, 1974). In liminality, participants can come into contact with *numinosity* or a sense of the transcendent and with power, where new connections are made within and among the participants. A new awareness emerges. The three-stage process of separation, liminality and re-aggregation is most important to understanding liminal space (Turner, 1979). Limen means threshold, and the entrance and exit in crossing the threshold from and back to structural or ordinary space needs to be critically marked as society needs to function within structure (Turner, 1979). Structure requires the renewal and refreshment of anti-structure lest it stagnates; the people also need to become reincorporated into structure with an expanded awareness the common human condition they all share after the confinements of roles and rules are dissolved (Turner, 1969). Such expanded consciousness and experientially altered ways of relating obtained from liminal space become the fodder for social change and transformation.

Pierre Bourdieu: Social Space and Symbolic Power

Bourdieu (1930-2002) was a French sociologist, anthropologist and philosopher. His inquiry was mainly concerned with the dynamics of power in society, the embodied nature of social life, and the role of practice in the maintenance and shifts of power in social groups and relations. With his pioneering concepts of social, cultural and symbolic capital, expanding on the more tradition concept of economic capital, Bourdieu proceeded to analyze the relationship between social space and symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1989). Capital refers to the resources in each field, for example, cultural capital is what we know about a culture, elements of taste and knowledge of the cultural code. Social capital is the people we know and how we are placed in the social hierarchy. Symbolic capital is the ability or right to name social categories and create distinctions (Bourdieu, 1989).

Space is a “system of relations” (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 16). Challenging the “substantialist” claim that space is a given and fixed entity, Bourdieu’s view is that space is relational. He contends that space is constructed through the invisible contributions of agents possessing different *volume* and *weight* of different species of capital relative to each other (p.17). Agents occupying similar and proximal positions in space usually share similar dispositions and interests, he calls *habitus* (p.19). *Habitus* is both acquired as a system of perception and practices, cognitive and evaluative structures by being in a social position, and also produces practices and representations. The spaces agents with different habitus occupy can be measured as social distances, and these social distances are said to be “inscribed in bodies” (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 17), in other words, embodied. Different degrees of cultural, social, symbolic and economic capital define one’s place in

the social space, and the affinities and differences in *habitus* are experienced as sympathy or antipathy leading to such relationships as marginalization, friendships, love affairs, marriages, associations etc.

For Bourdieu, space is defined by distances between groups and individuals according to their capitals, and a person's position or coordinates can be charted by the type and weight of social capital each possesses relative to others in a locale. Volume and weight of social, cultural, and symbolic capital are context determined as they vary from one culture to another. Social space is formed by "agents endowed with different properties that are systematically linked among themselves" (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 19). Further, the position in space a person occupies provides conditions and resources for action. In Bourdieu's model, social space is metaphoric rather than geographic, although social space may be reflected in the physical geography of how groups are organized. On the other hand, people who are distant from each other in social space can encounter and interact in physical space, however briefly and intermittently.

Contrary to Marx, Bourdieu does not see social classes and positions as fixed and categorical. Rather, he sees the fluidity of different groupings according to different principles of division, such as ethnic or national ones, although groupings with greater similarity in capital are usually more stable (Bourdieu, 1985). He calls this a transformation of "*class-in-itself*", that is a logically socially defined class, to "*class-for-itself*" that reflects an "awakening of consciousness", performed by intentional agents in coming together (Bourdieu, 1985, p.727). There is always a degree of indeterminacy and fuzziness in the social world that allows for the act of construction of spaces that takes place in practice. Here lies the stakes of political struggle, in that the perception of

existing categories of power relations can be transformed by human agents. Social change issues from the capacity for agents to make entities that had not attained objective and collective existence before “to exist in the explicit state, to publish, make public (i.e. render objectified, visible and even official)” (Bourdieu, 1985, p.729).

Bourdieu’s theory is especially pertinent in this thesis in his coinages of the different forms of capital – social, cultural, symbolic – in addition to economic, and the distances varying degrees of capital create between people in forming a social space. What is even more promising is the possibility he poses that such social spaces can be re-formed, re-aligned, through the exercise of symbolic capital in naming and creating new categories of social spaces, change in *habitus* that transforms pre-existing categories, and the power of *practice* that ensues to change the social space.

Henri Lefebvre: Production of Space

Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991) was a French sociologist of rural and urban life and an existential philosopher. *The Production of Space* is his signature work on space that has been translated into English, a work that is not easy to comprehend and its argument elusive (Unwin, 2000). In this book, Lefebvre asserts that “(social) space is a (social) product” (Lefebvre, 1974, 1991) and this is an idea captured with the following triadic concepts that take on different registers in the course of his work:

1. Spatial practice: “The spatial practice of a society secretes that society’s space” (Lefebvre, 1974, 1991, p.38). Lefebvre observes how capitalism reproduces itself in the spatial arrangements of how people live, the routes and networks that link up places of work, private life and leisure. Spatial practice carves out material

spaces that both reflect and shape social life under an economic and political regime.

2. Representations of space: This is the conceptualized space of planners, urbanists, technocrats with a cognitive and scientific bent. This is space that is top-down in its conception and is determined by the intellectual elite through a system of verbal signs such as policies.
3. Lived space or representational spaces: This is the space of users and inhabitants, of artists and philosophers, who describe the place as they experience it, expressed through their imagination, and symbolic use of objects, and differs from spaces as observed externally.

Lefebvre's theory is more often applied in the fields of urban and architectural studies (Purcell, 1997; Stanek, 2011) than in the social sciences (Thompson, Russell, & Simmon, 2014). In focusing on space as a social and political end product, Lefebvre has been critiqued for failing to give sufficient attention to the lived experience and human dimension of space and the inequalities and deprivation that are reflected in it (Unwin, 2000).

German Tradition in Social Work: A Socio-Spatial Approach

Social space as a conceptual reference has been a paradigm in the German tradition of social work since the 1990s (Spatscheck, 2012), although the discussion of space in social work has not been prominent in the larger social work literature. Social work, in German scholarship circles, refers to the relationship between individuals and society and the possible conflicts and professional solutions within this relationship (Spatscheck, 2012). Spatscheck, a main spokesman for the German tradition who has

published in English, proposed that a multi-level understanding of social spaces takes us beyond individualistic, clinical and single-case concepts, which resonates with the emphasis on “person-environment” interaction that is commonly espoused in social work practice.

In German social work, social spaces are regarded as places where relational orders and social goods are aggregated. Two understandings of social spaces with relevance to social work are put forward: (1) social spaces are discovered, analyzed and designed as fields for learning, participation and social development; (2) social spaces are used to improve flexibility, cooperation and citizen participation in the creation of social services (Spatscheck, 2012). The ecological model of Bronfenbrenner (1979) has been debated among German scholars as to whether social space is a set of concentric zones similar to Bronfenbrenner’s rendition, or a set of islands that are loosely connected but distinct and separate. What is key to both models is that social space is determined by the interaction between inhabitants and their social and ecological environments. As such, social space is guided by relationality and is neither totally absolute nor completely relative (Spatscheck, 2012). Social spaces represent a dynamic fabric woven out of material and social interactions. More appropriately regarded as changeable arrangements of humans and material goods, social spaces should not be regarded as mere static containers.

A spatially oriented approach to social work involves citizens in the building of social spaces to enhance their potential and interests (Spatscheck & Wolf-Ostermann, 2009). It is sensitive to power and dominance in social spaces, noticing barriers and creating new possibilities for citizens, supporting the formation of social networks, local

neighbourhoods and associations, and fostering the cooperation of private and public services. All these initiatives begin with the practice of social space analysis that scrutinizes the dialectics of space and social development to discover the potential within social spaces (Spatscheck & Wolf-Ostermann, 2009).

In sum, German social work has made considerable advancement in developing a socio-spatial approach both in theory and practice. Through an analysis of how the material and social dimensions of space intersect, we can arrive at a clearer map of how barriers or potentials are created for human development and thriving.

Social Constructionism

Social constructionism (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) challenges our perception that reality that we take for granted is an immutable objectivity and a given fact. They formulate that reality is in actuality a social construction by a set of values, classifications, and interpretations of experience that is shared among people through conversations, social interactions and symbols. Culture, institutions and identity are social products built through social agreement of what categories, definitions, and classifications are of significance among a group of people in a given place. Negotiations about the nature of reality occur through the primary symbolic system of language. Language assigns meanings to things, perceptions and actions. Symbols represent us to ourselves and to others in a process of interaction and sharing. Hence humans have the power to construct reality in their exchanges through symbols, sometimes in agreement, other times in contest. Externalization, objectivation and internalization are three moments of a dialectical process with which we confer value and meaning to experience, obtain affirmation that this construction of reality is shared and accepted by others, and then

internalize this constructed reality during a process of socialization so that these values inform our perceptions, beliefs and actions (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

According to Berger and Luckmann (1966), individuals become members of a society through their interactions with others to construct a system of shared meanings that promote coordinated action and cooperation. Collectively people define, interpret and endow their experience and environment with meaning and in turn also internalize that meaning system. The structure of the self or one's identity reflects the types of interactions and the significations in a social group. The self is profoundly social in that it arises out of social experience but is also continuously remodeled through conversations and interactions in social space. Social institutions and networks of joint action are formed and sustained by human interaction and are governed by symbols of definition and interpretation of the environment, events and experience.

Berger and Luckmann (1966) further observe that primary socialization is the first induction a person undergoes in childhood through interactions with care-givers and social institutions, such as school, which are reality legitimating structures. Secondary socialization is any subsequent process that inducts a socialized person into new sectors of society or a new culture. Although secondary socialization may not be associated with the same degree of emotionally charged identification like the child has with a significant other, it nonetheless still requires the interaction and communication between people. The correspondence between socially shared reality and subjective experience is never established once and for all, especially in our postmodern world represented by a plurality of values, perspectives, political interests and cultures. To maintain one's reality

and subjective framework of meaning-making, one needs the sustaining function of ongoing conversations, especially with people regarded as significant others in one's life.

Summary

In summary, theories of space converge around the understanding that space is more than a container and a physical entity. It is imbued with symbolic, social and political, and I would add affective and imaginary valence. These invisible dimensions of space mesh with one another. Together they form a dialectic with physical space, imbuing it with meaning and value. Space is neither totally fixed nor completely malleable. It confines and opens up. The creation and emergence of new spaces in its different dimensions is always possible, and it is this potential that is of interest in this study in terms of the social integration of immigrants. The theories of space discussed in this chapter serve as a background to the analysis in the study, but they do not explicitly function as an a priori framework to the analysis. The social interactions, actions and conversations in different spaces are important for the social construction of one's reality and the constitution one's identity.

CHAPTER 4

METHOD

In order to understand social integration as a process rather than as a product, qualitative research lends itself particularly well to this inquiry. Characteristics of qualitative research are the collection of data in the field usually from face-to-face interaction which provides context and collaboration with the participant in exploring an issue in depth with the researcher as the key instrument in collecting and creatively interpreting the data which cannot be separated from her own background, history, context and prior understandings (Creswell, 2009). The focus of qualitative research is on the meaning, perception and experience participants hold about a topic rather than starting with a priori concepts posited by others and the open, evolving nature of the inquiry which respects the complexity of the issues of inquiry (Creswell, 2009), such as culture and social integration. In-depth interviews which generated the data for this study, are one of the key methods of qualitative data collection that counters the depersonalization in quantitative research data collection (Oakley, 1981; Sword, 1999).

Research Design

Original Study

This study is based on the secondary qualitative analysis of data from an interdisciplinary project supported by an internal Interdisciplinary Research Development Fund of the University of Lethbridge, Alberta. The project was entitled “Creative Appropriations: Identities, Communities, and Development in Cross-Cultural and Interdisciplinary Perspectives” (2012-2014). The original research, multidisciplinary and cross-cultural in perspective, comparatively examined the engagement of First Nations’

and non-white immigrant women in Canada, and indigenous women in Ecuador with state and non-governmental organization-sponsored (NGO) community development policies, programs, and legislation.

The main research question of the original interdisciplinary study was: “How do diverse populations of women creatively appropriate or adapt state and non-government organizations initiatives to build social, cultural and economic capital for themselves and the larger society?” Comparisons were conducted across three interdisciplinary nodes consisting of: (1) Non-white immigrant women; (2) First Nations or indigenous women in Canada and the Plains’ states; and (3) Indigenous Saraguro immigrants in Ecuador. The dimensions for comparison were: (1) Framing and negotiating difference and belonging; (2) Understanding and building community; (3) Success and failure of existing policy and its implementation.

The methodology of the original study by the researchers in the interdisciplinary team encompassed a range of qualitative methods, from ethnography to content and thematic analysis to textual analysis of historical documents. My contribution to the original study was situated in the non-white immigrant women node to investigate “Experience of Chinese Women Immigrants’ Creative Appropriations of State and Non-Government Organization Initiative.” In the original study, we recruited 32 participants who were Chinese immigrant women with landed immigrant status in Canada and were living in Toronto. A research assistant helped with the recruitment and conducting of the interviews and focus groups in Toronto. Five immigrants participated in the in-depth interviews, and 27 participated in three focus groups.

Each researcher on the interdisciplinary team has full rights to any present or future applications of the individual research data they collected for secondary analysis. This current research is based on the secondary analysis of the data gathered from the five in-depth interviews only.

Research Question for Secondary Analysis

How do Chinese immigrant women socially integrate into Canadian society?

Secondary Analysis

The current research is based on the secondary analysis of the Chinese immigrant interview data from my component of the original study. Relative to secondary analysis of quantitative data in social research which has a well-established history, secondary analysis of qualitative data has a more recent development beginning in the 1960s (Heaton, 2008; Glaser 1962, 1963). The interest in qualitative secondary analysis has grown exponentially since the mid-1990s (Heaton, 2008). In many ways, this trend is a positive one as researchers can maximize the investment on both the parts of the researcher and participants in utilizing the collected data to inform knowledge creation. Furthermore, qualitative data are usually dense, and can generate multiple research questions and adoption of various angles of inquiry into complex phenomena.

Secondary analysis has been used to investigate *new* or *additional* research questions based on data collected by the researcher, and sometimes archival research data or data collected by other researchers (Heaton, 2008). Alternatively, secondary analysis can be used as a form of supplementary analysis to give a more in-depth investigation of an emergent issue or an aspect of the inquiry that was not yet addressed or only partially

addressed in the original analysis. Secondary analysis can also be used to verify the findings of previous research (Heaton, 2008).

One concern of secondary analysis is whether the original data is of sufficient depth and breadth to answer the new and additional secondary research questions (Heaton, 2008). After reviewing the interview data with my thesis supervisor, it was determined that the depth and scope of these interviews of approximately five hours duration per interview adequately serve the purpose of the secondary analysis.

The data collected for the original research question regarding immigrants' creative appropriation of government and NGO resources also offer data on how immigrants develop their social integration in their post-immigration journey. The moderately-structured interview (Appendix 1) was designed to cover the following: (1) stages of immigration and use of state, NGO and other supports; (2) participation in community; (3) influence and contributions to Canadian society; and (4) being a Canadian.

Ethics Approval

The secondary use of the data was included in the participants' informed consent agreement of the original study and approved by the Human Research Subject Committee of the University of Lethbridge.

The Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board at the University of Calgary approved the consent form and information letter of the original research project and accepted the certification issued by the Human Subject Research Committee at the University of Lethbridge.

Data Collection Site

Toronto is a destination city for immigrants. According to the National Household Survey (NHS, 2011), the population of the City of Toronto was 2,615,060, an increase of 4.5% since the 2006 survey. Forty nine percent of Toronto's population are immigrants, which is significantly higher than the national rate of 21%. Over 230 different ethnic origins identified themselves as the residents of Toronto. Fifty one percent of Toronto citizens were born outside of Canada, with 33% of immigrants coming to Toronto between the years 2001 and 2011. The immigration population in Toronto was slightly older than the rest of Canada's at age of immigration with 54% being over the age of 25 in Toronto and 49% for the rest of Canada. China was reported as one of the most common countries of birth by immigrants living in Toronto. 12% of the population identified as being of Chinese ethnic origin.

The average personal income for males in 2010 was \$52,716 and the average annual household income was \$87,038 which is higher than both the national and Ontario provincial average. The unemployment rate was considerably higher than the rest of Canada (9.3% vs. 7.8%) with 64.3% labour force participation (NHS, 2011). Sales and services occupations had the largest share of the labour force (22.6%) followed by business, finance and administration (18.3%), and education, law and social, community and government services (12.5%).

Sampling

Adult first generation (landed immigrant) Chinese immigrant women in Ontario (N=5) were recruited for in-depth interviews in this study, with each interview lasting approximately 5 hours. A method of purposive sampling was used in the original study to

recruit those who could speak most effectively to the research questions, coupled with snowballing where existing participants led to other participants who fit the target of the research. Although maximum variation sampling is recommended for qualitative research to gain a broad range of phenomenally and demographically varied cases (Sandelowski, 1995), the number of participants in this research was limited by the original project's duration, its pilot nature and funding available. However, we did get variation in representation among the interviewees from three countries of origin: Hong Kong, Taiwan and People Republic of China. The key sampling consideration was that participants provide rich information on the target questions with the following inclusion and exclusion criteria:

Inclusion criteria: First generation Chinese immigrant women living in Ontario (Greater Toronto Area); over 18 years of age; women who deem themselves or are deemed by others to have made an impact on the larger community outside of one's immediate and extended family.

Exclusion criteria: Individuals with neurological or cognitive impairments. These criteria served equally well for the secondary analysis as the participants were expected to be reflective and articulate about their immigration and integration journeys and be able to speak to factors that allowed them to make an impact in Canadian society deemed by themselves or others, an important signal of their integration.

A research assistant who has a Master of Social Work and is trilingual (English, Cantonese and Mandarin) and a resident of Toronto facilitated the recruitment and conducted the interviews.

Recruitment was conducted through posters, word-of-mouth, media, social media, and community organizations in Toronto.

Interested potential participants were asked to send a message to the research email address, or call a local or a 1-800 number for more information on the study. A brief screening was conducted to determine that participants met inclusion criteria to progress into the study. To indicate consent, participants were given an information letter and consent form in English and Chinese (Appendix 2).

Participants of the original research were advised of their right to withdraw from the study. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. Participants had the option to leave the study at any time and refuse to answer questions without penalty.

Participants in interviews received an honorarium in the form of grocery vouchers of \$50. Each interview lasted up to 5 hours conducted over 2-3 sessions.

Data Collection

Three methods of data collection were used: a demographics survey (Appendix 3), interviews and focus groups. This thesis utilizes the secondary analysis of interview data and demographics survey only. The interviews followed a moderately structured open-ended interview schedule (Appendix 1). The interviews were conducted in the homes of the participants in 2013.

The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed and simultaneously translated into English by two transcriptionists. Participants were all anonymized and given a pseudonym with the transcription.

Data Analysis

This research uses a qualitative method which does not pre-select variables to study. Nor does it employ a priori commitment to any theoretical view of the phenomena investigated.

A-philosophical Approach and Constant Comparison

This study is not wedded to any philosophical approach such as grounded theory, phenomenology or narrative, although it may carry some of the tonalities of these approaches. A method of “constant comparison” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) across cases is used to highlight similarities and differences and for understanding underlying meaning and issues that inform these variations. I attend to words and phrases that capture poignant moments of salient human experience conveyed by the participants. Words and phrases with particular nuances and significance in meaning in Chinese were transcribed along with the Chinese characters.

Coding

Thematic analysis of data was guided by Braun and Clarke’s approach (Braun & Clarke, 2013) within an emergent design which allowed the refining of the research questions as the analysis progressed.

I began with reading over the transcribed interviews twice to get a sense of the whole of the five interviews, and I paraphrased salient points and made comments on the key ideas that emerged from the readings. On the third reading, I started selecting units from each interview that have the potential to answer my research questions. They were coded into categories as a form of open coding, assembled under each category from across the five sets of interview transcripts. The categories were continuously modified to

accommodate new data and insights that came to the fore during the analysis. A total of 31 categories were established, and some examples are: “importance of work”, “ethnic enclave and no connection to mainstream”, “What is Canada/Canadian?”, “Desire to make a contribution”, “Multi-dimensional process of integration” etc.

Initially, data from the interview transcripts were coded for social and psychological categories in relation to the questions of identity, belonging, interactions, values and beliefs, struggles, and resilience as they were noted from the data. Thematic categories were developed based on these initial codes to answer the research questions.

Additional categories were added as new material emerged. I provided short paragraphs to give a descriptive summary of each excerpt I selected for a category from the transcripts, staying close to the content and meaning of the excerpt selected. In the description of each segment of the coded data, I tried to adhere to the data with an interpretation of low inference. In qualitative research, no description is free of interpretation. The researcher’s lens consisting of perceptions, inclinations, sensitivities and sensibilities as well as life experience enter into the selection and description of the data (Sandelowski, 2000). The use of low inference interpretation initially is to ensure faithfulness to the content and meaning of the data.

At this stage, my thesis supervisor was asked to corroborate with the accurate accounting of the *content* and *interpretation* of a sample of these qualitative coded segments to augment descriptive validity. At this level of analysis, I attempted to convey the more “surface” level of the data, which does not mean that it is trivial, but rather refers to the low level of interpretive activity around the data (Sandelowski, 2000).

Thematizing

The next stage consisted of my mulling over the data and searching for a thematic organization of the categories that would lend coherence and unity to presenting the data in answer to the research question. At this point, I noted the patterns of “space” in which the immigrants described their experience and interactions over time and the different quality and properties of interactions that occurred in different spaces. Combining the data as different types of spaces of interaction allowed me to see the data in new ways. Consequently, I began to organize the coded excerpts along various spatial dimensions to search for further understanding of how immigrants lost or found their place in society. This thematic development allowed me to go beyond the description of the surface content into a deeper level of interpretation to understand not only the manifest presentations of the data, but their underlying meanings. This further level of thematization added weight and depth to the interpretations and allowed for further transformation of the data to reveal latent patterns and subtleties of experience.

Sandelowski and Barroso (2003) classified qualitative findings along a continuum of (1) topical survey, (2) thematic survey, (3) conceptual/thematic description, and ultimately (4) interpretative explanation. This typology indicates the degree of transformation and interpretative distance from data, ranging from findings that stay close to the data as given to findings that move away from the data to concepts and higher level themes. A *theme* conveys an underlying or more latent pattern discerned in the data as opposed to a *topic* which conveys a manifest pattern. Interpretive explanation is the transformation of data to produce grounded theories or a fully integrated explanation of a phenomenon. The analysis of data in this study strived towards conceptual/thematic

description of the kinds of spaces of interactions that lead to an understanding of social integration.

Interacting with extant concepts, observation and theories in the literature

At this stage of penetrating deeper into the nuances of the immigrants' experience in the different spaces of interactions, theories and concepts from existing theoretical literature were searched out to intellectually interact with the emerging data to provide fresh perspectives and potential higher level conceptualization. However, the literature was not integrated into the findings but served as a backdrop to stimulate observation and interpretation. Extant concepts could aid in the interpretation of data, and the data could extend the meaning and understanding of extant concepts. As described in Chapter 3, the key concepts were from spatial theories, social constructionism, and social capital, predominantly Bourdieu's.

Rigour and Trustworthiness

Lincoln & Guba (1985) postulated that trustworthiness in qualitative research can be assessed by *credibility*, *dependability*, *transferability* and *confirmability*. *Credibility* of the findings in this study was safeguarded by having the thesis supervisor review the process in which the actual data were coded, categorized and later thematized, and to ascertain that this was conducted in a credible manner. *Credibility* was also increased by the researcher making initial low level inferences of the data in the descriptions, so the data meaning and sense was closely adhered to, before moving into thematic interpretation. The thematization was conducted systematically and gradually and not through big interpretive leaps. The data were read and re-read multiple times at different stages of the analysis for the researcher to grasp their import and meaning. Quotes from

participants were used to substantiate the themes and argument. *Dependability* and *confirmability* both rest on a clear stepwise description of the procedures of analysis that can be replicated. An audit trail exists for the different steps of data transformation. Lastly, the *transferability* of the findings will be discussed in comparison to existing knowledge in the literature and the findings will be shared with the participants in a publication that hopefully will lead to feedback and stimulate further discussion regarding the applicability of the findings to policy and programs for immigrants.

Personal Reflection and Biases

Interpretation of qualitative data cannot be separated from the lens, therefore I will comment on how my own background and experience as a Chinese immigrant in Canada, my own demographics, and my earlier research entered into my interpretation of the data in this research and the potential bias these factors could have introduced.

Pertinent Demographics of the Researcher

I am a Chinese immigrant from Hong Kong to Canada in the early 1980s, after obtaining two university degrees in the United States. I came to Canada as a professional in the independent class sponsored by an employer in Northern Ontario. Hence it is easy for me to grasp the immigration experience described by Oylen, the participant from Hong Kong who grew up in Hong Kong in the pre-1997 era like myself, and who immigrated to Canada in the same era I did.

To more fully understand the mind-set, political and cultural background of the three immigrants from Taiwan, I read a book (Fan, 2011) on the history of the Chinese military of the Nationalist party members and their families exiled from China to Taiwan after the Second World War and their struggles of integration into Taiwan. I also spoke to

a few Chinese immigrants from Taiwan outside of the study to better understand their socio-political context prior to immigration to Canada. This research external to the project I did on my own helped me to more sensitively interpret the interview data of the three Taiwan Chinese immigrants within their cultural context. In relation to the fifth interviewee, I have some knowledge of the current developments in the People's Republic of China (PRC) after having made a number of visits to the PRC in the last 7 years. This first-hand exposure to contemporary China and my knowledge of China's modern history in the 20th century aided my understanding of the circumstances of the fifth interviewee.

Being female, I was sympathetic to the dual responsibilities of holding a job outside the home, and assuming the responsibility of child care and the care of extended family members. However, I have not been a single parent, so the challenges of the three Taiwan Chinese interviewees in their sole parenting role perhaps eluded my full appreciation.

I have been in the work world as a professional for most of my adult life, and I have also spent many years as a student and was self-employed for a period while raising my children. Hence I resonate with the many roles the Chinese women described in the interviews. The analysis of the data in this study has raised my awareness for the complexity of work as a space in which multiple levels of social and cultural interactions take place and a site where cultural codes are negotiated and exchanged. Because of this study, I have become more actively and consciously engaged in social activities organized by my co-workers and taking part in conversations with them during coffee breaks, no longer viewing these engagements as a detraction from my work, but as a

space for subtle but important cultural exchange and social integration. As a therapist and a person interested in the arts, I appreciate the properties of these extra-ordinary, non-structural spaces well and have done previous ethnographic research on ritual and psychotherapeutic space.

Toronto Context

One drawback in this research is that a research assistant was hired to conduct the interviews with funds from the original research grant. She is a Master level clinical social worker and a psychotherapist, so I have confidence that we have a compatible style of interview and frame of reference. However, not having had the face-to-face contact with the participants in their environment, and not having lived in Toronto myself, removed me from the naturalistic context of the participants. This was a compromising factor in terms of nonverbal and contextual cues that could have added to my interpretation of the data.

To compensate for this contextual omission and to better understand the Toronto context in which these immigrants lived and worked, I paid two visits to Toronto during the course of the original study and during this secondary research. I visited the Taiwan Chinese Mall and the Chinese family service agency where two of the focus groups were conducted. Although we are not including the focus group data for this research, these places and interaction with some of the actors in these settings gave me a feel for aspects of the Toronto Chinese immigrant culture and the environments in which these women lived. The owner of the Taiwan Chinese Mall was mentioned by the interviewees in having donated space for many transnational workshops on personal growth, Chinese healing arts, and New Age study groups.

To fortify my interpretation of the interviews, I conducted online research on the leaders, organizations, workshops and authors the participants mentioned. This additional contextual research helped deepen my understanding of the import of events and people on the interviewees' philosophy, worldview, personal development and social integration.

Finally, I have had numerous conversations with the research assistant who conducted the interviews to clarify any questions I had concerning the interviews, the recruitment process, and any ambiguity about the data.

Chinese Culture

Because of the frequent allusions to Chinese sayings in the interviews, and references to Chinese philosophical concepts grounded in Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism by all of the interviewees, I found my lived knowledge of these philosophical systems embedded in my Chinese upbringing to be extremely valuable and relevant. These interviews impressed upon me how traditional Chinese philosophy and values are transmitted across generations in short-hand form through an oral tradition, clichés, and aphorisms. Deep concepts of ethics, practical wisdom and human relationships and psychology are encapsulated in metaphors and stories that are part of the common repertoire of the Chinese in conversation. This realization has deepened my respect and appreciation for the profound richness of Chinese civilization embodied in a symbolic system accrued over the millennia and how its effects are deeply embedded in her people.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS

Historical Background of Chinese Immigration from 1970s-2000s

Canada was the first country in the world to adopt multiculturalism as an official policy in 1971 to affirm the value and dignity of all Canadian citizens regardless of their racial or ethnic origins, their language, or their religious affiliation (CIC, 2012). This liberal climate of inclusion of immigrants of different racial and ethnic origins opened the door to a wave of Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong between 1970s and 1990s who migrated to Canada, motivated by the political uncertainty of the return of British-ruled Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China (Centre for International Communication, n.d.). Many Hong Kong Chinese came as investors and reportedly constituted one third of the business immigrants who landed in Canada between 1986-2000 (Sciban, n.d.). Canada's investment-inducing immigration policy during those decades also drew many Chinese investors and entrepreneurs from Taiwan, although comparatively in much lower numbers than Hong Kong investors (Centre for International Communication, n.d.). After the turnover of Hong Kong's governance in 1997, immigrants from Hong Kong dropped significantly as did immigrants from Taiwan, shifting to a rise in Chinese immigrants from the People's Republic of China through the 2000s (Centre for International Communication, n.d.). Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong are Cantonese-speaking while those from Taiwan are Mandarin-speaking.

In this chapter, I will first present the demographic and case profile for each of the five participants interviewed for the study. Following, I will characterize thematically the seven types of social spaces which the participants referred to in their accounts of their

integration into Canadian society. These themes will answer the research question “How do Chinese immigrant women socially integrate into Canadian society?”

Participants’ Demographic Profiles

Five in-depth interviews were conducted in 2013. Mean age of participants was 50.2 years (range: 35-58 years). The immigrant interviewees immigrated to Canada between 1974 and 2006 and have lived in Canada for an average of 19.2 years (range: 7-39). Three participants were born and raised in Taiwan, one was born and raised in Hong Kong and one born and raised in the People Republic of China. Canada was their first country of immigration. Three immigrated as skilled workers, one as an independent after student visa, and one was part of the investment class. Two were divorced but now partnered, two were married, and one was single. Two participants had no children and three had 1 or 2 children. None of these participants had extended family members living in Canada at the time of the interview.

Table 1 Immigrants’ Demographics

Name	Age	Country of Origin	Year of Migration	Age of Migration	Years in Canada	Migration Class
Oylen	58	Hong Kong	1974	19	39	Independent
Mona	47	Taiwan	1997	31	16	Skilled
Apple	57	Taiwan	1997	41	16	Skilled
Pearl	54	Taiwan	1995	36	18	Investment
Susie	35	China	2006	28	7	Skilled

Table 2 Immigrants' Demographics

Name	Relationship Status	Occupation	Education	Income
Oylen	Single	Teacher	Master's Degree	\$60K-\$100K
Mona	Divorced	Psychotherapist	Bachelor's Degree	Below \$20K
Apple	Divorced	Immigration & Resettlement Counsellor	College Graduate	\$30K-\$40K
Pearl	Married	Traditional Chinese Medicine	Master's Degree	\$50K-\$60K
Susie	Married	Social Work	Master's Degree	\$30K-\$40K

Table 3 Immigrants' Demographics

Name	Religious Affiliation	Did you vote?	Honours/Awards
Oylen	Buddhist & Catholic	Yes	Provincial & University Scholarships
Mona	New Age	Sometimes	Ontario Government Volunteer Award
Apple	None	No	Social Work Staff Award
Pearl	Buddhist	Yes	Only in Taiwan
Susie	None	No	

Table 4 Immigrants' Demographics

Name	Close Friends	Contact with Friends	Volunteer?	Current Happiness Level
Oylen	2	Depends	No	Generally Satisfied
Mona	6	When I think about them	Yes	Very happy most of the time
Apple	Many	Monthly	Yes	Very happy most of the time
Pearl	10+	Weekly	Yes	Very happy most of the time
Susie	5+	Monthly	Yes	Very happy most of the time

A brief individual profile with disguised and limited identifying details of each participant with their pseudonym is provided below:

Oylen

Oylen, age 58, came to Canada from Hong Kong at the age of 19 as a university student in the mid 1970s. She has been in Canada for 39 years. She worked as a health professional after graduation. At the time of the interview, Oylen was an art and music teacher in a public school in Toronto. Oylen's parents and brother joined her in the family class in the mid-1990s. Her brother returned to Hong Kong and left her with the care of her retired parents. Despite some language barriers, her father adapted well to Canada with his outgoing personality and many hobbies and interests. Her mother adapted less well, and returned to Hong Kong on visits regularly. Both parents eventually suffered ill health and passed away. At the time of the interview, Oylen rated her life satisfaction as "generally satisfied" (3 out of 5 on a Likert scale). She was not volunteering at the time and reported two close friends. Her reported annual income was between \$60-100K.

Mona

Mona, age 47, immigrated to Canada at the age of 31 from Taiwan in the late 1990s as a skilled worker. She has been in Canada for 16 years. She was a counsellor in Taiwan and became an outreach public health worker in the Chinese community in Toronto after immigration. She eventually became a trainer and supervisor in the health and counselling field. She is divorced after her immigration with one adult son. She currently has a Canadian Caucasian partner. Her income is under \$20K a year, but she had no financial worries because of the support of her parents.

Apple

Apple, age 57, came to Canada from Taiwan 16 years ago at the age of 41 in the skilled worker class. She had worked as an administrator for an international company in Taiwan for many years before immigration. She was a college graduate. At the time of migration, her daughter was an adolescent and her son a pre-adolescent. Apple migrated on her own and her husband provided basic child support in the first few years. They were eventually divorced. She was the primary parent for her children before and after immigration. Finances had been a problem for Apple until recently. She was retrained to work as a community services worker. Her annual income is \$30-40,000. Her current rating for life satisfaction is “very happy most of the time” (4 out of 5 on a Likert scale) and she volunteers.

Pearl

Pearl, age 54, immigrated at the age of 36 with her husband and her daughter in the investor class in the mid-1990s. She has been in Canada for 18 years. She had no financial problems after immigration, but functioned largely as a single parent in raising her daughter in Canada. Her husband remained in Taiwan to look after his business. She spent 7 years getting certified as a health professional in Toronto and is a staunch advocate for her profession. She is civic-minded and votes. Her annual income is \$50-60,000 and her level of life satisfaction is “very happy most of the time” (4 out of 5 on a Likert scale). She volunteers and has more than 10 close friends with whom she touches base on a weekly basis.

Susie

Susie, age 35, immigrated to Canada in the mid 2000, and has been living in Canada for 7 years. She came in the skilled worker category. She has a business undergraduate degree and was working for an international trade company. She applied to migrate at the suggestion of an agent in an immigration company. Her husband moved as a dependent to join her. She pursued graduate studies in a social service field after immigration and struggled with some serious health problems. She had worked in planning and delivering services for immigrants. She rated her life satisfaction as “very happy most of the time” (4 out of 5 on a Likert scale), has more than 5 friends with whom she talks to monthly. She also volunteers. Her annual income is between \$30-40,000.

Themes

A heterogeneity of spaces provide interactions for actors with different power and capital differentials through different types of exchanges. Actors with similar *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1989), referring to the values, dispositions, and practices, tend to cluster together in a social space. However, social spaces are not fixed and new social spaces can be created by actors intentionally leading to new categories in society that may consist of individuals with different *habitus* and sets of social capital.

Social integration of immigrants occurs in a plurality of spaces that are constituted spatially, socially and symbolically through interaction with other actors in society. Different types of social spaces serve different functions and produce different outcomes. I will report on a typology of spaces immigrants referred to in their interviews which I thematize in terms of various capital or resources, contrasts of *habitus* or dispositions, identity as reflected and negotiated in the interactions. What is revealed is that social

integration is not a straightforward one-dimensional process of immigrants conforming to Canadian norms defined by an Euro-centric culture and heritage. Rather different types of spaces allow for a multiplex of interactions and negotiations where the immigrants continuously re-define and re-constitute themselves in relation to other Canadians, which as a group is dynamic and constantly changing. Through these interactions, immigrants re-define their meaning, values and practices, and their affiliations, identifications and dis-identifications with different groups in Canadian society over time.

Theme 1 Countering Oppressive Space: Impetus for Immigration

Different socio-political and cultural interactions immigrants experienced as oppressive in their respective countries of origin fueled the prospect of their migration to Canada. Understanding what immigrants wanted to move away from and what they desired to establish or recover in Canada helped us understand not only their motivation but also their endurance during their post-migration period.

What defines oppression is when a person is blocked from opportunities to self-development, self-determination and is excluded from full participation in society and does not share in the rights and resources that other groups possess (Mullaly, 2010). Oppression is experienced in interaction as domination by the state, groups or individuals with greater power and status over individuals with less status and power that rob them of the freedom of choice, safety and the ability to define and develop themselves. This domination renders the lower status individuals to lose a sense of their own agency. Among the immigrants interviewed, the oppression they experienced was exerted by the state, patriarchy, family and social structures, corporations and unruly factions in society. These immigrants sought to escape from their oppression by seeking new horizons, with

the hope that in the society they join they will be liberated from oppression in attaining safety, services, opportunities and freedom of choice.

Escaping oppression

Mona immigrated to escape from patriarchy. She was dominated by her father in her career choice. She also felt restricted in her occupations as she was expected to act according to the cultural script for women and their roles.

I was almost asked to quit when I was at the university. I liked Chinese literature and arts, but my dad wanted me to study sciences or health sciences, so that I could be a doctor or a nurse. If I could not be a doctor, I still could be a nurse, and could marry a doctor. What I learned from my dad was that the better education a girl has, the more chances I would get to marry into a high-class family. That's why girls need good education for the marriage purpose. I was in the sciences class, and my grades were awful.

In the Taiwan context, Mona despised the nepotism of her family “pulling strings” to help her move up the social hierarchy. The interference of her parents to maneuver her position in the class hierarchy robbed her of her sense of self-efficacy to achieve anything for herself. She felt her privilege was attained by her family background, and not on her own merit.

I was used to have others helping me to deal with things. I always lacked confidence, because nobody believed that I could handle it myself... I also realized that the privileges I received were not achieved by myself. They were from my family, e.g. my parents and grandparents' backgrounds.

Mona's motivation to immigrate reflects how gender plays into her feeling of oppression and to a large extent was the reason why she chose to immigrate to a country where she hoped she could find herself, her freedom to pursue her career and define her own values.

Susie felt a sense of emptiness in her corporate job in Shenzhen. She did not have any particular ambition to make money or to move up in the corporate ladder. Nor did

she have a desire to move to a foreign country because her life in China was quite satisfactory to her. She was a capable woman and was accepted for her Masters in one of China's universities. What spurred her immigration was that her parents disapproved of her potential husband. In China, she was not able to join her husband in his province of residence. She was also experiencing emotional and existential distress because of growing up in a family of violence but could not find adequate psychological help in China. She decided to immigrate and bring her husband with her to start a new life together in Canada.

The oppression Susie experienced was related to family structure and violence, and a corporate culture and mentality that was dominated by profit and money. Restrictions due to the social and mobility structure in the China curtailed her individual freedom in choice of a mate and place of residence.

Social and political forms of oppression were experienced by the other immigrants that posed threats to their personal safety and future security. Limited and lack of availability of services and work opportunities to meet their needs and development constitute another form of oppression, services that were more available in other parts of the world.

Oylen first came to Canada as a student from Hong Kong. The 1970s witnessed a liberalization of immigration policies under the Trudeau era. Oylen applied for immigrant status because of the freedom of travel and broader job opportunities in Canada compared to Hong Kong. In the late 1980s, her parents and brother also applied to immigrate because of the political uncertainty with the impending return of the British colony of Hong Kong to People's Republic of China (PRC). Confidence in the communist regime

of PRC was rocked by the Tiananmen Square Incident in 1989. Fears of drastic political and economic changes were on the mind of many Hong Kong residents.

Apple immigrated to Canada from Taiwan to escape gangs and loan sharks because of her husband's gambling. She was recruited by immigration companies who offered to help her immigrate for a sum of payment. A second reason for her immigration was better mental health care for her daughter.

I moved here because of my daughter's health issues. This was not the main reason. The main reason was that my husband was a gambler and he owed many people's money, but I did not know exactly how much he owed. You knew that there were many gangs in Taiwan. I had a daughter, and I could not let my daughter out of my sight. If she needed to buy something in the store cross the street, I had to drive her there. I could not let her be alone, so we escaped.

Pearl decided to immigrate to Canada at the urging of her husband because of internal political and class conflict in Taiwan. She witnessed firsthand a blockade and a violent altercation resulting in a death that instilled fear in her heart about the security of living in Taiwan with the class struggle and civic unrest.

We lived in Taipei, in northern Taiwan. At that time, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was competing with other parties. Started in the 1900's. It was the rogues from southern Taiwan making troubles and causing problems. People told me that they caused a lot of turbulence, turmoil and fighting, but I did not see it. I did not pay any attention to it. One day, I experienced something really terrifying. The drivers of the two cars: a taxi and a pick-up truck, were arguing with each other and they parked their cars in a “八” shape. No one could drive through. The truck driver said that he was a labour class, etc. Three people got off the taxi and beat him to death. I was so scared. I did not know what happened after. Because of this, I agreed with my husband that we would migrate.

Notably, Pearl in effect migrated on her own with her daughter while her husband remained in Taiwan to operate his business. Pearl returned annually with her daughter to Taiwan to be with her husband, assist with his business, and allow her daughter to continue with acquiring her Chinese language. In this regard, we see a genderization of

immigration in terms of the woman migrating in the “investment class” as the main caregiver of their child, and allowing her husband to maintain his business enterprise in the former country, despite the fact that Pearl had in effect become a single parent.

The ethos and culture of a humanitarian environment was an important criterion for Pearl’s choice of Canada. She wanted a peaceful and humane environment for her daughter’s upbringing and socialization.

When I chose a city, I had to consider the social environment where it was good for my daughter’s growth... When I open my door, my daughter will face the society and be in the big social environment where she learns a lot of things... I had to think carefully regards its culture (文化) and the people (人民) etc. I did need to find a very slow place for my daughter. I am not saying that fast speed is always good. No, it is not and people are stressing out. Culture (文化) and people (人民) are different. Culture means history and heritage. People is about the social environment and social relationships, such as how people treat each other, and whether or not they are friendly etc. People is about manners (礼貌) and morals (道德), for example, in Chinese culture, we respect and look after elders, vulnerable people, pregnant women, and children. It is not only about being selfish or commercialized.

The women immigrants were all in search of a counter-oppressive space in Canada to escape from oppression they experienced at different levels of the social structure – familial, social, cultural, political, health and economic -- in their source country. Although some of the oppression they experienced were gender-related, others were more broadly based.

Re-covering & discovering what was lost

At a less conscious level, immigrants discovered at a later stage after their immigration, that Canada offered them opportunities to restore losses in their earlier lives, or an opportunity to re-invent themselves in this new country where learning, growing, discovering were made possible.

Apple's dream was to buy a house in Canada, the kind of house she saw her father built when she was a little girl. Sadly her father died at age 40 when she was only 10. The family house was sold, and her childhood ended. She eventually bought a similar house as the one her father built in Canada, "but with different materials." A new land provides a fresh start that makes good old losses.

I bought my own house in 2005 and my daughter graduated in the same year. When I came to Canada, I told myself, "I want a house; I will buy a house; it's ok if I cannot buy it now, but I will buy a house one day." I lived in a house when I was little. I knew it was like my dream. When I was looking for a house, I was looking for the house built by my father actually... I did not really give up, I still bought the similar house as my father built, but the house used different materials... I think that's an expression of my love towards my father. Compensation (補償)... It was so many years ago; it feels like yesterday.

Susie was able to find the healing from her troubled past in Canada through psychotherapy and spiritual groups. Oylen expanded her appreciation for the arts, especially her deep roots and intrinsic style in the oriental tradition. Pearl was able to fulfill her vocation as a health professional, and Mona found a way of working and being herself that allowed her to transcend the hierarchical, other-focused and power-laden social and familial structures.

Theme 2 Disorienting Space: Identity Loss

Immigrants experienced a shrinkage of spaces for their social interactions after they first arrived in Canada. They quickly lost their former status in society which sustained their identity and recognition by others through their jobs and professions. Most under-estimated the degree of hardships and struggles that accompanied the early years of their settlement. Apple described herself as "not yet awake" when she decided to immigrate to Canada. She completely under-estimated what adjustment to living in Canada and raising her children by herself in Canada would entail.

Several factors restricted immigrants' range and depth of engagement with the new society. Language was a central barrier as it is an essential medium in social interactions. Language also codifies meanings and mediates interpretations of the symbols in a culture. Despite language courses that taught immigrants the rudiments of English, they still needed Canadians who were interested and available to interact with them. Apple described how she resorted going to the public library, riding street cars to ask for directions and using online friendship websites to meet Canadians with whom she could converse. Not able to access a welcoming social space, immigrants lost their social markers in a land with different language, culture, and people.

Some withdrew into the enclave of their own ethnic group where language did not diminish their ease of interactions, although they no longer occupied the same space in the social hierarchy they once enjoyed in their original countries. Finances were another restriction in women immigrants' range of interactions, as they had to be concerned about meeting the needs of their daily survival and had little discretionary time to spare outside of looking for work and family responsibilities. Those immigrants who were parents of children or children of senior parents had added responsibilities towards other family members that swallowed up their spare time. Here we see a distinctively gender issue in accessing new social and cultural spaces for women immigrants, especially those with family responsibilities and financial problems.

As identity is maintained by social interactions and a shared set of symbolic representation of values and meaning, immigrants feel disoriented in the new country with limited exchanges with Canadian actors. Although partially maintained by friends from their own ethno-cultural group, and an internalized primary identity constituted

from their former socialization, their subjective biographies were nonetheless loosened. The stress placed on their self-identity after immigration taxed immigrants' mental and physical health which in extreme cases, led to suicidal thoughts.

Downward mobility without English language facility

Conversation is an important vehicle in inducting an individual into a society and its culture. Conversation requires language and social contact. Immigrants who have not attained proficiency in English suffer in their confidence and ability to carry on a conversation. Hence their level of participation in society changes, including the jobs they are able to take.

Apple lost her self confidence because of under-employment after 10 years in Canada. She immigrated at age 31 with two children. At certain points, she was near despair. She tried hard to improve her English language skills, but still she felt she did not feel comfortable in partaking in conversations as it is not easy to master the nuances of a language and its references. Language mediates a culture, and it takes knowledge of a culture to learn a language and its definitions and meanings. In Taiwan, Apple had an executive administrative position in an international company. She gave presentations in front of other professionals, but she was not able to function at the same level in Canada:

I found that I could not fit into the mainstream regardless that I tried very hard, so I gave up. I told myself that I tried. I do not care how my friends look at me. I cannot fit into the society. In 2004, everything went back to "0" the beginning... I got many certificates, but it meant nothing. My English is still not good. Maybe people think my English was good, but I did not agree...I presented in Taiwan in front of many big bosses. Some people were important leaders, but in front of me, they were nothing or not important at all.

Apple settled for a low level job compared to her position in Taiwan. She felt a lot was expected of her in her job with rotating duties, but she was determined to make it a success.

Derogatory remarks about her English set back her self-esteem. She had difficulty managing clients because of her language ability.

I accept it, but it makes me feel very unhappy. During the wintertime, I needed to cover the receptionist while she had her lunch. They would say, "Her English is so poor; how could she cover the receptionist?" See, I was new.

I used to have an awesome job and I could deal with all kinds of problems. I could handle 6 things at the same time, but I never felt it was difficult. Here I only worked as a part-time employee. 21 hours per week...I would not do those jobs while in Taiwan. I looked down on them. Here I could only help the students to turn on and off their computers. Because my English is not good, so I could not teach them how to write a resume. I did not even know how to do that myself. I do not have the ability.

Apple suffered a downward mobility in her career and financial status as a result of immigration, leading to mental health and many initial hardships.

If I had not come to Canada, my income in Taiwan would be enough to support my children; they could have a luxury lifestyle there. Of course, they won't live like that, but my point is my income would be good enough; I would not have experienced those problems. In Taiwan, I never lacked money. The word, "poor" was not in my dictionary. Here I always had to check my bank account. Once I forgot, so the check was bounced back...It's not really about money; it's the feeling. I asked myself "why has my life gone down hill?"

After coming here, I became so unconfident. I was so tough and strong. Here I did not know the rules, and did not know how to communicate. I felt that I was so useless. I had no value.

We witness a dismantling of Apple's identity because she lacked language skills in making meaningful contact with the new society. It led to her disorientation, self-doubt, and loss of status in society. She suffered a marked decrease in social and economic capital after immigration.

Similarly, Mona immigrated to Canada at the age of 31. She felt she lost her place in society after immigration, in contrast to the respected position she held as a supervisor and community leader in Taiwan before immigration. Language barriers reduced her ease of social interaction. She isolated herself. Mona had a difficult time integrating into mainstream society, and was not very motivated to further this integration. She discovered that the Canadian form of the same organization, i.e. her church, was surprisingly different from the church she knew in Taiwan. Organizations take on the culture of the different societies they are situated in. Geographical distances in Canada can be prohibitive as Mona discovered:

Language is the biggest barrier. I can't find my place in the society, this was really the number one obstacle. I was somebody [in my home country], but I felt I lost my place in society. This made me fearful. Before I came I had connections with the church. The church issued a letter. I was a marriage counsellor. I lived in Mississauga and the church was in Markham. I was not really that close to the church... I really was not that enthusiastic in working for the church... Yes, I didn't expect so much challenge. I just wanted to get away from my father. I didn't think much about the future after immigration.

Changes in family space

Immigration posed changes to the family space. Family members did not always speak openly about their stress and struggles after immigration for fear of burdening each other. This often led to isolation which exacerbated the problems. Susie suffered from some severe health problems but she kept her distress from her husband thus producing greater despair. Her husband was not able to find satisfactory employment.

I felt that I suffered from all those health problems for so many years, and they suddenly erupted. I was afraid of being blind, which I could not accept. I was thinking that my new life just started and we just got married. I did not have a chance to have our own babies yet. Was I going to spend the rest of my life with a service dog? It became really bad and I thought about suicide. I tried to kill myself because I felt helpless and could not picture what I would do if I became

blind. I never told my husband about my suicide thoughts and actions, but somehow he found out.

Marital difficulties develop from the stress of immigration adjustment in some cases. Susie immigrated with her husband soon after they were married. It was not easy for both to find equally satisfying work. Susie was sought after for various jobs because of her personality, strong language skills, and experience. However, her husband had difficulty finding work that was rewarding in Canada compared to his respected position in China. Changes in occupational and financial status affected the marital relationship and how the partners regarded each other that did not meet with their social and cultural expectations:

I was very depressed during that time. I was from a well-off family, and I was not worried about money at all. Now we had no income and faced financial issues. I started questioning my marriage and the move I made. I was thinking that probably I married a wrong person, who did not have a technical skill, and made a wrong decision just for our love...During a time period, I had some serious health problems. My immunization system was crashed. I suffered some health issues for almost 10 years since the time when I experienced my emotional crisis. I could not figure out what happened, so I would visit a temple and sat there.

Separation and divorce result in some cases when one spouse migrated with the children while the husband remained in the old country to continue his business. In the case of Apple and her husband, they eventually divorced, but there were pre-existing fault-lines. Her husband had not come to visit her and the children in Canada for 12 years.

Due to financial difficulties, Apple had to settle for low quality housing that compromised their privacy as a family, leading to anxiety problems in her daughter. Apple had to go back to Taiwan for a period to obtain some money soon after they arrived. She left her children with a co-worker. Because of multiple stressors before and after immigration, her daughter became depressed and suicidal. She attributed her

daughter's mental health problems to an accumulation of stress after immigration.

Apple's children were concerned about her, and the family finances. Nobody wanted to complain because they had made the choice to come to Canada and were determined to make it work. Apple recalled:

My daughter always told me how much stress she had during the first year. She often did not say too much because she saw that I worked very hard and had many issues to deal with already. She is also the oldest, so she just dealt with those issues by herself. My daughter didn't tell me that because she knew she chose to come and she wanted to stay. Because they saw I worked very very hard, but I never complained about that; they saw it, so they could not say anything either. I talked to my children, and told them that we only have enough money until September (from March), so who wanted to stay here? I would take the younger brother with me. And then they said, "Mom, we will save more money and we will find a part time job."

Besides an identity erosion from the loss of one's occupation and social status that are important markers of identity, Apple and Pearl suffered an identity loss as a parent, related to parent-child role reversal after settling in Canada. Apple felt helpless in guiding her daughter with course selections in high school and depended on her children to explain to her how the school system worked. Immigrant parents lost part of their parental role and efficacy in guiding and advising their children.

Many moms here did not know about the education system and how to choose the courses. Children had to teach their parents. Although they explain what they learned to their parents, the parents still did not understand. The theories and concepts are hard to understand... What I learned was dated. I went to English schools in Taiwan, but I could not teach her what I learnt then.

Pearl, a parent who put her daughter's education as a high priority, was distressed to not be able to help her daughter with her homework because she did not know the words in her reader.

Adjusting depends on life stage & other family members' well-being

The ease of integrating into Canadian society depends on the age, life-stage, marital status, and family responsibilities of the women immigrants. Oylen came in 1974 at the age of 19 as a student and was placed in largely a structured university environment, living in residence except for holidays and summer vacation. During vacation, Oylen was housed by a host Chinese family from Hong Kong, part of her parents' social network. Hence her need to interact with the larger society was minimal until she began her field practicum. Being single and without parenting responsibilities, Oylen was able to devote her time and energy to work and further her education leading to a career change.

Her parents and brother later joined her after she was established in her new career. Each of the family members reflected a different life stage at immigration and they adjusted with different degrees of ease. Her parents came after their retirement. Her father adjusted easily because of his interest in the outdoors and his extraverted personality and the leisure he had at his disposal. Her mother was less happy after immigration and made many trips back to Hong Kong. Her brother was already in mid-career and was not willing to accept re-training and starting over in Canada, so he eventually returned to Hong Kong. Oylen was left with the care of her parents, as was common for women in assuming the care-taking role.

Women like Apple and Pearl came on their own with their children while their husbands stayed behind in Taiwan. Pearl made visits back to Taiwan annually with her daughter. Being a single parent involved ongoing duties of transportation, homework and developmental advice, peer group integration, finding resources to meet the children's mental, physical and social needs. This often left little time the single parent for herself.

In the case of single parents Mona, Pearl and Apple, the weight and stress of child-rearing and decision-making fell on these single women parents' shoulders.

Ambivalence and turning back

After arrival in Canada, Pearl was very half-hearted about making Canada her permanent home. Immigration was a “backdoor” policy of escape should something happen in Taiwan. Her husband's business was thriving, and he was not prepared to start over again in a different country. A sign of her half-heartedness was that she did not even prepare herself with English language training before immigration. She did not buy a house in Canada initially.

I was just here to get the citizenship. I had no plan to stay here and as soon as I had the citizenship, I would go back. I did not want to be here; I really really did not want to be here. I tried to ignore it, and focused on my work and family.

Taiwan is a very nice place, and I never thought I would immigrate to another country. My coworkers wanted me to go back. I could, but I could not bring my daughter back because she would not be able to catch up in her study. She could, but we could not find a good school for her.

The initial period after immigrant for Pearl was fraught with ambivalence. In addition to the stress she felt as a single parent and her own language learning, she had a major health problem that required surgery. However, with a child in her school years and learning languages (English and written Chinese), the immigration decision was not so easily revoked without disrupting her daughter's development and education. She travelled back and forth every year between Toronto and Taiwan for 10 years, both to help her husband's business and also for her daughter to learn Mandarin Chinese.

Apple confessed that it was her sheer persistence that led her to remain in Canada.

I did not know, I never knew that my life would be that hard and difficult. If I have known it ahead, I would not come. But I am the person who committed to what I

am doing. If I had gone back, I would not be able to have what I have today and to see where I am at today.

Thoughts and attempts to move back to Taiwan were on some immigrants' minds. It was a country with which they were familiar, where extended family support was available. However, there came a point when the children could not adjust to the old country because of their schooling and acculturation in Canada.

My daughter graduated from the university...I wanted her to go to Taiwan and to find some working opportunities there...She stayed in Taiwan for 10 months, and found a job there, but she still wanted to come back.

In summary, the initial post-migration period was characterized by disorientation and loss of identity due to a downward mobility in their social status and diminished social spaces. Changes in the family spaces were also disorienting with loss of the expected parent role in guiding a child in the new culture. Marital rifts developed due to occupational and financial change, both partners' adjustments and thwarted gender and cultural expectations. The social space in the old country that once sustained their identity and self-esteem had receded. Family communication is strained when family members kept to themselves to avoid burdening each other. Language difficulties, time constraints and family responsibilities limited social interaction with the larger society. This disorienting period with a decrease in social, cultural, occupational and economic capital during the early years after immigration stirred immigrants' thoughts of return to the old country.

Theme 3 Work Space: A Primary Site of Social Integration

Analysis of women immigrants' descriptions of the role and function of work in their integration process revealed that work not only provides for immigrants' subsistence financially, it has primary significance psychologically and socially for immigrants.

Work opens up a space for multiple interactions that facilitate social contact and exchange with members of Canadian society. It designates their value and place in the new society that is legitimated through paid acknowledgment for their contributions. Occupation and income are important significations of an immigrant's status in society's institutions.

Work space is revealed to be a multi-levelled space with different levels of interaction, both formal and informal and among actors with varying weights of social capital. Interactions occur at these multiple levels: with superiors, fellow workers and clients, together representing a microcosm of hierarchical, structural space and how people relate to each other in those hierarchies and roles. In immigrants' perception, work space reflects Canadian society in its ethos and multicultural landscape. Through contrasts and negotiations, work spaces allow immigrants to discover and understand their own culturally internalized work ethic, values and attitudes and test out how well they fit in the Canadian context. Social integration is a process of evaluation, adaptation and contrast whereby immigrants redefine themselves and their values in relation to the culture of the new society.

The interviews bear out how immigrants' social integration depends on the sector of Canada's multicultural society in which they work. The women in this study work in the education, health care and social services fields in a metropolis with a large ethno-cultural population, many of whom are new immigrants. So their experience of what is "mainstream" challenges their own preconceived notions of mainstream as white, Euro-centric and upper middle class. Within this reference set, immigrants ascribe their own place in society.

Workplace interactions that were described in the interviews are both formal and informal. Training and professional development introduce immigrants to Canadian values, norms and practices. Supervisors set up standards and expectations and provide feedback. There are also informal interactions with co-workers and clients. Through these interactions, immigrants have occasion to reflect on their ways of working and functioning and evaluate whether their prior knowledge and skills fit within the Canadian context. A culturally-sensitive supervisor will provide the understanding and feedback for the immigrant to go at her pace and make the necessary adaptations.

In cases where work spaces were open to immigrants' contributions, not only expecting them to conform to existing *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1989, p.17), but open to change from new ideas and input from immigrants and newcomers, a space of flow that balance give and take is created. Such open work spaces are important forums for exchanges that foster vitality and innovations in society.

A turning point in the immigrants' lives was when they found paid work. Being situated in the work space assigns status and signification of citizenship and contribution. Immigrants develop a sense of belonging through affiliations with others in the work space, changing their self-definition and anchoring in Canadian society.

Contrasting habitus

Social integration takes place when people with a particular cultural predisposition, values, attitudes and practice meet others with a different *habitus*. A process of negotiation through symbols of words and practice then takes place.

Commonly women immigrants in this study find in their sectors of work, i.e. education, health and social services, interface with other immigrants. They are also

motivated to help other newcomers by nature of their own immigrant experience. Toronto is a city composed of approximately 49% immigrants (City of Toronto, 2011), reflecting a changing Canadian multicultural mosaic. Hence the definition of “mainstream” is in flux. Oylen describes the kaleidoscopic shifts of majority and minority in her schools and the constant changes in reference points she encounters:

In terms of teaching, to me, there was a shift. In Toronto, it is much easier to integrate into Canadian society. For example, with the Toronto District School Board, because it is so diverse, it is difficult for me to feel like a minority. For example, my current school, 60% of the students are Muslim and from Eastern Africa. And with such a demographic, what then is the majority? It is Muslim. However, in my previous school, 90% of the students were African Canadian. So then my perspective kept shifting. Because... majority in the school is a minority in the broader society. And my first school, it was mostly African Canadian. So there were racial issues and a certain confusion about... who was actually in the minority. Because the white kids in my class were in the minority, in that school at least. So the racial tension shifts around.

Through contrasts with other social and cultural groups, immigrants differentiated themselves from in their *habitus* such as work ethic, perceptions of the world, styles of interaction, interests, and values, while striving to accommodate each other and to work together.

In the 1970s working within the “mainstream” culture at the time, Oylen encountered mostly Caucasian bosses and clients. She experienced unforgettable gestures of inclusion and good will extended to her by the Canadians at that time, that formed part of her social integration:

One of my patients back then taught communication in University of Toronto, he would encourage and invite me along to learn... It's in the continuing education department. I actually went. I took a couple of courses there.

Another example...one of my patients loves to read and is very scholarly. Probably, she has been a teacher herself. She introduced me to a book by Pauline Johnson, a First Nations writer, and basically gave me a book on native stories...

like the legends of... very Canadian. It kind of introduced me to Canadian culture and history. This is supposed to be something very minor, but I still remember it to this day.

Later, I realized ... Pauline Johnson is indeed very famous in Canada history.

Immigrants in this study who came after the 1990s reported less exchanges with Caucasian Canadians. This was likely a reflection of the changing demographic and increase in ethnic groups in Toronto. Work space exposes immigrants to many cultures that make up Canada today. Similar dispositions and *habitus* among Asian cultures with values of family and spirituality create a natural affinity between immigrants and other Asian groups, narrowing the distance between the groups as they share food and appreciate the richness of other groups' cultures:

Apple: I have many Indian co-workers from whom I learned a lot of new things about religion, meditation and spirituality.

Oylen: India is an ancient civilization... Music and arts. Like the Maharajah exhibition, it is interesting. And the culture and the country is interesting... Oh and now I even like Indian food. Whereas in the past, I didn't even know the food then.

Work is a site of mingling in Canada's multiculturalism, especially in the milieu of Apple's work which provides services to immigrants. Apple found it easier to relate to Asian groups she met at work because she perceived that they showed more of a genuine interest in her and were more authentic. When asked how she mingled with the "mainstream", Apple answered:

A: Now we come back to my work. Yes, mainly my co-workers. I found it is easy for me to make friends with people from Asia, such as India. I also have friends from the Philippines.

Interviewer: You found the culture is similar. But are they the mainstream?

A: I am not looking at their culture. I am looking at their personalities. They are genuine (真诚) and authentic. I felt that they really wanted to know something about me. For example, mainstream Canadian people may ask you, "How are you?"

The sentence is not finished yet, but they have left already. I often made the joke in my office: If you really want to know how I am, you have to wait for hear the answer. If you do not want to know, then you do not ask. My coworkers would laugh. It still bothers me. If you ask me, "How are you?" then please wait for my answer. I found it's easier to deal with Asian people. Even Black people are easier than Canadians. It's not their fault. I found Canadians could not show their true color to you. They want to, but they lack of the ability to do so because of their lifestyle and education. They are taught in this way. This is ok; that is ok. "Ok" is ok for them, but it's not ok for me. I want to know exactly whether this is good or not. Does the food taste good or not. 'Ok?' What does that mean?

Social integration occurs in day-to-day interactions and the exchanges that take place at work with co-workers and clients. Sustained and genuine conversations lead to better contact and integration between groups. Gradually immigrants' perception of what constitutes Canada changed through these contacts. Some immigrants entertained preconceived notions of Canada as "white" and "upper class", represented by images they saw in corporations and media. Mona made the following observation:

From my perspective, mainstream society consists of upper class people, e.g. elites and governors, who have power to control things and to make decisions.

Chinese immigrants have experienced a colonial mentality from where they came with an internalization of differential racial capital. Apple had experienced this differential in her workplace in a multinational corporation in Taiwan and she had challenged this mentality in the past:

Taiwan people are very weird because they flattered foreigners. I worked with a British man, who was terrible. He asked me to book an appointment with my boss, but my boss was very busy at that time. I told him that I could make a reservation for them for breakfast, lunch or dinner. He did not want to meet after work. He said, "I am from England, so you have to be nice to me." I was thinking, " Why? You came to Taiwan, which meant you were sent to exile by your company." ... Everyone treats them so special. They are getting used to it. I do not like it. We are co-workers, and paid in the same way. Why should you have the privilege? ...I really look down on Taiwan people who feel the foreigners have a higher status than they do.

Immigrants' prior perception of Canada as "white" and "upper class" and themselves as "second class" gradually gave way through their work space to a new perception of everyone being "equal" in a Canada in a multicultural society. Their internalized norms and definitions were changing as their definition of Canadian "mainstream" was shifting, that Canada is not only white and upper class Canadians, but it is a multiculturalism in action. Apple was content that through her work, she could contribute to better the lives of Canadian newcomers, because she could identify with their struggles. When asked about her interactions with "mainstream" Canadians, Apple replied:

A: I only have contact with the mainstream society when I am working.

I: Do you have more connections with the mainstream society now?

A: Through my work. Personally I do not like it.

I: Do not like it?

A: I never thought that I should fit into the mainstream. Never. Everything I did is related to my work. For example, this agency provided many free services to the newcomers. Whatever we do not provide here, I would refer them to another place. My community information is like a book. I try to help all the newcomers because I experienced a lot of difficulties. As long as I know, I would tell them, e.g. how to find a job, school and house.

I: All about the newcomers.

A: Yes, it's my working environment. Everyday I deal with newcomers and try to help them. They do not only need help with finding jobs, but also need help with other things.

I: Besides working, you are not interested in getting into the mainstream society at all?

A: No, not at all. I am never interested in the mainstream society.

Although Apple was reluctant to mingle with "mainstream," she clearly found a sense of place in relation to newcomers in helping them with their struggles in her work space.

With the perception that mainstream consisted of only white people, Susie used to feel her difference made her a second-class. However, her work at an immigrant service agency allowed her to interact with other ethnic groups. This led to her realization that

Canada is a multicultural society that is accepting of all groups. Differences do not mean superiority or inferiority. She then began to feel a sense of belonging in Canada because she can be who she is. She has become more self-accepting without feeling inferior to others. This difference in *habitus* in Canada and China also lead to her contrasting her greater ease in the social system in Canada than in China. In China, she constantly had to prove herself through status or demonstration of worth. Susie experienced more pressure in China, a country more differentiated by economic and social capital than what she experienced in Canada. She reasoned that this is because China has a huge population and the competition is intense in order to make a place in that society that signifies respectability and worth. Susie highlighted how her sense of belonging and social integration was developed progressively through various interactions at work and in school:

Interviewer: Do you feel that there is a distance/gap between you and the mainstream?

S: I am not sure about your definition of “mainstream”? I have a sense of belonging, which I did not have when I was in China. I am not talking about it from a political perspective. If you did this interview two or three years ago, I would not talk with you like this. I would select my answers and give you the right answers to meet your needs. I was fake and pretending...I used to feel that I was a second-class citizen.

When I came, I lived in a Chinese community and interacted with Chinese very often. My work and study allowed me to reach out and had more interactions with different ethnic groups. Slowly I realized that Canada is an accepting and peaceful country. It is very open to and accepts differences. I can be myself and be who I am.

It is different from China. China is big, but it also has a lot of people and the competition is intense. That creates emotional stress in people's lives and to survive, you have to pretend to be someone who you are not. It is not about good or bad. It happens for reasons.

Informal and formal interactions

Analysis of interviews showed that work spaces are sites for learning about the differences between one's original culture and the new culture. This could happen informally through day-to-day interactions at work with clients, and formally with feedback from supervisors. Formalized classroom knowledge is different from practical knowledge in application. Oylen described her initial challenges working as a nurse in training:

I mean I have no problems with school. Like for instance, anatomy, I didn't have any difficulties understanding the subject at all. Academic stuff was never a problem for me. But the societal portion was. In working with patients for example, technically, I understood what they said. But at the same time, I did not really understand what they told me, particularly the social and interpersonal context they portrayed. Like what the professor described, I had problems understanding their (Canadian) way of life.

Culture is not learnt in a textbook. It is more tacit than explicit knowledge and not codifiable without leading to stereotypes. Over the years, Oylen found that she learnt about Canadians through stories people related about themselves at work and during her volunteering:

I think one has to understand the psychology of Canadians, like how Canadians think, how Canadian society functions. I gather the field [her profession] does require social awareness. ... Volunteering I suppose helps with understanding. Giving and doing a service helps... helps with integration...the conversations and the stories help. Everyone has stories. Listening to them helps...Stories help us understand where we stand. Yes, everything is interconnected. Nobody is an island. You've got to have something in common with people around you. Yes, listening to other people's stories help me reflect.

Informally, exchanges at work induct immigrants into understanding their rights, and the rules and regulations operative in society at different contexts. Co-workers in the

work space served as advisors to Apple about her tenant rights and how to handle a landlord who was infringing.

The owner of the apartment knocked my door in the middle of the night. My co-workers told me that he should not do that...I could talk to the owner, but I did not know how to write the letter. My co-workers offered to help me write it, but I was a new, and very shy to ask for their help.

Apart from informal conversations and interactions in the work space, social integration occurs in more formal training contexts and in interactions with one's supervisors. The learning of Canadian values such as tolerance and equality occurred in an interactional context between Mona and her supervisor and how the supervisor responded to her challenge and criticism. Mona was trained to be a public health outreach worker. Through her training she changed her style of working and began to identify with Canadian values in practice:

Sometimes I wondered why the leader is so superficial. I was tempted to challenge her. The leader could sense that but she still respected me. In this tolerant (宽容) environment, my confidence came back. From my work I learned about equality and tolerance of difference. That's not the case in Taiwan. There is not as much tolerance of difference.

Mona was fortunate to find a job that matches her previous experience in Taiwan in the public health field. This perfect match allowed her to thrive and get promoted quickly from worker to supervisor and trainer. Through her Canadian training and practice, Mona made changes in her style of working and relating to people. She became more client-centred rather than theory-based.

My confidence has improved. I am more willing to face reality and more down-to-earth... Before I relied on my working experiences in Taiwan and always taught people the theories. Later they would tell me that I was not doing what I said. Now they found my counselling services are more helpful because I could walk with them to find out what they actually need.

Mona attributed her change through a process of “self-reflection and self-criticism.” Both Oylen and Mona made explicit references to the importance of their own practice of “reflection” which suggests a process of evaluation, weighting and modification of their previous mental constructs and *habitus* in accommodating the new reality of other people’s frameworks with whom they have to work.

Feedback from others in interaction is an important modifier of one’s sense of self in relation to the others in society. Mona talked about how she gained in confidence in herself when she received validation for her ability to express herself in a work-related encounter:

Last time when I was looking for a job, I saw many local English-speaking people there. Someone told me a little bit about the job requirement and started talking about family. It was about an hour of talking. It’s all about family experiences, and it felt like a counseling service. I felt it was not too bad because people could understand me...talking and not frowning.

Confidence in one’s language ability comes from live interactions with others, not simply from a score on a test or another certificate, Apple attested, after pursuing a certificate in teaching English as a second language to boost her own confidence.

The flow of giving and taking in integration

Society depends on the exchange of energy and gifts among its citizens, observed a few of the interviewees. This keeps the cycle of interaction moving through which society gains its vitality. Work that makes room for not only learning but room for giving back by its people is a dynamic resource for a country. When citizens naturally exchange their passion and knowledge with each other, there is a flow and expansion of awareness of society as a whole. Otherwise society becomes stagnant and it is “game over.” A

healthy society depends on a balance between taking and giving. Without these spaces for exchange, people become isolated and stultified.

Oylen teaches art and music in a public school. Her creative approach focused on the use of different art modalities to help immigrant students explore their identity. She felt she has learnt a lot about herself through the arts in her years in Canada, a country that allowed her to change her career from that of a nurse to a musician, artist and teacher. For her, creativity and passion in teaching was continuing a cycle of giving back what she has taken. Through this giving and taking, she becomes part of Canadian society.

It is an openness... You can say... you can say it is a give and take. For example when I learn things here... and then I teach in return... That is what makes me part of the society.... If you were just to take... and not give... that would not make you happy.... If one were to be like that, they'll never improve. Because one who only takes is going to be stagnant.

It is easy to get stuck or isolated without even noticing it... Then, one day, you'd realize it doesn't work. Might as well as go back into the flow. What you take out is what you have to put back in. What we say ... "don't owe anyone anything" (無拖無欠).

Mona's professional and personal growth enabled her to offer new critical and constructive perspectives on programs she was asked to deliver. Her ways of working reflect the values she learned in personal development and growth groups. She was then able to critique existing practice with her expanded framework and bring a more personalized approach to help women, a sign of her professional growth as well as social integration. She is making a contribution to Canadian society:

I went for a training session for 3 months that was about helping women to deal with their issues. The programs are all about how to protect your rights, and how to look for jobs. It lacks personal, one-on-one help. The programs teach you how to find your own strengths when looking for a job, but the jobs they provide to those women are unskilled and low-class ones. I use my skill to help them in my own way. I try to put myself and people who need help on the same level. I am doing better now. It is about 60-70%, and before it

was about 20%. I do self-reflection and self-criticism. I asked myself if I am really that superior or same as others.

There should be more programs that are personalized and focus on personal needs, stress and abilities. Now some counselors would tell the client, "Stop complaining about your childhood abuse, and you should look forward." I felt I needed to deal with my own things first, so that I can help others.

Interviewees' accounts showed that the values, ethos and skills of a culture are transmitted through training and practice associated with work. An immigrant is a thinking and creative actor in appropriating new knowledge. The personal and professional growth of an immigrant in turn brings value and new socialization back to society through their skills, insights and perspectives to enhance service design, structure and delivery. The cyclical nature of how a society provides learning and growing opportunities which are then mediated back to society was elaborated in the examples of Oylen and Mona.

In her retirement, Pearl dreams of working in the Canadian North where health services are scarce. She envisions doing preventative medicine with her holistic knowledge of health with her Chinese medicine training. She discovered her own belonging to Canada in her dream.

I do not have to go to other countries; a lot of places in northern Canada need doctors, too. What I am doing now is more about companionship. I am not saying that is not good or not important, but people need treatments, too. It is not about money. It makes you happy when you see a patient who becomes very healthy after receiving the treatments and live in a very meaningful way. Chinese medical treatment often can help people to extend their lives. That's my hope. I do not mind to go to other countries, but I want to contribute to the place where I live.

When immigrants find in their work space accepting and meaningful interactions, and an openness for what they want to offer, they yield their full measure and make meaningful contributions that add social and cultural capital to society. In this way, they become active participants in Canadian society and socially integrated citizens.

Theme 4 Mentorship Space: Leveraging Integration

Mentorship space is a unique kind of space that brings together two people with different volume and weight of capital – social, cultural, economic and others, which is not commonly a likely scenario as people of similar levels of capital tend to cluster together. In the mentorship space, the party with more capital voluntarily works with the other with a deficit of capital to raise the latter's capital to the higher level. In more concrete terms, a mentor is someone with the advantage of possessing greater social, cultural, occupational, financial and network capital than a mentee. Motivated by a desire for the mentee's success, a mentor shares freely of his/her know-how and resources to give the mentee a leverage in navigating her path in attaining greater capital.

Instrumental to immigrants' social integration and success is the function of a mentor. A mentor is defined as a person with resources or capital and experience more than what the immigrant possesses at a point in time. A mentor knows the territory the mentee is trying to navigate. In many cases mentoring is a longer term relationship built on trust and commitment that the mentor will be there for the mentee when needed. However, mentors can exist in different forms and the relationship with the mentee can be more or less intense.

A mentor can open doors and expand networks, clarify perceptions, assist the mentee make the necessary occupational connections. A mentor also knows the codes of a culture that are often implicit and points them out to the mentee. A mentor helps the mentee survive the landmines in unfamiliar territory. Where there is misunderstanding, a mentee acts as a translator to bridge understanding and adjust perceptions between the

mentee and the system. A mentor is also a spiritual guide imparting inner clarity and orientation that is needed by the mentee to sustain the journey.

A mentor sees the mentee's potential and points out opportunities and possibilities as well as mistakes or wrong turns. Knowing the larger territory and the mentee's potential, a mentor can help make linkages for new enterprises. A mentor fosters the mentee's autonomy and contributions to society. Not just helping the mentee conform to societal norms, the mentor as a person of knowledge and insight focuses on the mentee's latent gifts and talents. So inspired, the mentee then becomes a mentor to others and continues the cycle of integration.

Mentors crack the culture's code

In terms of social integration, mentors possess higher levels of cultural capital in knowing the cultural code than the mentee. Oylen encountered her mentor Mr. Richards when she first started teaching in a middle school with mostly immigrants from a rough catchment area. Mr. Richards has taught in the school for many years and knows its culture and students. A mentor is a senior and seasoned person who knows the system, has the street smart and experience and the attitude to be helpful. His mentoring advice is not about the techniques of teaching but about the school and student culture and how to survive in it. A mentor imparts tacit knowledge about a system. It is about learning "who is who", the lay of the land, and coaching the mentee to navigate the landmines and the invisible aspects of the culture. A mentor also empowers by the assurance of backing up the mentee. He is someone with clout and credibility in the culture. A mentoring culture is based on trust which is different from one that involves "backstabbing" or undermining. Oylen's mentor taught her ways of gaining entry into the school immigrant sub-culture,

winning acceptance, and showing her the ropes of when and how to act. He made himself available on call when needed and offered emotional support. A mentor is someone who has walked the block a few times himself.

There was an older Canadian gentleman there who taught music, currently deceased, who helped me a lot then --- Mr. Richards. He helped me a lot when I first got there. He has had an interesting life and provided a lot of advice about teaching in that particular school environment... So instead of demanding from the kids, he said to learn to observe and figure out who are the gang leaders and don't offend them. He taught me survival... And he added that if I got into trouble, he'd back me up. He has been at the school for a long time and knew what was what. These kids respect him. Not because he is the best teacher there... his method is controversial... but because he had street creed... And the school I was at then really has a street culture with its own consistent set of values. Unlike my current one, where there is a culture of backstabbing or everyone is on their own and have to watch their own back. Makes you go crazy.

A mentor introduces the immigrant to the street creed which is coded. His advice helped the immigrant make corrections in expectations and in her approach to become successful in integrating into the foreign culture.

Yes. Mr. Richards helped me to set my foot in... to gain acceptance.. You know, I just graduated... had high ideals... I mean I was very green and had done very well in school up to that point. I have this whole idea of what music education is about. Mr. Richards warned me that there's the element of social problems in the school, and taught me the importance of being flexible.

Mentors open doors

Mona met a key person in her ethnic network who acted as a mentor. Jin [pseudonym] is a champion and organizer in the Taiwanese Chinese community. She owns a shopping mall with Taiwanese businesses and she makes her spaces available for community activities and workshops. One of the focus groups for this project was held at her space in the shopping mall. She also sponsors workshops, some of which she subsidized with her own money if she deems them worthwhile. She also has a big

network of Taiwanese Chinese to draw from as attendees or speakers. One can say Jin possesses spatial, financial and network capital.

Spotting Mona's expertise in a specialized area in public health, she invited Mona to lead a workshop at her mall, showing her support by attending the workshops with her husband. Through Jin's mentorship and the exposure she facilitated, Mona's network expanded and became a coveted workshop leader, whose students later started their own training.

Other champions cited by immigrants have social, specialized technical knowledge and economic capital. They organized people, applied for funding for worthwhile programs for the community and disseminated knowledge and information.

They got provincial funding in 2002 to help women immigrant and refugees from Southeast Asia...They used their social networks and organized three workshops. Other organizations only had one.

Susie cited her meeting with a teacher of a workshop who opened new doors for her. Through this teacher she was connected to another trainer who was beneficial to her. Mentors and teachers of knowledge and insight are instrumental in immigrants' growth as persons. This in turn helps them with their transition and social integration as immigrants. Mentors have networks they introduce to immigrants that expand immigrants' learning, work and service opportunities. Susie relates:

I talked to [my teacher] and she told me that a lady offered a course in the Gestalt Centre in Toronto (完形中心/学院). I contacted her and registered for that course. I later started organizing some workshops and invited many speakers[for immigrants at her service agency].

Mentors serve as role-models

Mentors are often what is traditionally called "elders". They have an inner solidity of self expertise in a particular area and a wisdom in life that attract others to them. Their

reason for their sharing with the mentee is not mercenary, but issues out of their own life-long dedication to areas that claimed their passion. They can be local or transnational.

Oylen said she discovered her “Chineseness” in painting through studying with an old Chinese artist who was a friend of her father’s. He gathered students in his house to give Chinese painting lessons for a nominal fee. This elderly painter was an important figure for Oylen to discover her own Chinese style in painting. He opened up a physical space in his home for aspiring artists to gather. So he transformed his domestic space into an artistic, communal and cultural space for those sharing his interest in art:

[He was] like an uncle figure. He came over, retired and then... full-time art classes. It is not like it was very... structured. But he taught it at home in a home studio. The sort where it is not depending on it for a living. Um... he was a multi-style multi-medium artist himself. And familiar with both Chinese and Western styles. Me however, once I put pen to paper, I felt Chinese.

One of Mona’s mentors was a retired nurse who recognized the goodness in people. She inspired Mona to find her own resources, and to see her difficulties as opportunities. Similar to what Mr. Richards was to Oylen, this woman made herself available any time Mona needed her and the mentoring relationship extended for a period of over 20 years.

Yes, I have an elder friend who is a leader of the [New Age] club. She used to be a nurse. She had many personal issues, and attempted suicide several times. She had studied and promoted [New Age philosophy] for more than 20 years... The lady and I have been friends for more than 20 years... When I have some issues, I will call her and she can counsel me through the phone. She will help me to figure out what is happening with my body energy and where it is stuck.

Mentors extend acceptance and inclusion

In the 1970s, there were more accounts from immigrants like Oylen about the hospitality and inclusion extended by Canadians. These accounts were few and far

between from immigrants who came after 1990. An example of how large an impact such volunteer gestures of hospitality and good will was etched in the memory of an immigrant experience as described by Oylen that exposed her to Canadian traditions and cultural life in small town Ontario. Its affective impact in integrating newcomer cannot be overstated:

In the first few years when I first arrived, I recall attending a number of hospitality related events... There were a lot of them in my first year. The families invited and hosted for a weekend . Local Canadian families. I still remember. There's this family. They lived in Leamington. I still remember them... a very Canadian family... The entire family showed me Thanksgiving and Harvest. They introduced me to typical life in Southern Ontario. They in fact orientated me. This hospitality program was great ! Tecumseh, Ontario. It was a very small town. These are typical Canadian small towns which I would not have visited on my own, if I didn't know anyone there. These were all pure hospitality and good will...Acceptance. I felt welcomed... I can still remember after so many years... This was about forty years ago and I still remember the family. It was a strong impact... on my adjustment. These were all very Canadian families, very warm and welcoming.

In contrast, Apple described great difficulty in accessing Canadian friendship, not to mention mentorship. She took pains to find friends on the internet in order to practise her English. However, there were complications as Apple described:

My friends. I just had Internet friends at the beginning. I am good at using my computer. I was looking for friends. I wanted to make friends, and to practise English. I posted it online: I am new here, and I want to practise my English. I did not know those websites were for dating. I met a new mother. She just delivered her baby, and could not go out. We talked about and found that we both liked tea and pottery...There were a lot of troubles... people thought I was a gay. I thought I want to find people who speak English, so I had friends from different areas, e.g. U.S. and U.K. I tried not to find local people to avoid problems. Many western men wanted to date Chinese girls. It was not for me.

As most of her online contacts were in writing, and only later involved spoken conversation, Apple later joined a Language Exchange Program to have live contact with native English speakers in exchange for teaching them Chinese. However, spontaneous,

voluntary mentoring and hospitality from native English speakers were not reported by any other immigrants apart from Oylen who came in an earlier era.

Mentors are local and transnational

In a globalized world of travel and internet connections, mentors are found not only locally, but transnationally. Organizations sponsor leaders, gurus and experts to Canada for workshops, training and retreats. Immigrants with means also travel the country and the world to learn from their mentors and role-models. Although these role-models may not fit into the definition of mentoring that includes a two-way relationship, they are nonetheless important to the immigrants as inspiring role-models they look up to who provide them with a frame of orientation towards what they deem significant in life. Some examples of these transnational mentors are in Buddhist meditation and Qigong. Mentors can assist immigrants in developing a spiritual compass that stabilize them in the storm and give them a sense of direction in the challenging process of social integration. Immigrants emphasize their ability to successfully integrate is a holistic process that is multi-dimensional and includes the spiritual and emotional aspects:

It [social integration] is not simply about filling the forms. People arrived in the new environment and started learning a new language. They had to reconstruct their life outlook, values and traditions. Many people felt that it was hard to find a job because in the new environment they lost their confidence and thought that they could not do certain jobs. They, in fact, had the skills required for jobs, which was not the biggest issue. Their emotional settlement is the most important and we need to support them. They need to find a sense of peace and contentment (幸福感).

Immigrants act as role models for other immigrants, inspiring in them a sense of vision and service in Canada. Oylen mentioned the founder of Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care in the Greater Toronto area. It is now known as an exemplar of high

quality and culturally sensitive care ranging from its architectural design to the diversity of its programs.

Wong Yu Kai (Joseph) was also from McGill, the guy from Yee Hong... It's only after my dad had been admitted to Yee Hong I started to understand how noble some of his visions were then...It is a great place for old Chinese folks. There are things like wide corridors that can accommodate two wheelchairs side by side, which significantly decrease disputes and arguments. There are also roomy rooms and great windows...I think Wong Yu Kai's vision is very important for Canadian Chinese. He has indeed greatly contributed to the Chinese community here in Toronto.

The vision and achievements of other ethnic Canadians to Canada is an inspiration for others to do the same.

Mentors point out discrepancies and enlarge perspectives

Oylen related how different mentors and supervisors were instrumental in her career development. One example was when a supervisor pointed out to her that she must have experienced “culture shock” and put a label to her struggles when she first worked in the health care field.

I encountered difficulties. Firstly, nursing just wasn't a good fit with my personality. Secondly, one needs to understand a lot ... cultural and social nuances ... plus it required much maturity. So I went to see the department head after a year ... a little more than a year. The person asked if I had cultural shock. The person said I must be having cultural shock ... not quite able to integrate into the Canadian society (不能涵接), not quite understand the Canadian way of life (不懂來龍去脈). It was only then I heard about the term “cultural shock” ... only then I knew I had “culture shock”. In working with patients for example, technically, I understood what they said. But at the same time, I did not really understand what they told me, particularly the social and interpersonal context they portrayed. Like what the professor described, I had problems understanding their [Canadian] way of life.

Mentors help correct mis-interpretation of Canadian experience and lead to more realistic and accurate understanding of the causes of failure and job search. They also help develop new values, such as self-responsibility, to help immigrants become

successful. Susie cited the following example in her role as mentor of immigrants' job search:

One lady told me: "when going for an interview, the dress code is very important, and do not show off your wealth in front of your employer." The reason was she was not hired after her interview because her potential employer saw her driving a BMW. I was thinking: next time you will not drive your luxury vehicle, but what will you do if you are still not hired? She does not look at herself at all! She does not look at her own abilities or competitiveness at all.

"What other teachers perceive as garbage, I see potential."

Oylen envisions a different way of tapping into what immigrants can offer Canadian society as she works with her students. It would be helping them focus on their existing passions and interests, and helping them feel they have something to offer. A mentor is one who sees the potential in the mentee and what his/her native cultural skills and passion have to offer. A mentor then brings forth that potential and encourages the mentee to share with others, because she knows the interests and needs of the society. She develops new ways for immigrants to think about themselves other than as one who is dependent on the government because one feels one has nothing to offer. She helps the immigrant connect with large circles and network and in so doing facilitates the process of their social integration. A mentor is a connector to resources within the person and with the larger community:

Okay, for someone who doesn't know English... Okay, and does not really have a skill... plus my level of education is very low... When I get here, I have got to look at... how much the government is going to give me in benefits. And can I apply as a refugee. Do I have any contribution to Canada? Not a thing at all... However, if one were to think... wow... I have...you know... now that I am in Canada... I can share my love of... like for instance, I love Tai Chi... And I can teach... I can start a class. If people come, I'll teach. I offer free lessons for those who are interested. Or if there is a space...Now because I know Tai Chi... There can be an entire class of people that can learn Tai Chi from me. It is about the thinking. One ought to have the perspective of "I know Tai Chi. I'm great at it. It is a Chinese thing." Tai Chi... is vertical; culturally and socially it is a

contribution especially in a relatively horizontal world. Especially so since after such Tai Chi sessions, people gather and chat a lot. It is a huge contribution. Because if there were no such classes, there would be a huge group of people there that would have nothing to do and feel lonely. But one has to know this. One has to think from such a stance.

In her teaching, Oylen tries to see the potential in her students that is often missed by other teachers. She sees into their intentions.

My students once said, you know why... Why you are a good art teacher? Because you can make art out of garbage. What other teachers perceive as garbage, I see potential.

A mentor's gift to a mentee is not only to help the mentee conform to societal norms and procedures, but to help them perceive and realize their potential gifts to society.

For example in the same piece of art, another teacher might say this is wrong. I asked for the student to draw... with certain colors and without outlines. The student didn't do what I asked for... the other teacher might give the student a C-. As for me, from my perspective... I have in fact said all these ... one to seven things... the student did not follow any of these instructions... however, the student ... what the student drew... he was able to convey... something important. You know... This student has given it thought. It wasn't a case of just handing in a thoughtless mess. You can tell... There was something inside... I would give it an A.

Mentors translate and defend what the mentee cannot express

Mentors act as translators for the mentee because she/he understands the intention and can intuit the mentee's perspective. This is an important role in bridging misunderstandings and misconstruals that place immigrants in a disadvantaged position. Oylen talks about how she takes on the mentorship role with her immigrant students in the school:

The history teacher asked the student to draw a diagram to make a point. Then the student drew... a mess. The mother came and asked me what I saw. The parent said the teacher gave her child a zero. The parent just asked what I saw and didn't elaborate on the assignment or say anything else. I shared what I saw. I know the child, so I said, "Here is what I think is what the child might be trying

to say". Then the parent said... "Mmmm... that is it. You see it. But the other teacher gave my child a zero". This has to do with not following instructions, being exact or using labels. I said, how the other teacher grades is up to them and I don't have a say in it. However, if I were to be the one grading, you know what... The point is there, I would grade it differently....

Canadians in positions of authority play an important role in supporting immigrants. Oylen mentioned that in a case of discriminatory incident at work, she was backed up and defended by her supervisor:

For example, at work, at the work place, occasionally, you may hear remarks against Chinese... Yeah, patients. Like for instance, some kids would say "I don't want to work with a Chinese..." ... So I would talk to my boss... So then my boss, who is very supportive, would talk it over with the patient, and probe for the reason. She would clarify with the patient if it was work related. If not, she would say, "I have full confidence in my staff." She was very clear about what she was doing. If it's about discrimination... She wouldn't switch... She would support her staff. She would even tell the patients, if they didn't like it, they could go to other hospitals.

Supervisors and mentors in an official capacity who are judicious in assessing a complaint and determining if it is of a discriminatory nature reinforce the values of social justice in the work place. They are critical agents in the social integration of immigrants. Hence, targeting their training against racism, their cultural sensitivity and preparation for such potential scenarios could make a difference in immigrants' social integration.

Mentees becoming mentors

Apple aspired to volunteer to help other young immigrants who had trouble in Canada because of her daughter's struggles with mental health and adjustments as a teenager. For Apple to make a contribution through volunteering, she felt it is important for her to find a good match between what she feels passionate about and what the needs are out there. Only then is she invested in giving freely of her knowledge and experience. Mentees do not have to be limited to her own ethnic group. In her case, she has a concern

for young people:

If they have 20 teenagers who have relationship issues, I will help them right away... There are many full-time moms who can help with making donations and with the auction...I feel I am very useful and have a certain value in this kind of group [teenagers]. I did the same thing in Taiwan. Last time when I was in Taiwan, I helped 20 teenagers who had relationship problems.

Likewise, Oylen wanted to give back to her students what she had learnt from her mentors. Her mentors were artists who worked with her to develop community-based art shows and exhibits. In Canada, Oylen felt Canada offered her a wide range of artistic explorations including rediscovering her own Chinese heritage in the arts. Hence she desired to give back what she learned out of her own “gratitude”, thus continuing her cycle of “social integration.”

I learned about Canadian music and met different artists. Finally in university I met a professor who was involved with a children's choir and he taught elementary children music. That inspired me to go back to school to study education. And now, I teach in public school.

Being equipped in a specialized area of knowledge allows immigrants to feel they have something to offer. Some sought out further training and make contributions transnationally. Being mentored and mentoring others multiply the contributions of Canadians to society both nationally and transnationally. Mona trained many other people in outreach in an area of public health:

M: Many people who attended my classes are giving classes themselves. They may get further training in the U.S. Some went back to Taiwan. They organized their own groups, leading study groups and growth groups.

I: Have you imagined how you come to where you are now?

M: No. I never even dreamt of it.

The broken cycle of mentoring

The cycle of mentoring breaks down when the mentee does not “pay it forward” in mentoring others. The traditional Chinese adage is for one to think of the source when one prospers, but this principle is not always honoured. Thus the chain of reciprocity and giving and receiving is broken. Apple was always able to find mentees from her agency to return to be featured for interviews regarding their success stories. She provided examples of those who used their experience to inspire others, and some who did not. The Chinese who are more able to abide by this traditional principle of reciprocity keeps the circle of benefaction and mentorship alive.

There were many cases like that. Another girl was from [city]. She came to our class, and was looking for a job. I asked her to be my assistant first, and helped her to find volunteer work in different organizations. She got a lot of certificates and awards by volunteering in different events. Eventually she found an IT job in [major bank] ...She never came back to visit again after she left here. We wanted to interview students who were successful in their careers, but we could not find her. I helped her from the beginning. She came here with nothing, e.g. job. I helped her to register classes, and even allow her to take some classes as training sessions. She found a job and a boyfriend and eventually she was married and had children. I liked to interview her, but she did not want to do it. Not a lot of Taiwan people would do something like that. I helped about 10 people from Taiwan. I helped one guy from Taiwan, and now he is the Training Director in [major company]. He used to be an editor's assistant. I did his interview. We became friends, and I joined his reading club, too.

When a mentee becomes a mentor to other immigrants, they keep the social integration dynamic going. When mentees fail to become mentors, the social integration process loses energy and stagnates. Hence mentorship is a gift that keeps giving so that the cycle of social integration continues. Those with more social, cultural, symbolic and economic capital intentionally and freely fosters the development and growth of capital in those less privileged.

Theme 5 Liminal Space: The Universal and Transpersonal

Space is not uniform but heterogeneous. This is an important observation by Foucault (1967) and Turner (1974). Each space is imbued with meaning and different kinds of relations among actors within it. Foucault's *heterotopias* function in counterpoint to ordinary and regular space. They represent the dark, forbidden, deviant spaces in society. Within heterotopias time can be warped, layered and linked into *heterochronies*. Hence experiences in heterotopias are of a different sort compared to ordinary space, but in juxtaposition to ordinary space.

Similarly, Turner concept of *liminal space* calls our attention to the kind of space that is created intentionally through symbols to allow for interactions of equality, essential humanity, authenticity, universality, community and transformation (Turner 1969). Mind and body are engaged in an altered state of consciousness as in rituals and theatre. Emotions are free to flow. It is a space for experimentation of relations with self and others. This space is usually guided or facilitated by an elder or an expert who understands the dynamics of liminality. It is also referred to as an anti-structural space where social hierarchies, rules and structures are suspended and questioned. Those who took part in liminal space emerge from it with a new awareness and perception of self and others in society even as they fall back into their respective roles. Because of its transformative effects, liminal spaces are healing in reconstituting one's self-perception, values, dispositions and practice. All societies have their heterotopias and liminal space (Foucault, 1967; Turner 1974).

References to liminal spaces are replete in these immigrant interviews. They highlight how these spaces are essential to their preparation and equipment for social

integration into society. Perhaps liminal space is in itself a form of social integration in that it exposes its participants to a human universality that transcends race and culture. It opens them to a wider, transcendent perspective and set of resources. It also transforms the way they handle conflicts, emotions, and purifies their motives for service. Whether liminal spaces are created during a life transition or crisis, or accessed regularly to keep one's balance and awareness, they are complementary to immigrants' engagement in society and how they function within it. Hence anti-structural spaces, though less studied by sociologists, are as indispensable as structural spaces. They renew and regenerate the structural space. There are different degrees of anti-structural qualities to liminal space, which exists along a continuum. The arts, meditation, therapy groups, festivals, study groups are some instances of liminal spaces, which always involve groups in interaction and not just an individual in lone activity.

The arts and psychotherapeutic groups as transformative space

The arts are an important vehicle for identity formulation. Oylen had the support of a community of artists/mentors in her work in the schools who fed different ideas and experimentations into her work with students.

Identity is a main theme I teach day in and day out... every year. Because I teach folks in their tweens and teens, identity is an easy subject to teach and it comes up in all sorts of projects...they end up doing a lot of mapping and so on. Thought about... identity through... self-portrait. Identity through eating - I love teaching that! Through food. I worked on such projects.

Oylen's creative work as teacher was always invigorated by her interactions with other artists and academics. Her art was conducted in community and resulted in community.

Animation... filming...Because I was involved in many projects and I was a subject in ... I was a subject in another research project... It wasn't a PhD project,

I forgot what it was for... I also took a course at the museum... I was the subject, and the museum ... Museum as teacher's transformation. So through the environment of a museum... How teachers transform... How does it affect and alter the way teachers teach... And make student take that transformative leap as well.

So that was where I know Suzuki from. Because she was one of the artists... I brought all my artists to school. And it was a transformative experience for my students! I can really see the change both in myself and in my students. I really feel that I made a difference. I did contribute... a lot. It is real...It helps people to find their identity and know where they stand.

Liminal space that involves both the mind and body is where people can make radical transformations of self and perceptions of others and the world. Working in a symbolic space consolidates self-construals and changes one's stance in the social space.

Oylen related that she gained her self-assurance as an art and music teacher over time. It was only through her solidity of self developed through the liminal space of art in concert with other artists and students that she could answer to her principal about her unconventional method of teaching.

I: Your sense of self assurance. Where did that come from?

O: I built it.

I: Over time?

O: Over time. Built accumulatively. For example, in every identity exercise, I got clarification and refined my sense of identity. There is a reflective element built in those. It helped me build a sense of self. So it was totally built. I mean initially I was insecure. Afraid. For example... When the principal says something is wrong, I'd be frightened. Now...my response would be, you know what, I know what I'm doing and I know who I am. And... you know what... nowadays I can actually have conversations that like.

Apple made use of Systemic Constellations and Rotation Qigong to change her relationships with her parents, her perceptions of men, and her interaction style.

From 2004-2009, I changed a lot. My personality is: stubborn, terse, strong, powerful and tough. Behind that, I need love. I refused to accept people's help and love. It's hard for me to accept people's help. I re-establish my love towards my mom and recall my love for my dad. I hated my father since he died. I was thinking, "Who gave you the right to die after you had so many children. You left us." I erased his love from my memory...In the Rotation Qigong class, everyone

was asked to think about a person who they knew when they were children, and then think about what the person did. I recalled some things my father and I experienced together. My father took me to the hospital when I was sick. It was flooding, and he held me tightly...My dad's death had a big impact on my attitude towards men. I did not like men, but I did not understand at that time. I had boyfriends, but I tricked them. I did not treat them nicely...I could not work with male co-workers...This situation has been changed.

Apple found being a part of groups that nurture spiritual well-being essential to her and her daughter. These groups provide a space for social contact with other like-minded people and a place for joint activity for mother and daughter.

I like to take classes; any class that benefits wellbeing (养生); I would take my daughter. I even said we go back to Taiwan to take the class. I do not know if you know [leader]. That's the class; I said we would take in Taiwan. I took her to a Qigong class where she made a lot of good friends...She also learned a lot from me.

Liminal spaces allow in-depth contact in a non-hierarchical relationships that replenish immigrants' resources to meet day-to-day challenges. Groups run the gradation of different levels of liminality, but they all provide a safe environment where people can share more deeply of personal concerns. Pearl joined a book club to share ideas.

I joined a book club. People read different kind of books and they exchange their information or discuss about the books. I would find some experienced moms there and asked them how they raised their children, and I could learn from them.

Even in a book club that allows people to share their experience from personal experience informally, immigrants can learn about raising a child in the Canadian context that is age appropriate and culturally sensitive. The value of these informal spaces sometimes taking place in the home is often under-estimated.

Discovering human universality: "Underneath and from the root, they are connected"

Among the Chinese there is a love of learning, of bettering oneself. This was

prominent in the immigrants' narratives about the important components of their lives.

All the immigrant participants sought out places and opportunities to learn and grow throughout their immigration journeys.

Susie met close friends from different cultural backgrounds at work and they took part in book clubs, art therapy, case studies together. These constitute a therapeutic and self-improvement milieu. After people share at deep personal levels, they form bonds of ongoing connection. They share over the phone or meet for coffee. Liminal space involves people sharing at a deep level beyond the usual social contact which fosters connections that transcend cultures.

I: Do you have connections with other ethnic groups?

S: Yes. They are Indian, German, Korean and Malay people.

I: On which level? Good friends or co-workers?

S: Very close friends.

I: Do you share your secrets with them?

S: Yes.

I: How do you interact with them?

S: We went for coffee. We also talked on the phone or we visit each other. Also I joined their activities.

I: What kind of activities?

S: Book club, art therapy and case study.

I: Are they like self-improvement groups?

S: Yes.

I: How did you meet those people?

S: Through my work, which allows me to meet people with different cultural backgrounds.

Susie was involved in self-improvement and therapy groups. She mingled with Westerners to discover that under the surface, they were not much different from her. Regardless of culture, there are people who suffered from violence and abuse, who experienced no support. These encounters dispelled her idealization of Western culture as viewed in Hollywood movies where Western men were always heroes.

I joined many self-improvement organizations. I organized some entertainment groups, such as singing and cooking groups while I was working, but I never joined those groups. I liked to join some groups, such as book club, retirement group and retreat groups. By joining these groups, I interact with local people growing up in the Western culture. I realized that as human beings, we are the same. We just have different social standards and limitations. We are exactly the same. I thought my family was so violent and dysfunctional, but some of their families were even worse than mine. I did not have a lot of support, and they did not have either in their lives. I am ashamed of talking about sex, and they did not feel comfortable either. This is against what I thought about Western people. I thought they are very open and their lives are like what are shown the Hollywood movies: fathers are always the heroes... there are also some other therapeutic groups, such as voice treatment, art groups, and energy work and bodywork groups.

These self-improvement and therapeutic groups provided a liminal space where people relate to each other in their vulnerability in shedding the social masks of roles and respectability. The separation of superiority and inferiority is dissolved. Liminal space encounters equalize and humanize those who participate in it. It gives participants a different view of their relationship with others, who occupy different structural spaces with different levels of capital in structural space. A different definition of self in relation to others is made possible through encounters in liminal space.

Susie discovers herself in relation to other ethnic groups through liminal space. Liminal space allows participants to experience other human beings regardless of race and culture as universal beings. People may appear different in appearance, but underneath, they are the same. However, only with maturity are people able to share themselves, observes Susie. Before that, they are hiding like seeds inside their shells. It is only when people start to blossom that they can communicate. It is not easy to take part in a liminal space.

At the bottom, we are the same, but on the top, we are different. Additionally, we are still not opening ourselves. In Osho, it is said that human beings are still

living like seeds. They are hidden inside that seeds to be protected. However, life has many possibilities. When the shell of the seed is broken and in bud, the life is alive. They can communicate with each other only after they have flowers. Flowers have honey and can communicate in the wind. The bees also help them to interact with each other. That's the moment when you can share. For me, I am growing, but I am not a flower yet. Personally, for the ethnic groups to share something, they have to know: regardless that the flowers are in different shapes and sizes, they all have a sweet or pleasant scent. Underneath and from the root, they are connected.

Accessing the transcendent

Liminal space allows immigrants to access the transcendent and spiritual resources. It provides them with a sense of universality and an expanded perspective in relation to others. What existed as hierarchical relationships are perceived differently in liminal space where people are equal in their humanity and yearnings. Through her involvement in a group that relates “Mind, Body and Spirit,” Apple said she “learned about the super spirit” that helped her understand what kept her in Canada amidst all the hardships.

Susie critiques new immigrants services that are focused on helping immigrants “fill out forms.” In reality successful integration is more than utilizing government services, but it is in finding one’s self-efficacy. This requires the development of the immigrants’ agency and multi-dimensional well-being to equip them with emotional and spiritual resources. Such resources can be accessed through liminal space:

It [immigration] destroyed all my privileges, foundations and advantages that I used to have in China. Immigration itself pushes me to make changes. In China, this kind of growth opportunity is not available. You cannot have a big shift. Everyone needs to fit into the new social environment. The government cannot give you a formula that teaches you how to fit into the new environment. Immigration is not about whether or not you can work in certain organizations or if you speak English fluently. It is a long process through which people’s emotion and spirit needs to settle down (心灵的安顿). The immigration organizations here do not have counseling services that can help and teach the newcomers to deal with their emotional/spiritual struggles. The

services centers teach you how to fill out forms and other technical skills, and they ignore the needs of psychosocial services.

In Susie's experience, strengthening her spiritual practice was a key component to her social integration through finding her own self-efficacy:

I think it [social integration] is related to my spiritual practice. The more I know about life, the more I feel that I do not have many demands. I found that the more I know about the nature of life, I desire less material things. I know I could have a regular work and still survive. I started searching for my belief since 2001. Belief (信仰) is the most important part of my life and it is my life. I do not care about what kind of job that is, but I have my own way to find mine. I believe that eventually I could attract more people to be around me and I could inspire more people, but I had to walk down the path first. We should not be money's slaves. I would say that I believe in God/Spirit, but I am not associated with churches, very institutionalized.

During times of struggle dealing with her father's Alzheimers, Oylen found role models of Asian elders in the Catholic church and in a meditation practice she followed. Religion is a semi-liminal space in that it is both hierarchical and non-hierarchical. What aided Oylen in her struggles came through structural and non-structural avenues, i.e. the leadership of Asian elders and the spirituality they imparted and modelled. To support her spiritual quest, she found community in the Catholic church, retreats, and meditation groups. These groups were inter-cultural and allowed her to find transcendent meaning and peace with the big questions of life, death and human suffering.

I am not church-going but the show [on television] inspired me to go to go back to church. This blind priest has a gift... he is not that old, may be not even 40. I was so surprised ... his sermons inspired and moved me a lot. You know, in the past, I would just fall asleep at the time of homily... (laughed). Because of his inspiration, I ended up going back to church.

The other person... equally amazing ... was a retreat headed by a master [一行禪師]. He is a Buddhist monk from Vietnam... should be in his mid 80s. He was exiled and started a monastery in France. Realizing that he was going to have a 5-day meditation retreat in Vancouver... I signed up. I wasn't Buddhist, even though I may occasionally read their teachings. And there I ended up in the

retreat in Vancouver. He was a very peaceful presence. We did both passive (坐禪) and active (行禪) meditations... all one thousand of us.

I think these two experiences help me resolve problems. It also informs my philosophy on life and death. It helps me to feel more at peace. In fact, till this day, I would still go to meditate with a group at University of Toronto occasionally. It helps me clear my mind. It helps me to come to terms with my father's Alzheimer's. Also it helps me to accept life and death.

In a New Age study group based on reading, sharing, and practice that touched on the transpersonal, Apple changed her attitude towards her difficulties which made it easier for her to deal with them.

My attitude. I use a different attitude to deal with the difficulties I have experienced. The difficulties are still the same, but my attitude is changed. It's still very difficult, but it is not as hard as used to be.

Return from anti-structure into structure

Some immigrants voluntarily select to withdraw into themselves and their own healing process before they feel ready to make a contribution to society. All the immigrants interviewed took their personal growth and healing very seriously. A deep personal focus allows them to heal from their past wounds and trauma, whether political, cultural or familial. This is a process of reconstituting the representations in their inner space so as to be open to new kinds of socialization. They then return to society equipped to become mentors to others.

Mona: I need to go back to my own issues, and deal with them first. It's not about being isolated. I am just taking my time to improve myself.

Susie: My husband has not worked for 2 years, and he is focusing on his spiritual/Zen practice (禪修). Now I wanted to focus on my own spiritual practice. Some people thought that we were crazy because we both did not work and had no income. They ask how we survive. I felt that we were fine since we had some savings. I believe that fear is in our brain. I wanted to experience my anxiety and fear and to see where they are from and where they will go. In Gestalt, it said that do not share it with others if you have not experienced it yet (没有通过自己试验的东西不要拿来给别人说). I always encouraged others to

try it, but I was the coward hiding in the closet.

Immigrants find sustenance and meaning connecting with their ancestral, cultural and religious roots through religious teachings and practice. These resources may be mediated through religious organizations but the experience is liminal, transcending denominational structures.

Pearl finds that her involvement in a Buddhist organization helps her connect with her Chinese roots and beliefs she absorbed by osmosis as a child in Taiwan. Pearl accesses podcasts by spiritual masters that give her inspiration, positive energy and deeper understanding of her Taoist and Buddhist faith. Religious practice helps her emotion regulation, self-cultivation, centredness, contribution to all living beings, and responding to the deeper significance of encounters.

In Canada, you can listen to the Tzu Chi radio channel from Taiwan. It is a good radio station, and always gives you the positive energy. It broadcasts positive news and has masters talking about Buddhism. One of the masters said that we should come out from our own anger.

Cultivating one's mind to let go of anger needs to find practice with other people, so liminality is never just liminal. It eventually takes one back to society and its many interactions that refine one's practice. The ultimate goal is not just self-cultivation, but contribution to society. Pearl explained:

It is easy for people to learn the scriptures themselves, but you have to interact with the society, and to gain experiences. Everyone can be mad and angry, which is a challenge and test for us. It is a training process that teaches you how to stay calm and to overcome the feeling of anger or resentment (嗔戒). Also during this process, self-cultivation is not good enough because Buddhism is about benefit everyone (利益众生). We can help each other, for example, I can do the interview with you now, is our fate (缘份).

For society to be in flow, anti-structural and structural spaces must alternate. Anti-structure or liminal space offers regeneration of structure by bringing in new perceptions,

deepened social bonds, and reconstitution of self in relation to others. Liminal space allows participants to question past and existing social and cultural values, experiment with new practices and form new *habitus* of dispositions and actions. Hence liminal space can be seen as a radical space of social and cultural transformation that can re-group and re-align citizens.

The risks of liminality

To mark the qualitatively different properties of liminal space, proper procedures and symbolic differentiations from structural space need to be observed. Despite the benefits Apple received from the liminal groups she took part in, she also was burnt by the gossips and lack of confidentiality in one of the groups. The misrepresentation of what she shared damaged her relationship with her daughter which took a few years to heal.

I liked that class, but I had to leave it because that was a Chinese group who liked to gossip and make rumors. In the class, you had to open up yourself. We shared the stories that we would not tell others. I thought what we said be in kept in the class, but it did not. In fact, people manipulated my story and told others. I was in the adult class, and my daughter was in the youth group. She was dating a guy, and his mom was in my class. She did not like my daughter, so she told everyone that, “Her mom said she had mental diseases per crazy (神经病)” My daughter was so angry and asked me why I told people that she was crazy. I told her that I did not. I said, “My daughter had some mental issues and she was seeing a psychologist.” There was a mom in the class who said that her child was crazy, but I did not say my daughter was crazy. It took me about 2-3 years to mend our relationship.

Serious risks exist when the liminal space or sharing groups are not guided and structured properly. The breach of confidentiality could cause harm to its participants. Apple observed how liminal space can range in size of participants:

Yes, the Seth Reading club was big because a leader was involved. There were more than 100 people.

Activities in liminal space flourish when there is a trained leader or mentor who understands how to structure the process of liminal space and set up the container with boundaries. In liminal space resides power and danger. It is an alternative kind of space that is often overlooked in immigration services and an underappreciated space in terms of its equalizing and resource releasing power.

Theme 6 Friendship Space: Sharing Capital and Sustaining Reality

Friendships usually bring together people who share similar cultural, social and economic capital reflected in their common interests and tastes, affiliations and social class. Compared to mentorship, it is a relationship of greater equality and reciprocity, and is less radical than the transformative relationships in liminal space. Friendships play an important role in immigrants' integration. Friends share their capital with each other and serve as sources of social, cultural and legal information and nodes to extended networks. Friends provide practical and instrument support, moral and emotional encouragement. In some cases, friends are pivotal to the advancement of an immigrant's career. Friendships, such as ones within professional circles, help maintain and stabilize an immigrant's identity at a time of career or immigration transition. Conversely, the failure of friends to come through undermines faith in human bonds and their own ability to survive in the new country.

Sharing capital

Friendship operates on the principle of reciprocity, and the Chinese take a long view of reciprocity that extends across generations, rather than one based on immediacy. Oylen cited many instances when friends were of great help to her, especially initially after immigration. Some of her friends were from her own former friendship network in

Hong Kong, and many were her mother's friends from work. In Chinese circles, it is not uncommon for friendship networks to be cross-generational.

First problem was around vacation, as overseas students, we have to find guardian during vacations. My parents found me guardians whom I haven't met before. They were our friend's relatives ... not really close... It was difficult to find guardians, especially in London. No one in Hong Kong knew where London was. Hence, when family friends knew of someone living in London, they made connections for me. A couple, a very nice couple. They were very good to me, so I didn't feel bad.

Practical support and care ease immigrants' transition, when their own store of capital in a new context is limited. The Chinese have a saying that a friend nearby surpasses a relative faraway (遠親不如近鄰) :

Oylen: They would allow me to crash at their places even if they didn't have extra rooms for me ...Moving for example, if I said I needed help with moving, they'd all show up to help with a move.

Pearl: I had a kidney stone surgery... I really appreciated the help I got from friends who took me to the hospital and for the doctoral appointments. They also prepared some easy meals because I could not cook at that time and my husband was not here. Because we lived in an apartment where there were some immigrants since we came here, we had good relationships with our neighbors who also helped me.

Friends share the burden of care during difficult periods, shoring up immigrants' social capital when extended family is not at hand. In Oylen's case, friends provided emotional and practical support for her parents when they experienced chronic illness:

... they just backed me up when I needed them. For example, with my father being sick now, we still put these friends down as emergency contacts. For example, with my father at Yee Hong now, they would get emergency calls when I'm unable to drop by. And they did show up to help... many times.

While my mother was ill, there was a lot of people around and there was a lot of support. When she passed away, she was just in her early sixties. Lots of friends visited her every day and so on...So... There were lots of people to pitch in. Plus my father was around too. It's not the case that I have to deal with it all by myself. I mean we still have to deal with our experiences and the cancer, but there was support all around.

Friends normalize immigration adjustments and provide comraderie:

Yes, I recall I had two friends who were from good families, who did not need the money from summer jobs to support themselves, but they too were working as chambermaids too. None of us minded.

Friends share cultural capital and knowledge of the new social context in providing timely and practical advice to aid Oylen's decision-making:

Like for instance, when my father immigrated... a friend whose husband is a lawyer, would provide the necessary information we needed.

When I got a job in Mississauga, my friends provided advice to buy a car and then tagged along to help with shopping for a car.

When Apple had problems with her landlord, her real estate agent who became her friend stepped in:

A: I talked to the agent friend, and he helped. He also told me how to use the free law services and other community services, such as counseling services.

Sometimes decisions made through the influence and encouragement of a friend could be life changing, such as Pearl's enrollment in a health profession program which fulfilled her dream and passion:

P: She [friend] knew that I liked to learn [health knowledge area], so she found a [health profession] school for me nearby. She registered for me and bought me the books. To avoid her, I had to hide in one of my daughter's friend family... they were all evening classes, and I could not attend. My daughter was so little, so she could not be left along during the evening. I eventually took the classes and was certified.

Through the implicit reciprocal nature of friendship, an immigrant friend of Pearl's who was assisted by Pearl in her early days of settlement, helped Pearl babysit her daughter while she attended her health professional classes:

P: My daughter would be at her place when I went to the class. We had a very good relationship...I helped her when she came. That's me. I thought, I came here earlier than you did, so I would help you. I knew the struggles and difficulties, so I

could help. I took ESL classes during and day, and learned Chinese medicine in the evening.

Friendship networks are multiplicative, especially in a metropolis like Toronto with a high population density. These networks help immigrants locate expertise, services and income opportunities:

Oylen: Whenever I needed help with anything and couldn't find them, take for instance I would like to continue learning the piano after relocation, they would make recommendations and provided a lot of information and contact information. So lots of word of mouth kind of help.

In Apple's case, a few friends led to many who helped with providing the kind of help she needed and opened up entrepreneurial and volunteer opportunities to practice her English. However, Apple's friends were largely within the Taiwan Chinese circle:

I met others through those people [Taiwan friends, wives of former co-workers]. One of them had friends who were on the school board. I later met a friend... She was a counselor helping Chinese people. I met her and volunteered in some Chinese communities. If they had social activities, I would ask my friends (those wives) to help, e.g. a presentation related to health. I helped with some registration work, and made forms. At that time, many people did not know how to use the computer, and they had to write. I knew, and I also wrote for them. I met another friend who sold wine. Also a friend from a dental centre who asked me to join the Amway network to sell Amway products. I had to go to the classes, also helped them to do presentations in different hotels every weekend. They did not pay me; I did not mind because I wanted to learn English.

Sustaining reality

Identity is more precarious than is commonly realized, as its maintenance depends on the ongoing validation and reflection of others through conversations and interactions. One's orientation and identity are sustained through the bonds with and validation by others. Friends serve a sustaining function during transitions to support one's identity through established group affiliation before a new identity is negotiated within new

associations. Oylen described how her former friendship network from her previous occupation was important to her as she was transitioning into a new career in teaching:

That is why I thought they were very nice. Even when I switched jobs and careers... Like when I stopped working as a [health profession] or when I switched to working part-time... People kept staying in touch. All the way until after I fully transitioned into a new career... and also then the hospitals was going through major restructuring and amalgamation then.

Mona utilized with ease her internet social media of Facebook (FB) to maintain the immediacy of contact with her Taiwan friendship and interest as well as professional networks, which also served to maintain her professional and cultural identity and to stay current in “what’s happening” in Taiwan among her friends in her early years in Canada. Internet multi-media technology in social media with its built-in networking functions, interface with cell phones and its ease of use surpasses email in its immediacy and multi-sensory communication for maintaining friendship ties. FB creates an immediate virtual space for friendship links. She is kept in the loop and feels she is still a part of a group she identifies with:

FB is very convenient. When I see this person on FB, we can have a short chat. I look at their current statuses, and articles as well as pictures they have posted. Now, when I turn on my computer every morning, I also open my FB to see the updates. My cell phone is also connected my FB. When I go out, I still can check the information they post. For example, a few days ago, here was -15degrees and snowed, so I took some pictures and posted them on my FB through my cell phone.
F: Are there any particle or emotional effects that FB has on you?
M: Yes, both. For example, I knew my friends in Taiwan organized a trip recently, and I knew what are the most popular therapies used in Taiwan recently. I kept myself updated with my friends in Taiwan and about the workshops in Toronto, so I would know what people talked about when chatting with others.

Friendship is primarily an identity and reality maintaining space that gives one’s world stability and validation through the apparatus of conversation.

The ability to chat and be able to have deeper conversation. The way we see things... People who are good listeners. Compatible worldview.

Similarities...Compatible value systems. People who are loyal (有義氣). People who are discrete and able to exercise discretion.

India is an ancient civilization...there is also the cultural connection [in our interest] such as music...Their culture is very very rich in what you can explore. And Indian people... they are of course...they are not all the same .. But in general, I think they have strong family values...As in similar to Chinese family values... Being filial to one's parents. You look after the elderly...traditional values.

Friendship is therefore a legitimating space that maintains immigrants' representation of reality in a destabilized world of pluralistic tensions. It opens up a space for shared significations of how people relate, what aspects of life are important, how one is situated in relation to others, and an appreciation for how significations of a culture accumulate over time.

Theme 7 Internalizing and Internalized Cultural Space

Spaces of importance to immigrants change over time. In the early stage after immigration, immigrants require spaces to interact with other Canadians to learn the cultural code and practices of the new country. Work space, friendship space, mentorship and liminal spaces are all necessary and important. These spaces serve the immigrants' task in the acquisition of cultural capital that will allow them to function in sync with the large society and earn a place in society to increase their social capital. Throughout the social integration process, immigrants weigh and contrast their native *habitus* with *habitus* of the people they meet, all the while that their own *habitus* is slowly changing.

Immigrants come to Canada not as *tabula rasa* but carry within them an internalized *habitus* from their primary socialization in their original country. This primary socialization occurred through interactions, conversations and observations of their parents and groups that took on a taken-for-granted objectivity. Their internalized

habitus never really disappears, but exists in dormancy or in tension to what they encounter after migration to Canada.

It was through contrasting interactions over time that what was tacit in their primary and secondary *habitus* became explicit. Therefore over time, immigrants can better articulate the differences between their internal cultural space from their primary socialization and what they have acquired from their secondary socialization in Canada. It is then that immigrants are in a better position to consciously select what values, practice and identity within the different sets of *habitus* to best represent themselves in various contexts and relationships.

If symbolic capital is the power given by others for certain actors in society to name and coin values, policies and what is of importance to a society, immigrants do not possess a large share of symbolic capital. Forums in which their voices can be heard by mainstream society are spaces that need to be opened up, thereby allowing immigrants to increase their symbolic capital and their ability to expand their contribution to Canada.

Sifting and sorting through contrasts

Immigration is a disruptive experience. It threatens immigrants' identity and worldview with the loss of belonging in society and the social interactions and conversations that sustain it. Immigrants go through a secondary process of socialization whereby they have to learn anew the rules, attitudes, values and practices of how to be a part of a group. The degree of change that is required depends on the difference of *habitus* internalized from their first socialization and that of the new one.

Usually one's culture is not consciously articulated because it is taken in like the air one's breathes and the water one drinks. Susie related her discovery of her

internalized Chinese culture with a story of a gifted pianist who lived on a ship all his life. He never heard the sound of the rolling sea waves because the sound of the sea was all he had known. He had to leave the ship in order to hear the sound of sea waves. “When you leave, you can hear and see clearly,” mused Susie.

Susie’s primary culture of being Chinese is a taken-for-granted fact, unlike knowledge about the Chinese view of emotion that an outsider could formulate into formal knowledge and categories:

I am a Chinese, which is merely a noun, and it has nothing to do with the geographic location. It is something in my blood and bones.

I tell you a story to explain my point. I joined in a course about emotion expression. I was the only Chinese in the class and others were from different ethnic groups, including Caucasians and Aboriginal people. The whole course was about how people’s emotions are related to organs, and for 3 days they were taught how Huangdi Neijing (黄帝内经) described it. The teacher asked me if I am a Chinese, and I said yes. She asked me why I took that course. You know I never looked at my own culture and traditions so closely. I would not have paid any attention to it if I were in China because I took it for granted. Here I could see how people from different cultures look at our own traditions and knowledge. Although I have been assimilated to Canadian culture, but I am still a Chinese.

The process of sifting and sorting, weighting and evaluating form the process immigrants go through in their social integration. They need to decide what to keep and what to change. Susie learned about her internalized cultural attitude towards receiving support she is trying to change. She only encountered the concept of “support” after coming to Canada. From her parents, she learnt that to seek “support” is a shameful thing. One would rather die a beggar than to live as a beggar. She related how her parents survived famine and war but would deny their physical needs so as not to be needing of others’ support. Susie learnt not to accept help from her parents, both through their

actions and their teachings. She is only learning to receive support and ask for support after coming to Canada, and to view that not as a shameful gesture.

I learned the word “support” after coming to Canada. I had no idea about this concept before... You know “face” is very important for Chinese people. Better die a beggar than live as a beggar (不食嗟來之食). My parents experienced those difficulties, e.g. famine and political events. They were impacted by this kind of ideas. They would rather starve themselves. Their life is based on their spirituality and not their physical needs.

The gift that Canada gives to Susie is that the space and freedom for her to appropriate what is right for her here and now. Susie started to critique some other Chinese concepts which bred dependence, obligation and enmeshment.

It [Canada] allows me to cultivate “trust” and respect “individuality.” The peaceful environment is close to my heart. Also it promotes “honesty and sincerity.” This is very different from China. For example, in China, filial piety (孝顺) is very important. The parents look after their children and the children must look after their parents. Parents are very needy. If you do not do that, you are bad.

Social integration involves sorting and selecting what items to drop or add, weaken or reinforce in one's cultural repertoire. While Susie gained clarity of what she wants to modify, she also discovered what she finds admirable about Chinese culture and wants to keep. In Canada, she finds the space to exercise her freedom of choice in her values.

Susie rediscovered the Chinese virtue of making room for others. It could be seen by some as withdrawal or retreat, but Susie sees this as a counter-balance to the Western way of asserting oneself and not making room for others out of consideration of their needs. However, there are always exceptions to a culture.

I feel that the mainstream is not opening themselves either. When I was at school, I realized that white people often are not patient and would not let you to get

involved in, e.g. a conversation. If you are not ready to talk and speak for yourself, they won't give you the time to get prepared.

It is different from Chinese. We like to give some room for others and allow them to warm up (谦和). From a negative perspective, people see it as withdrawal or avoidance (退缩).

Mona discerned that some cultural attitudes are facilitators of integration, others are deterrants. An example of a deterrant is Mona's under-estimation of her English skill, her fears stemming from an expectation of "perfectionism" from herself. These attitudes curtailed her social interactions with other ethnic groups who do not speak her language and slowed down the integration process. Many of these attitudes and values are rooted in the traditional culture transmitted by her upbringing where she learnt if she did not do something perfectly, it's not worth doing.

I was in the training session with people from different groups. If I talked to them more often, I would have made more connections. I was not confident about my language ability, so I just said hi to them and made no real connections. I was afraid of making mistakes. It is related to my childhood experiences. When I was little, I would be criticized when I made mistakes. Later I figured that if I did not do anything, there is no chance to make mistakes.

Mona found internal and external integration into Canadian society that took a period of time. After a phase of intense individualism in rebellion to her family-tied and other-centred Chinese upbringing, Mona is now learning to find a balance between the Western values of personal rights and the collective good. Mona said she is proud of her Chinese culture because they teach her about relationships and the cultivation of personal integrity and virtues derived from ancient Confucianist concepts which regard relationship as central.

I: What makes you so proud of Chinese culture?

M: Four virtues and Eight merits (四维八德)...The problem with Chinese culture is: it always focuses on the collective honour and benefits and ignores personal

needs. I am trying to find a balance in between, which does not sacrifice the group's benefits and also not abuse my rights.

Mona was finding her balance and integration:

My mind is more open than before. To a certain extent, my mind is pushed to become more Westernized, but it is also pulled back to the traditions... I think I am becoming more integrated, the integration of others and me (人我的整合). Later I realize that I am not the only person in the world. There are other people and the relations are important.

Oylen rediscovered her Chinese roots through her art and how she naturally expresses a style that is different from Western painting, through contrasts with her Western counterparts:

So in the class, everyone was pretty Westernized. Umm... once I put pen to paper. My Westernized classmates wouldn't... they wouldn't be able to draw the same things I drew. They saw me as talented. I don't think it's talent. I think it is... once I put pen to paper... I feel it. I'm Chinese. It has to do with the way I see things and what I perceive. The way I observe things... seems less linear. What I draw is more ... about the essence (袁境) ... a perception which they don't have.

Oylen discovered the cyclical propensity in her Chinese thinking, in contrast to the linear Western thinking in her art classes based on the comments of her work by other artists. There was a new realization of her Chinese interior space:

Even after being here in Canada after so many years...I still remember what makes an impact... from...from my elementary school... Tang dynasty poetry. The famous three hundred Tang dynasty poems... Never thought... that once I reach a certain stage in life, such things would actually be the things and memories that have the strongest impact on me! I actually dug out those poems and read through them... I noticed a co-incidence where the poems were a perfect match for the mood I was trying to convey through my art! When I think about it... I think such things are embedded. No matter how Westernized my upbringing. I think geographically [people at the foot of the Lion Rock] and culturally... Hong Kong is embedded in who I am.

Because of the intensity, frequency and daily interactions, intimate space is an intense site for negotiating identities, values and what one holds in common and in

difference in relation to a partner from another ethnic culture. Oylen discovered that the biggest barrier between her and her boyfriend was their differences in value system. The intimate relationship highlighted for her how she still held Chinese values in her relational ethics:

After my dad was admitted to Yee Hong, I almost visited him every other day. Sometimes I would spend the entire weekend keeping him company. When I first visited, he [Caucasian boyfriend] would commend Chinese for the excellent care of their elderly parents, then eventually he dropped a few phrases about how my father might not even recognize if I'm there to visit or not. To them, once their parents are admitted to long term care or senior homes, they won't visit... they just don't feel the need to do so. At most they would visit once a month. Even when they do, they would say hi, bye, and leave. We are very different. I don't care if my dad recognized me or not. I want to spend the time with him no matter what. To me, my presence meant a lot... we have a difference in attitude toward the elderly and the dead. To him, the dead is dead, so he would never visit his mother's grave. All he thought was to move on himself.

After some time distancing from Chinese groups to learn English and trying to integrate into Western mainstream society after meeting her Caucasian partner, Apple went back to her Chinese groups. She commented, “Yes, that's my root (根).”

Forming new identification with Canada

Immigrants develop identifications with the values and practices found in Canada over time. Often they refer to an affective bond that is formed. Susie is grateful to Canada in giving her the space to be herself. She named the Canadian values she identifies with:

Slowly I realized that Canada is an accepting and peaceful country. It is very open to and accepts the differences. I can be myself and be who I am... Here you can take your masks off and be yourself.

When I just came to Canada, I really wanted to be a Canadian. Now I know that being a Canadian means being who you are and be yourself. I looked at people from other ethnic groups, who also have accents when they are talking; I feel that they are Canadians, too. I am becoming more accepting. I do not need to fight against my own culture and do not need to worship other cultures either.

It's in the [multicultural] political system. It cultivates "trust" and respects "individuality." It is a peaceful environment and it is close to my heart. Also it promotes "honesty and sincere."

In Canada, I can be myself, which is natural. In this environment, it is natural for me to develop my own potentials, which in turn can benefit the country.

Susie described her bonds with China and Canada with a metaphor:

I am living in between... We did not start from the beginning... China is like my ex-husband and we had a child already. We are connected by something always. Canada is like my spiritual partner and we are getting to know each other. We just started. My life did not start here.

Government and non-government organization's services are normally conceived of in the abstract. However, it is the personal encounters when these services are utilized by the immigrants that give them the first-hand appreciation or disappointment with what the government and organizations provide.

Positive experiences with government and community services at a time of need create a sense of belonging in Canada. Conversely, rigidity, exclusion and lack of adequate or appropriate support of government and community services diminish the immigrants' sense of belonging and integration. When her parents suffered from health conditions in their later years, Oylen described how she felt supported by organizations such as the Cancer Society, Alzheimer's Society and Diabetes Association that provided information and support. The services she received both from these community groups and the Canadian health care system awakened in her a strong sense of being Canadian. Much like a child who found a responsive and caring parent at a time of need, the responsiveness of government and non-profit services played an important role in fostering a strong "attachment" between the immigrant and Canada, mediated through the services of its institutions.

My father had Alzheimer's in 2003. And before that he had diabetes. So it was the Alzheimer's Society and the Diabetes Society that helped. So when he was diagnosed I quickly started going to these society meetings and found out what Alzheimer's was. I got involved and these groups really helped me... there were meetings and support groups and so on. Very helpful.

In fact now that I think about it, it actually helped me become more Canadian. You know, this is very societal... Because of my parents' illnesses, I learnt more about the Canadian health care system... it's a big thing. Before this, it was just something I took for granted. It makes me feel like I am a Canadian. Yes, that is the feeling.

I mean before this, I've never noticed. I mean how this is related to Canadian identity. And would never think of it as being related or interconnected. I mean before that, in Princess Margaret Hospital, they had this Cancer Society, there were tons of volunteers. It never registered. But now with my parents being ill, it was a different experience.

Pearl found that her way of finding belonging and identification with Canada is through making contributions. She believes in volunteerism:

I encourage my daughter to participate in some political events, such as helping a campaign candidate to distribute the handbills. Watching the news on TV is just a way to keep you updated, but it is not a way to know the society. You can learn different things from doing that. You will know how the system works and what the society looks like. You also get different opinions from others. It is very important for you if you want to live here unless you want to go back to Taiwan.

I volunteered in the hospital through which I could meet many people. For me, making contributions (奉獻) is a way to know this society. Without it your perception of and knowledge about this society is just superficial. It is just the surface...I have done this for about 6 or 7 years. If I stay at home, I can only be with TV or the Internet. I always look at those things from a positive perspective: the world is still very beautiful.

Pearl appreciates how Canada is “gentle” country and it is not as “commercial” as some other countries. For her, the ethos of a society is important, and she would like to see more “moral education” to maintain a society that is civil and safe:

When I came to Toronto, it was ranked as the world's most livable city, but its rank went down...It is sad that there is no moral education (道德教育) class in Canada. Children who go to a church will get this kind of education, but the public schools do not offer it... Learning is so important, e.g. learning how to love and how to receive others' love. The schools here teach children that some touching or touching in certain areas are not okay. I think it is good because you are teaching children how to protect themselves. The moral education will benefit

the children.

Pearl still feels proud of Taiwan and calls herself a Taiwanese Chinese. Her identification with Taiwan comes from her shared values with the Taiwan people and her pride in her former country, but at the same time she also identifies with Canada:

I still feel very close to Taiwan. After a time period, you look back and find that it is not too bad... I have been here for 28 years, and lived in Taiwan for 30 years. I still like it and feel very close to that place. When you see the streets that are very clean. The environment is protected by the public and not only by a small group. People are very kind to each other. When you are waiting for the bus, people stay in the line and no one tries to cut in line... When elders got on the bus, a row of young people automatically stood up and let this group of elders take over their seats. It was not that the young people did not like to sit there, but when they saw the elders, they would let them sit... That is something I have been proud of. When watching the Olympic games, I cheered for the Canadian team, although I could not go there to watch the games. I wanted them to win. Of course, every athlete wants to win, but I really wanted the Canadian team to win something.

Social integration is not only an external social process, it is also an internal process of evaluating and modifying what one has internalized from a previous socialization while selecting, adding and incorporating values and practices in interaction with the new society. The contours of the old and new become clearer over time through contrasts in interaction with others.

Summary

Qualitative findings from this study illuminate how social integration is a process built through myriads of social interactions in a mosaic of spaces. Each space in the mosaic typology was characterized by its cast of actors, power relations and differences, contentions and negotiations, reciprocity and rupture, openings and foreclosures, flexibility and rigidity of stances. In these spaces with positive social interactions, immigrants were able to increase their set of social, cultural, economic and spiritual

capital to participate in and contribute to Canadian society, although some of these spaces are limited to their ethnic enclave. Immigrants also redefine their own identities, reappropriate and sometimes reassert the values and practices from their primary socialization in contrast and contestations to the values and practices from their secondary socialization after becoming immigrants in Canada.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

Limitations

The findings and interpretations in this research are limited in a number of ways:

(1) Immigrants are a heterogeneous group with diverse historical, political, cultural, gender and social backgrounds, all of which intersect with their social integration. Therefore the study of each sub-group's integration must take into account these demographic factors. This study is based on a sample of Chinese immigrant women meeting the criterion of having made an impact to Canadian society, deemed by themselves or another person. They all immigrated in the skilled worker, entrepreneur and independent classes. One could say this is a group that has successfully found a place in Canadian society, but is not representative of the immigrant population at large in terms of class, education, gender and resources. (2) It should be noted that these immigrant women's social integration occurred in the context of a metropolis with a large immigrant population. All of the participants worked with other immigrants, although not exclusively. Toronto has a very high representation of cultural groups with 230 ethnic origins (National Household Survey, 2011). Rural areas have a different distribution and density of diversity and hence the experience of immigrants in integration would likely be different. (3) The data for this research were based on a pilot project with five interviewees and therefore may not have reached information redundancy or theoretical saturation. Future qualitative research will serve to validate and complement this present study. (4) The purposive and snowball sampling could have produced participants that are more alike than they are different. (5) The interviews were conducted by a research

assistant and translated and transcribed by two transcriptionists. The process likely has attenuated some of the nuances of the data and restricted my access to information that could have been gleaned from contextual cues and the environments in which this study was conducted. (6) In examining the phenomenon of social integration as a “two-way street”, this study is limited by obtaining only the perspective of the immigrants. The missing piece of the puzzle is how Canadians experience newcomers and their attitudes and types of interactions with them. (7) This investigation is conducted through reported interview data, which do not capture the live interactions that occur in the spaces described in this thesis. To describe what actually happens in these spaces would require an ethnographic, participant-observation study to bring out the more fine-grained descriptions of interactions in how social interaction and integration actually take place. (8) Lastly, the typology of spaces presented in this research is by no means exhaustive. They should therefore be considered an initial typology. Other types of spaces have not been included into this thesis because they are comparatively less prominent in the interview data, although of interest for future studies on social integration. Examples are geographical and physical space, intimate and domestic space, neighbourhood space, and institutional space.

Social Integration Spaces

While social integration research has primarily focused on objective socio-economic indicators such as employment, income, and education, this study investigates how immigrant women subjectively experience their integration and the way it is constituted socially and symbolically. Viewing social integration as the migrants’ progress in becoming full participants in society and the skills and capital they acquired

to manage their everyday life (Aycan & Berry, 1996), I will now consider the typology of spaces in relation to existing literature on women immigrants, social integration, social capital, and spatial theories.

Countering Oppressive Space

Power imbalances experienced as *oppressive space* in their source countries led immigrant women to seek new social and cultural spaces to counter their compromised sense of agency and safety. In three cases, the oppression was gender-related in terms of a culture of patriarchy, the trauma of family violence, and addiction of a male family member that led to harassment and compromised safety for herself and the children. Other forms of oppression that spurred immigration were civil and political but not gender-specific. Studies indicate that significantly more women migrate to join other family members (Chen, Gee et al., 2009), but this is not the case with this immigrant women sample. All the women in this study migrated in the independent, skilled worker or investor classes. This reflects a changing pattern of migration in that highly skilled migration (university degree or equivalent experience in a given field) represents an increasingly large component of global migration streams (Iredale, 2000; Man, 2004). This could be partially explained by neoliberalism policies in an increasingly global and competitive environment that seek out a skilled labour force. In fact, at the time of this study, none of the women reported having other family members besides their children in Canada. Among Asians in general, great variations exist in immigration histories and reasons for immigration (Chen, Gee et al., 2009; Zhou & Gatewood, 2000).

Disorienting Space

Immigrant women's degree of struggle depended on their language proficiency, life stage, finding employment, financial status, and family responsibilities in relation to other family members' life stages. With their diminished network of occupational, social and cultural support, compounded by language barriers and downward occupation and economic mobility after immigration, immigrant women found themselves in a *disorienting space* with few reference points. Other studies have documented that educated and professional women often face a deterioration of their social and occupational status after immigration due to family and care-giving responsibilities as well as difficulty securing jobs that correspond to their qualifications (Man, 2004; Zhou & Gatewood, 2000). Most of the women in this study assumed the primary role of parenting with absentee husbands or elder-care without the involvement of a male sibling. These responsibilities are onerous as well as time and labour-intensive without a partner's or sibling's support. They also reduce the amount of discretionary time for immigrant women to socialize and enroll in classes to develop language proficiency.

In what is characterized as a *disorienting space* in this study, immigrant women experience *anomie*, a seminal concept by sociologist Durkheim (Durkheim, 1897) to describe a state of normlessness and disconnection from others in society when the rules and expectations of behaviour are unclear and one's meaning system has broken down. *Anomie* can lead to depression and suicide or thoughts of suicide, as reported by some women in this study. Sociologists Berger and Luckmann (1966) further elaborate on the state of *anomie* and the "terror" (p. 102) that develops with the loss of a "sheltering

canopy” (p. 102) of one’s symbolic universe that once served as a protective shield for individual biography and social significance.

After immigration, this research found that family dynamics and conversation are altered adding to the immigrants’ isolation, as they avoid burdening other family members, and conflicts due to disparities in members’ different degrees and ways of adaptation to the new society, as well as a loss of their former parenting role due to unfamiliarity with the culture and language. A national U.S. ecological study of Asian immigrant mental health indicates that family cultural conflict and everyday discrimination are related to depression and anxiety in both genders, with family conflict affecting more significantly the women (Leu, Walton & Takeuchi, 2011). Researchers of the same study recommend ecological over individual interventions to promote healthy immigrant families, especially for immigrant women who experience family cultural conflict.

The health status of immigrant population in Canada indicates that with the exception of new arrivals, immigrants experience worse health status relative to non-immigrants, associated with income adequacy, home ownership, gender, working status and age (Newbold & Danforth, 2003). Declining and poor health among the immigrant population represents a combination of social, cultural, political and economic factors that call for interventions (Newbold & Danforth, 2003).

Work Space

Immigrant women were treading water until they found an anchor in the *work space*. The human capital model of immigration in Canada since the 2000s has placed a priority on immigrants’ education, experience and language ability to address labour

market demands within the policy of neo-liberal capitalism (Ferrer, Picot, & Riddell, 2014). However, this research makes the point that the *work space* functions as more than as an engine of the economy; it is a primary and highly salient site for social integration. Studies indicate that adverse employment-related experiences, such as status loss, unemployment and underemployment, impact negatively immigrants' adaptation and psychological well-being as well as self-confidence (Aycan & Berry, 1996; Starr & Roberts, 1982). Unemployment delays immigrants' adaptation (Aycan & Berry, 1996). Alienation results when a state of discrepancy develops between what society values as the norm of the majority of citizens, and the failure for the immigrant to achieve that norm (Guthrie & Tanco, 1980).

Immigrants earn their status and value in society through paid work. Hence employment gives immigrants an identity and a purpose in life (Aycan & Berry, 1996). The work space situates them in a microcosm of the social hierarchy within a sector of society. With this sample of immigrant women, they were all employed in the sectors of social assistance, health and education. They all provide their services to immigrants, although not exclusively in some cases. Gendered occupations serving mainly an immigrant population are generally perceived as having lower status than technical and corporate jobs. Men's areas of employment are represented predominantly in the technical, scientific, goods-producing and business fields (Statistics Canada, 2015) that will provide different types of social interaction. The *work space* opens multi-levelled interactions with supervisors, co-workers and the clients they serve. Through these formal and informal interactions, immigrants receive training, feedback on job performance from supervisors, and input and advice from colleagues on the rules of the

new culture. They access stories that reveal the mind-set and patterns of Canadians, as well as the habits of new immigrants from different ethno-cultural groups. If these relationships are supportive and positive, immigrants incorporate new values and practice to adjust their prior *habitus* to align with Canadian culture.

Of particular interest in the integration process of immigrant women in the *work space* is their re-definition of what constitutes “mainstream” Canadian society. All of the immigrants in this study work with other ethno-cultural groups as clients and in some cases as co-workers. In this multicultural context, they revise their previous definitions of themselves as “second class” citizens, question the superiority of “white” Canadians as defining the “mainstream”, and form comraderie, friendship and bonds with other ethno-cultural Canadians based on the principles of equality, individual autonomy, and respect espoused by the Canadian multicultural policy unlike integration in European countries where there is usually a clear ethnic majority and integration viewed as the adaptation of immigrants to the dominant group, the “dominant” group is less strictly defined in Canada (Martinovic, Tubergen, & Maas, 2011). Hence, an indicator of social integration may be in terms how immigrants interact with members of all ethnic groups other than their own, rather than measured as interaction with “mainstream” Canadians only, as the definition of the mainstream category is rapidly changing. Immigrant women’s indication of their life satisfaction in this study reflects their psychological adaptation with their social integration, although in some cases the integration is largely in relation to other ethno-cultural groups including their own.

The context of social integration for the immigrant women in this study is Toronto, a metropolis with a high density of ethno-cultural groups. In rural areas, where

similar ethno-cultural groups to the immigrants are sparse, greater challenges are encountered in social integration. This was a lesson learnt from a study in Manitoba that in the absence of a critical mass of people of similar ethnic origins, it requires substantially more work to develop a welcoming community that is accepting of diversity to facilitate integration (Carter, Morrish, & Amoyaw, 2008). The same study found that immigrants are often willing to compromise their economic status to live closer to their ethnic community, illustrating the importance of their own ethno-cultural group in their integration process.

Mentorship Space

Mentorship space features a particularly important relationship for social integration. The actors in this space possess different weights of social capital in whom they know and cultural capital in their knowledge of the Canadian culture and ethnic cultures. Other capital that can provide leverage for immigrants' integration are technical, economic and spatial capital. Mentors are people who freely and willingly extend their resources to immigrant mentees to increase the latter's store of capital in different areas. This beneficent relationship provides considerable leverage for immigrants in raising their capital in different domains, thus facilitating their integration into Canadian society.

Mentorship programs have been recommended by a few researchers (Lai, 2014; George & Chaze, 2009b) since bridging capital that crosses the divide of ethnicity, class and knowledge does not happen naturally. *Mentorship spaces* work against the principle of clustering among those with similar kinds of capital. Bourdieu (1989) observes that this clustering effect is a form of social exclusion that keeps power and privileges within those of the middle and upper class. The bonding principle in capital (Putnam, 2000) can

be applied to immigrants tending to associate with immigrants, or the upper class with others in their circles. Although immigrants in this study did not explicitly give the label of mentors to individuals who aided them in raising their social, cultural and economic capital, the role of mentors featured prominently in their stories of social integration. Mentors, both from their own ethnic groups and outside, performed many resource-enhancing functions as they intentionally shared their resources with immigrants and whose gestures commonly made a large impact in the immigrants' lives.

Citizenship and Immigrant Canada piloted a Host Program in 1984 as a community program to sponsor refugees, and the program was extended to other immigrants in the 1990s. Based on the "two-way street" principle, the Host Program was unfortunately devolved into other settlement initiatives in the 2000s (CIC, 2004). Its goals were to facilitate settlement and adaptation, develop community, social and professional networking, and promote two-way cultural exchange, but its distinctiveness as a mentorship program with community volunteers not limited to professional advancement became less prominent (George & Chaze, 2009b). The structuring and potential effects of mentorship remain an under-explored area of Canada's social integration strategy.

Mentorship spaces exemplify how Canadians with more abundant capital assist and share with newcomers who have less capital; the recipients in turn become mentors to others to keep the cycle of resource-sharing alive in society. *Mentorship spaces* can therefore not only facilitate social integration, but can lead to innovation and enrichment of society when immigrants give back. To combat the under-utilization of immigrants' skills in the labour market, mentoring programs in the work place could make a critical

difference to both immigrants and organizations (Reitz, 2005). Human resource managers will have to work with other partners to design and develop effective programs to manage and utilize diversity in the work place (Reitz, 2005). The mentor can pass on local knowledge about practices in an occupational field. Given its many benefits to both mentors and mentees, and its contribution to the vibrancy of society as a whole, *mentorship spaces* and programs are unequivocally worthy of exploration and deliberate development with relevant community stakeholders.

Liminal Space

Immigrants in this study call our attention to the multi-dimensional nature of integration beyond the economic and institutional zones. Psychological and spiritual resources need to be mobilized in the arduous process of integration for immigrants. *Liminal spaces* are radical spaces of social transformation that lead citizens to realize that in spite of sociologically defined differences, underneath people share a common universal humanity. This experiential realization in *liminal space* helps citizens develop empathy for one another, cooperate with one another, and relate to each other in human-to-human terms across the divides of class and culture.

Participatory theatre, rituals and the arts, psychotherapeutic groups, meditation and spiritual groups all the way to study and parenting groups serve the function of liminality to different degrees. They create a non-hierarchical space outside of institutional, hierarchical space for people to interact in depth. It is also a heterogeneous space that accommodates people with different degrees of social and cultural capital and equalizing them. These spaces are experimental and transformative, thereby allowing the reshuffling of roles, rules and norms which renew energy and self-definition when

participants return to the structure of society. Exploration of how these spaces can be made more available in society is recommended because they build *communitas*, or deep human bonds, and reduce stereotypes and rigid classifications based only on sociological and institutional categories. *Liminal spaces* allow for the formation of bridging capital because of their radical heterogeneity which is transformed into homogeneity at a human-to-human level. Far from a frivolous and dispensable activity, the arts have been found in recent scholarship to play a central role in social cohesion, social change, and communal problem-solving to address local problems that are difficult to discuss in words and text (Adams & Goldbard, 2002; Prentki & Selman, 2000). Sometimes known as *anti-structural space* (Turner 1969, 1974), *liminal space* is a counterpoint that operates in tension with the apparent fixedness of structural space. Anthropologists, sociologists and spatial philosophers observe the ubiquitous presence of *liminal spaces* in society to keep society fresh and responsive to alternatives and change (Foucault, 1967; Turner, 1969; Lefebvre, 1991).

Immigrant services tend to focus on the technical and institutional needs of immigrants but overlook the holistic needs and nature of immigrants' integration. The experience of trauma and oppression among immigrants and refugees is among the range of obstacles that hinder their personal agency in the social integration process (Kaltman, Green et al., 2010; Mobasher, 2006; Schmitz, Jacobus, et al., 2003). Hence, the provision of counselling, healing from trauma, personal growth, parenting, family communication programs, extending to community programs to foster formation of deep human bonds with other immigrants and non-immigrants require ongoing program development to assist immigrants. Evidence from this study shows that immigrants view integration as

more than learning how to sign on to the bureaucracy of government and institutional programs. Immigrants find their own deep psycho-social and spiritual resources of personal efficacy in *liminal spaces*, and experience inter-cultural bonds to others in their universality of human yearnings. *Liminal space* experience enables them to become more powerful agents in charting their own paths in the new society. Facilitators with multicultural competence, well-trained in understanding the issues and social integration process of immigrants, are required for the successful and appropriate running of such programs to ensure safety and effectiveness. *Liminal spaces* are quintessential spaces to augment multiple forms of capital in bringing together people from different ethnicity, classes, education and profession in symbolic and deep interaction that leave an impact.

Friendship Space

Friendship space is where like-minded people with natural affinities in culture and values share their resources and sustain each other's precarious reality in a pluralistic society. This space is a stabilizing resource for immigrants' integration. The literature shows that immigrant friendships are often among co-ethnics, and inter-cultural friendships are harder to form because of language and cultural differences as well as lack of interactive spaces (Hynie, Crooks, Barragan, 2011; Martinovic, Tubergen, & Maas, 2011). Gender plays an important role in friendship among women who share roles of wife, mother and experiences of child-rearing (Izwayyed, 2014). Their style of communication also differs from men's, with higher levels of disclosure, intimacy, and discussion of feelings among women than men (Dindia, 1992; Reis, Senchak, & Solomon, 1985; Williams, 1985). Hence, the quality and intimacy of women's friendships and their formation likely differ from that of men's.

Friendship space is often derived from *liminal space* among participants in this study where deep human bonds of friendship and *communitas* were formed that transcend cultural and social differences. *Work space* is also an important site for inter-cultural and intra-cultural friendships to develop. The importance of friendships in fostering a sense of belonging, facilitating psychological adjustment, and improving self-perceptions has been reported in studies of friendship among adolescents and university students, populations that are in transition in life stage and environment (Hamm & Faircloth, 2005; Pittman & Richmond, 2008).

Internalized Cultural Space

While recent immigrants' priority focus was initially on accessing external spaces of interaction for their social integration, established immigrant often turn inward to give attention to their primary *internalized cultural space* in contrast to their secondarily acquired values and culture in Canada. Through a sifting and sorting process immigrants learn what they want to retain and what to discard or modify. It is at this point that they re-discover some of the gems of their own traditional, ethnic culture which they consciously express in their choices and actions in Canadian society. While the espoused Canadian view of integration is that of a "two-way street," hardly any discussion in the literature or government documents has been found to illustrate how immigrants' values and culture could be an asset to Canadian society. Since immigrants generally have low symbolic capital, that is, recognition by others that they have something important to say, realities to label, and values to contribute, the opening of symbolic spaces where their voices can be heard and observations shared is a further step to their integration into Canadian society. Canadian society stands to be enriched with the added texture of

immigrants' relational ethics and values, traditions of spirituality and their inter-generational view of life in sustaining a civil and cohesive society.

The social spaces for integration are opportune and precarious, some made available to immigrants through work, mentors, friends, others through immigrant services, healing and transformative circles. They are also spaces that immigrants actively seek and carve out for themselves through their participation. Different density and depth of interaction and conversation are found in each space, and each carries different properties of social integrative value.

Social Integration and Spatial Theories

This study contributes an initial typology of salient spaces for immigrant integration that provides an impetus towards a more intentional approach to open up social and symbolic spaces for social integration of immigrants.

Attention to the equalizing and transformative effects of *liminal space* was presented by Foucault (1967) and Turner (1969, 1974). Other spatial theorists alert us to the fact that social spaces are not fixed and immutable. Bourdieu presents the idea that an “awakening of consciousness” can lead social agents to create new “classes” that contravene their natural tendencies of groupings aggregating around social, cultural, symbolic and economic capital similarities (Bourdieu, 1985, p.727). He further suggests that social change issues from the capacity of social agents through practice and by those with symbolic capital to name and create new collective entities and configurations. *Mentorship* and *liminal spaces* are examples of intentionally created spaces that break with the expected hierarchical interactional spaces in structured society. These social spaces alter the degree of social and multiple forms of capital available to the immigrants.

Lefebvre's theory of space hinges on an understanding of space as socially, economically and politically determined. Users and inhabitants of space, artists and philosophers who describe the space they experience through symbols introduce a creative possibility of how space can be transformed. An example from this study is how spaces in a shopping mall are transformed from a commercial space into a *liminal space* for local and transnational workshops by an immigrant with high economic and spatial capital. Another example is how *liminal spaces* for identity exploration can be created within a school environment by an art teacher.

Although not a prominent concept among social workers in North America, social space as a paradigm for social work has been developed in the German tradition of social work. Their spatially oriented approach calls upon social workers to build social work spaces that enhance disadvantaged citizens' potential and interests with an analysis of power imbalances and dominance that occur in social spaces. Social integration as shaped through different types of spaces that allow for social interactions, conversations, identity representation and performance invites further exploration.

Implications for Social Work

A hallmark of the social work profession is helping to advance the well-being of disadvantaged individuals, groups and communities that suffer from limited resources due to social marginalization and exclusion, while adopting a lens of broader social issues and policies that affect people's functioning within with the larger system (CASW, 2015). A growing discussion in the literature centres around social work practice with immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers as a field of social work practice (Nash, Wong

& Trlin, 2006; Yan & Chan, 2010) and the inclusion of immigrant settlement work as a specialty of social work in Canada (Türegün, 2013).

An exploratory study in British Columbia reveals that social workers are poorly equipped to work with newcomers and immigrants who are routinely encountered in their social work practice (Yan & Chan, 2010). Social workers feel ill-prepared to help newcomers with cultural adaptation. Only a minority of respondents reported having taken university courses or on-the-job training specific to working with immigrants and refugees. Majority of social workers are unfamiliar with immigrant issues and policies. A clear gap exists in the knowledge and skills of social workers for working with the complexity of the challenges and integration of immigrants.

This thesis shows that immigrants are a disadvantaged group with less social, cultural, symbolic and at times economic capital compared to the non-immigrant population. Immigrant women may have a history of oppression in terms of compromised safety, political security and limited freedom to make choices under their original cultural and political contexts that led them to seek a counter oppressive space in Canada. This discussion will focus on how the findings from this study impact social work theory and practice at three ecological levels: micro (individual and family), meso (community) and macro (program and policy).

At the micro level, social workers counselling individuals and families need to be cognizant of the spaces immigrant occupy before and after they arrive in Canada and how they produce social and cultural disorientation, psychological distress and cultural dissonance. Changes to the family space involving family roles and disrupted conversations among family members concerning the stresses of adjustment need to be

attended to. Social workers can conduct an inquiry and analysis of immigrants' spaces of positive social interaction conducive to their integration into Canadian society and what areas of spaces can be potentially opened up for them, e.g. family conversations about challenges and changes after immigration, conversation partners to practice their English conversational skills, mentorships, paid and volunteer work opportunities, personal development workshop or groups, and spaces to develop friendships.

There are signs that values of the liberal era of the welfare state and the expansion of rights in the 1980s has come to an end (Harris, 2014; McKenzie & Wharf, 2010). The neo-liberal era that followed in the 1990s and into the 21st century prioritizes privatization, profit, economic growth in globalization, and individualism that relegate immigrants to looking after themselves (Arat-Koc, 1999). This policy environment increases the distance between citizens and diminishes social cohesion and social capital, potentially reducing citizens' engagement with each other and with immigrants. Hence, deliberate actions to counter this societal trend are urgent.

At the meso level, the concept of social capital as an asset accrued through social networks and interactions can help social workers understand constraints on capital (social, cultural, economic, symbolic) acquisition for immigrants (Hawkins & Maurer, 2012). Social workers can help to augment these various types of capital among immigrants with an analysis of social spaces, the power and structural differential that exists in them, and open up new spaces for exchange and equalization of capital acquisition and integration. Social workers equipped with skills of community development can create collective spaces for immigrants and non-immigrants to meet. These spaces can bring together stakeholders in structuring mentorship programs in the

workplace and other areas of social life (Carter, Morrish, & Amoyaw, 2008). Social workers can orchestrate community events, led by artists and therapists, to develop *liminal spaces* based on heterogeneity to increase social, cultural and spiritual capital for all involved.

Social work education and training on the complexity of issues facing immigrants at different stages of their integration is a current gap. Curriculum and training to expand social work skills in facilitating spaces that cross traditional class, ethnic, gender and generational lines would increase safe spaces for social integration. Social workers can act as cultural brokers and translators to help immigrants articulate their concerns and contributions to help them gain symbolic capital. Opening spaces to allow immigrants to present how their cultural values serve as assets to themselves, their families and communities can help re-dress the view that immigrant values are of less value than mainstream secular, individualistic values. Interactive spaces and initiatives that go beyond food-fests and ethnic festivals to promote multiculturalism with conversations at the level of cultural values and worldviews can bring greater depth to multiculturalism and social integration.

At the macro level, social workers are called to be involved in the making of social policies defined as “guiding principles for ways of life, motivated by basic and perceived human needs” (Gil, 1990, p.523). Policy critics have observed that policy-making in the human services tend to largely exclude those who are most affected by the outcomes because they are often deemed incapable of making a contribution (McKenzie & Wharf, 2010). This runs contrary to “the principle of affected interests” (Dahl, 1970, p.64) that those who are affected by a policy have a right to participate in its formation

and determination of its desired outcomes. Immigrant voices and perspectives are often under-represented in the design of programs and social policies that affect their integration. The contribution of this research is the inclusion of the voices and perspectives of Chinese immigrant women to deepen our understanding of what processes and spaces facilitate their social integration. It is noteworthy the degree of enthusiasm and eagerness with which the women participated in the interviews of this study. Social workers can continue to open up such spaces to increase the symbolic capital of immigrants in policy-making and in the public understanding of immigrant experience.

Whether working with newcomers, immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers falls within the scope of social work practice is an area for active discussion. If so, what theoretical and practical knowledge would inform this new curriculum? Would spatial theories of social capital and social constructionism applied to immigrants add to the theoretical and practical base of social work? These are questions that call for discussion among social workers along with their community stakeholders.

While this qualitative inquiry involving in-depth interviews of a small sample of Chinese immigrant women pose limitations to the generalizability of its findings to the larger Chinese and immigrant communities, the cases are instructive in offering an impetus for future validation and comparative studies with other immigrant groups. “Societies that enable all their citizens to play a full and useful role in the social, economic and cultural life of their society will be healthier than those where people face insecurity, exclusion and deprivation” (World Health Organization, 1998, p. 9). In a society of interdependence, immigrants’ well-being and integration affects the well-being

of non-immigrants and society as a whole. Policies and programs need to frame this mutuality to encourage non-immigrants to reach out to immigrants, because their futures are bound together under the same nation. We benefit from recognizing that multiculturalism is not only a policy, it is ultimately a collective achievement.

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Appendix 1

Interview Protocol on Experience of Chinese Women Immigrants' Creative Appropriations of State and NGO Initiatives

Stages of immigration and Use of state, NGO and other supports

Using each decade as a framework, we will explore:

- What major challenge(s) did you encounter in each decade after immigration?
How did you go about meeting these challenges?
- Did any changes after immigration surprise you or were they within your expectations? In what ways?
- What were your biggest adjustment challenges?
- Where did you turn when you had difficulties or needed support in each decade?
- On a piece of paper, one for each decade, and with yourself at the centre, please indicate the people/ groups/ services you went to in times of your biggest challenges and the relationship of these people to you, e.g. mother, minister, friend, co-worker etc.
- Did you participate in your host society? How?
- Did you have friends not in your ethnic group? What were the implications of these friendships?
- Mentors and sponsors?
- Other networks identified?
- If you did not tap into the community or government resources, why not? (E.g. external barriers like language difficulties, or internal barriers like cultural beliefs and family rules)

Social and Government Programs

- Have you utilized cultural, social, religious or government programs?
- What difference have these programs made in your life?
- What were helpful/not helpful?

Participation in Community

- In what ways were you part of groups and organizations in the larger community outside of your family after immigration?
- What motivated you to give to these groups?
- What role did you play in these networks/groups?
- What was your experience like?

Influence

- In what ways have you made a difference in society here in Canada? Exerted an influence within and outside of your family?
- What desires or contributions do you have for living your life in Canada going forward?

Being Canadian (Canada's multiculturalism policy)

- How do you feel about being a Canadian?
- How do you feel about Canada as a country?
- What factors contribute to your feeling Canadian, or not?
- What have you done to “blend in” or to maintain your own ethnic or racial uniqueness?
- Do you have other identities besides being Canadian that are important or strong for you?
- Can you draw a picture of how you situate yourself in Canada within the social fabric in terms of your ethnicity?

Appendix 2

PARTICIPANT'S INFORMATION AND CONSENT

Chinese Women Immigrants' Creative Appropriations of State and NGO Initiatives

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Research Affiliate, Prentice Institute for Global Population and Economy

Purpose of Study:

The purpose of this study is to explore the experience of first-generation Chinese women's immigrant and citizenship experience in Canada. We want to learn about your hopes and dreams, your struggles and resources, to whom you turn when in need, and your sense of being a Canadian.

We hope to use what we learn from the study to develop a larger project and to make preliminary recommendations to government and organizations to develop programs and policies that support immigrant women, their families and the larger community.

You are invited to join in this study if you are:

- Over 18 years of age
 - A first generation (landed immigrant) Chinese immigrant in Canada
 - Interested in writing and talking about your "immigrant and citizenship experience"
 - Interested in exploring your cultural identity
 - Able to comprehend the nature and purpose of the study
- Participants will be selected on a first come, first serve basis. Once the quota of participants is reached, you will be placed on a waiting list. You will be notified of the status of your application to take part in the study.

What you will be asked to do and the amount of time it will take

You will be asked to:

- Fill out a Demographics Questionnaire online or in paper format (approximately 15-20 minutes).
- Take part in an audiotaped focus group (approximately 10 people) session lasting approximately 2-2.5 hours in to explore your personal "immigration and citizenship" experience including your struggles and successes facilitated by two focus group leaders. You will be asked to draw a diagram of your social network during the interview or focus group.

AND/OR

- Take part in an audiorecorded individual interview lasting approximately 3-5 hrs. that may be conducted over 2-3 sittings to explore your “immigration and citizenship” experience with an interviewer.

Risks and Benefits

Since the study deals with personal issues related to immigration and citizenship including experienced struggles and challenges faced by being both a woman and immigrant, emotions may arise that are at times difficult. Participants have the right not to answer questions that they do not feel comfortable answering and/or to decline to talk about topics that they are not ready to disclose or explore. If distressing emotions and/or issues should arise from the interviews or focus groups of this study, participants can ask for a list of counseling resources in their community from the interviewer or focus group facilitator.

Despite these potential risks, your participation in the study will contribute to increasing and deepening our understanding of Chinese women immigrants’ experience in Canada, their challenges, internal and external resources, and their contributions. Our learning from this study will help in developing future larger scale studies and make some preliminary recommendations to organization and government programs and policies to support Chinese immigrants, their families and the larger community in Canada.

How will the results of this study be used?

Your demographic data, excerpts and quotes and social network mapping from the interviews may be used anonymously in reports, publications, blogs, and conference presentations and proceedings. Publications may be in the form of papers, posters, powerpoint slides, journal articles, pamphlets, artistic performances, website information/ publications, monographs and books. Your identity will be disguised and any identifying details will be altered, unless you clearly state in writing to request that your real name be used.

You will be given an internet link to access an overall summary of the findings of the study. You are also welcome to contact the researcher for a summary of the study’s findings.

The Principal Researcher further seeks your consent to use your data from this study to answer other related research questions (secondary data analysis) that may emerge related to Chinese immigrant women, citizenship, social capital and multiculturalism, including the use of the data for potential theses by graduate students supervised by the Principal Researcher. However, your identity will be disguised and protected. Publications and conference presentations may be in the forms of papers, posters, manuals, journal articles, website information/ publications, theses and dissertations, training material including monographs, books, videos and DVDs using actors.

In all the instances listed above, your identity will remain anonymous and identifying details disguised.

Will you be paid to join this study?

Focus group participants will receive an honorarium in the form of a grocery voucher valued at \$20 for your participation in the focus group. Interviewees will receive an honorarium in the form of a grocery voucher valued at \$50 for your participation in an interview lasting approximately 3-5 hrs that may be conducted over 2-3 sittings. Participants may choose to withdraw from the study at any time.

Audiotaping

We will ask your permission to audiotape the focus group and interview sessions. This will be for the main purpose of transcription so we can analyze the content of the discussion or interview. You can also indicate if you are willing to allow us to use the audiotape of yourself for sharing the findings of this study with others for purposes stated in an earlier section of this letter. If not, your identity on any footage or tape will be masked or deleted.

Assurance of Anonymity and Confidentiality

The online survey will be mounted with FluidSurveys, a Canadian company providing an online survey tool. Even though Fluidsurvey indicates that it meets all privacy regulations deemed necessary by Canadian institutes, a guarantee of 100% privacy cannot be made.

We will be transcribing the audiotaped information we gathered in the focus group and/or interview. The researcher team of this study, the research assistants and the person(s) doing the transcriptions will be able to see hear the audiotapes and read the surveys. However, be assured that they will not share your identity and information with other people outside of the project and they will sign an agreement to respect your confidentiality.

Freedom to join and withdraw from the study

Please know that you are entirely free to join or decline to join the study without any consequences or penalty. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any time and all your information be deleted.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE
A Project for Investigating “Experience of Chinese Women Immigrants’ Creative Appropriations of State and NGO Initiatives”

**Your completion and submission of the demographics questionnaire will be an indication of your consent to take part in the surveys as stated in the Information Letter. **

****You will be given this form to indicate your consent at the time of the face-to-face focus group or interview****

Please **INITIAL** next to the items where you agree.

- ☐ I understand the terms of the Participant’s Information Letter on the study.
- ☐ I have had the opportunity to clarify my questions in regard to participation in this study and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
- ☐ I freely consent to taking part in this study with the terms outlined in the Participant’s Information Letter.

I consent to.....

- ☐ Participate in the study’s focus group, interview, and provide the requested demographic information on paper.
- ☐ Allow the focus group /interview content to be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ Allow the data gathered and quotes to be used for research, presentation, performance and publication purposes provided that my identity remains anonymous and protected.
- ☐ Allow use of my data from this study to answer other related research questions (secondary data analysis) that may emerge related to Chinese immigrant women, citizenship, social capital and multiculturalism, including the use of the data for potential theses by the researcher and/or graduate students supervised by the Principal Researcher.
- ☐ I know that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time and, if I choose to withdraw, I can ask that any data gathered from me be destroyed or deleted.

Participant’s Name
(please print)

Participant’s Signature

Date

Appendix 3

DEMOGRAPHICS SURVEY

Experience of Chinese Women Immigrants' Creative Appropriations of State and NGO Initiatives

You may choose to not answer any of the following questions if you so wish. The questions will provide the researcher with some basic information about you. Please answer the following questions as best you can:

1. Where or how did you first hear about this study? (please check one)

- Posting on the internet
- A friend
- A professional
- A co-worker
- A family member
- Ad in the newspaper
- Announcement on the radio
- An organization
- From the researcher
- Social media, e.g. Facebook, Twitter
- Email
- Other _____

2. How old were you on your last birthday? ____

3. Where were you born? _____

4. In what country (ies) were you raised? _____

5. When did you migrate to Canada? Year _____

6. What is your country of origin? _____

In what country (ies) were you raised? _____

7. When did you obtain Canadian citizenship? Year _____

8. Which other countries have you migrated to before Canada? _____

9. What immigration classification did you apply for entry into Canada? E.g. economic, family or refugee.

10. What places have you lived in in Canada?

11. What is your current marital/relationship status?

- Single
- Married
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Separated
- Living with a partner
- Other_____

12. How many children do you have?

13. Who are you currently living with?

- A spouse
- A male partner
- A female partner
- A roommate
- Self
- Parents
- Children
- Pets

14. Do you have extended family members in Canada? (1) yes (2) no

15. How many extended family members of yours live in Canada?

16. What is your current occupation? _____

17. How much schooling have you had?

- 8th grade or less
- Some high school
- High school graduate
- College graduate
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Ph.D. or M.D.
- Other_____

18. What is your annual income?

- Below \$20,000
- \$20,000-\$30,000
- \$30,001-\$40,000
- \$40,001-\$50,000
- \$50,001-\$60,000
- \$60,001-\$100,000
- Over \$100,000

19. What was your religious background in childhood?

- Buddhist
- Confucianist
- None
- Catholic
- Protestant
- Muslim
- Other

20. What is your religious affiliation today?

- Buddhist
- Confucianist
- None
- Catholic
- Protestant
- Muslim
- Other

21. How often do you attend religious services?

- At least once a week
- Approximately once a month
- During religious holidays
- Never
- Other_____

22. Do you have any memberships or affiliations in social, cultural, religious and political organizations (past and present). Please list_____

23. Your political party is

- Liberal
- Conservative
- NDP
- Other_____
- Depends_____

24. Do you vote? (1) yes (2) no (3) sometimes

25. Have you ever been given any honours, awards and recognitions? Please list

27. How many close friends do you have? _____

28. How often do you meet or talk to them?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Less than once a month
- Other _____

29. How often do you get together with your extended family?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Less than once a month
- Other _____

30. Are you connected to the Internet? (1) yes (2) no

31. If you are connected to the Internet, how many hours per week do you normally spend “visiting” your friends and family on the Internet? _____ hours a week.

32. Do you volunteer? (1) yes (2) no

33. What kind of volunteer work do you do? _____

36. Have you ever been diagnosed with a mental health problem? (1) yes (2) no

37. What kind of problem? _____

38. In general, would you say your health today is:

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

39. If you rated your health fair or poor, what is the problem_____

40. Generally how happy have you been with your personal life during the past 12 months?

- Extremely happy
- Very happy most of the time
- Generally satisfied, pleased
- Sometimes fairly unhappy
- Unhappy most of the time