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Transnationalism and Implications on Identity: The Case of Overseas Hong Kong Families in Vancouver

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Abstract

In this research project, I focus on transnationalism through trans-Pacific migratory processes and its implications on the evolution of identity in Hong Kong families in Vancouver, Canada. Under the system of reference of social and cultural geography, three main parts are discussed: a conceptual one presenting surrounding aspects of transnationalism and its underlying concepts of identity, perception and sociocultural capital. The second part is empirical with a qualitative survey based on a case study, represented by the second generation of Hong Kong migrants of the 1980s-1990s. The survey demonstrates the real implications of transnationalism on these actual Hong Kong students living in Vancouver. Strategies of post-transnationalism such as cultural logics, social networks, accumulative capital and embeddedness, give a frame to the case study. I then analyze how many of these children had or still have 'astronaut' parents and how such 'satellite' kids studying at the University of British Columbia (Vancouver) conceive of this phenomenon of transnationalism, how it impacts their identity and how they manage to deal with cultural differences internally and externally to their family. Furthermore, I investigate how the children cope with their double identity as a hybrid one embedded with their Asian parental mentality and with the dimensions of cosmopolitanism. In the final part of this research, further questions are raised as to how transnationalism may influence these generations at a broader level and how national identities are located in individuals in light of a growing tendency towards universalism.

Résumé

Ce mémoire de master concerne le transnationalisme à travers le processus migratoire trans-pacifique et ses impacts sur l'évolution identitaire des familles hongkongaises à Vancouver, Canada. Sous le référentiel théorique de la géographie socioculturelle, ce travail est réparti en trois grands chapitres : une partie conceptuelle pour la présentation des notions transversales du transnationalisme ainsi que ses concepts sous-jacents ; l'identité, la représentation et le capital socioculturel. Le chapitre suivant est constitué d'un apport empirique, avec une étude de cas de type qualitatif composée de la deuxième génération de migrants hongkongais des années 1980-1990. Cette étude a pour but de démontrer les réelles implications du transnationalisme sur les étudiants de parents Hongkongais vivant à Vancouver. Les stratégies du post-transnationalisme, comme les logiques culturelles, les réseaux sociaux, l'accumulation du capital et l'enchâssement de tous ces éléments, cadrent l'étude de cas dans laquelle nous analyserons combien de ces étudiants ont eu ou ont encore des parents dits 'astronautes', quels en sont les impacts sur leur identité et comment ils gèrent les différences culturelles de manière interne comme externe à leur famille. Nous investiguerons dans la gestion de l'identité hybride enchâssée avec la mentalité asiatique de leurs parents ainsi que sous les dimensions du cosmopolitisme. Nous terminerons par des questionnements plus conceptuels concernant l'influence du transnationalisme à travers les générations et comment les identités nationales se situent chez les individus face à une tendance identitaire universaliste croissante.

Key Words

Transnationalism, Multiculturalism, Trans-Pacific Migration, Cultural Identity, Hybridity, Sense of Belonging, Hong Kong migrants in Vancouver, Cosmopolitanism, Universalism, Generational Differences, Representations.

“Rien n’est permanent, sauf le changement”

Héraclite d’Ephèse (576 - 480 av. J.C.)

“Je ne suis ni d’Athènes, ni de Corinthe, je suis citoyen du monde”

Socrate (470 - 399 av. J.C.)

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1. Introduction

1.1. Presentation of the Research Project

1.2. Questions, Dimensions and Field

1.3. Goals and Hypotheses

1.4. Structure of the Research

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Presentation of the Research Project

The present research project examines one aspect of international migration. It focuses particular attention on the phenomenon of transnationalism - understood here as interconnectivity between people in the context of international migration - drawing on global mobility. Transnationalism will be habitually employed to depict several kinds of practices in the context of migration (Waters, 2005). Some aspects of this international movement of people are then selected according to a specific context and mainly analyzed from a social and cultural geographical view. My focus is twofold: as well as discussing different approaches to the concept of transnationalism, I also investigate the implications and impacts of this broad concept in a case study of Hong Kong families who have recently moved to Vancouver, Canada. I introduce some cultural features of this group from the past 20-25 years since their arrival to Canada, and then analyze the development of their identity in their host country.

More specifically, in this analysis I address the following questions: how do the last two generations of parents and especially their children, who are currently studying at the University of British Columbia (Vancouver), conceive of identities? How do these children manage to deal with eventual cultural differences with their parents? How do they stand - in their sense of identity - in society? These differences are especially pertinent when the migratory process becomes a 'troublemaker', adding 'gaps' in cultural heritage or replacing the original cultural behaviours with others, thus challenging the relations and comprehension between these two age groups of Chinese families according to changing situations. In addition, transnationalism transcends not only the parents but also affects the following generation - the children - due to a difference in cultural environments. Clearly, conditions of the post-migration process for the parents were different from those of their children, who grew up in the host country or arrived at a young age. Moreover, it is intriguing to observe not only how the children manage their situation as a son or daughter who did not directly experience migration, but who also has to master and to negotiate two different locations: where they grew up - Vancouver - and the native land of their parents. It is also interesting how parents and children cope with these circumstances, both together and individually, in daily life. Furthermore, I explore the ability of the youngest generation to run with a mixed identity, or 'hybrid', one where a North American life-style is embedded in their Asian

parents' mentality as a result of the socio-cultural impacts of transnationalism. Further and broader issues to be raised are: particularly how the phenomenon of transnationalism itself may impact these two generations, the children, how an empirical analysis matches with a state-of-the-art theoretical framework and, what elements actually trigger these intergenerational changes when the families in question are faced with a new cultural configuration.

The transnationalism of recent Chinese migration to Canada within the current context of globalization and an increasingly interconnected world offers a unique window on the representation of migratory processes today. It sheds light on economic and political developments as well as on consequences for migrant populations and on the setup of the families in question. Moreover, an analysis of this matter with regards to current trends adds an interesting dimension to the research project by acknowledging the difficulties faced by families in the migratory process in general. At another level, the study provides an opportunity to observe the evolution of tendencies becoming apparent and taking shape, and giving new characteristics to transnationalism, gradually adding or canceling new representations of the notion itself.

My choice to write about this topic came about for several reasons: I was fascinated by the phenomenon of 'mobility' through the migratory process. I saw it as an increasingly basic condition for 'being in search of' and for 'succeeding' in life in general, whatever the degree of importance one places on it or what goals one wants to reach. I think it is also fundamental to observe what the deeper consequences of this flexibility may be on hybridity, adaptation and identity in general. This interplay has implications for so-called 'identity reference points', whether it acts to preserve an ethnicity... or to make way for the emergence of a new one. This intergenerational duality between two different ways of thinking - of the children and of the parents - and based on cultural values, is more or less balanced or exacerbated. Strategies (section 3.4) are used to accommodate the divergences, especially when factors such as cultural differences are combined with the particular characteristics of generational distinctions. Many aspects have to be taken into account in larger contextual changes: all the factors unavoidably influence and are influenced by each other in a complex but thought-provoking 'alchemy'. Finally, I do not intend to find a set of solutions in this research project; instead, I will approach it from a sympathetic, constructive and innovative viewpoint in order to offer the elements of answers and to probe further research prospects.

1.2. Questions, Dimensions and Field

A number of questions are worth asking about transnationalism and its influence on various personal features of targeted individuals. Framing my topic as a series of questions allows me to define what I am looking for more precisely and to determine an efficient way of thinking throughout the paper.

Concerning questions of identity, it will be interesting to see where the second generation of Chinese-Canadians locate their cultural frame of reference, geographically speaking, in real and imaginary places and why they prefer one place – precisely located or not - to another one. An additional aspect will be the degree of reference to cultural mentality with which they manage their life: whether one or several national identities are involved. More Chinese or more Canadian? Both or neither? This position of nationality-based narratives may be legitimate (still). Moreover, the logic behind mechanisms of identity in these particular circumstances should be demonstrated. How should we define cultural differences with generational disjuncture? Both cultural and generational differences should indeed be matched together. Is transnationalism challenging the definition of nationalities? Will the following case study lead to a rethinking of the meaning of the broad concept of national identity, especially in the current socio-economic context? Transnationalism may be regarded as the first step to the ‘end’ of nationalities. These are the questions I attempt to answer in the following chapters.

To carry this research project through to a successful conclusion, certain fields and dimensions should be examined first. Various approaches surround the idea of transnationalism, which sometimes cross, juxtapose, mix with or influence it to a greater or lesser degree. These factors require particular attention. However, the system of reference of my research will clearly be part of social and cultural geography. In addition to discussing important geographical aspects such as the effects of scale or location, this master’s thesis incorporates approaches from various intertwined fields such as sociology, anthropology, political science, history and economics. The topic of Chinese communities in Vancouver, including the concept of transnationalism, presented from different perspectives, calls for paradigms from diverse disciplines to be linked together. The ramifications from this concept are various, occur at different stages and at different times; it is therefore necessary to consider factors from divergent categories. Furthermore, more than one reason should be

highlighted to understand why and how transnationalism may have modified recent Hong Kong families and their structure. I nonetheless emphasize individuals as key elements when developing and presenting arguments. For this reason I do not describe or go deeper into the political component of transnationalism with questions such as migration policies or laws. I do take the political aspect into account as a background curtain in my topic's development, however.

Besides the importance of interdisciplinarity, another aspect should be considered: the technical limitations of this study and the limits of the topic itself. I focus my research on social and cultural implications of transnationalism based mainly on a small survey over a nine-month period of work conducted with a sample of two age categories of people from the same background - Hong Kongers getting old in Vancouver - with different cultural contexts. The fact I created the questionnaire, and interviewed people living in Vancouver and taking part in this survey, naturally restricts the scope of this study. However, I expect, from the representative aspect of this sample and the kind of questions I ask, to obtain a legitimate idea of prominent tendencies.

1.3. Goals and Hypotheses

The goals of this thesis consist of outlining and discussing a critical conceptual overview of transnationalism of overseas Chinese families in Canada, as well as of generating detailed information in the empirical part of this work. Interviews and questionnaires serve as a means of displaying how reality may match the theoretical framework and to validate or disprove hypotheses. Furthermore, I hope to show how transnational practices in intergenerational behaviours are differently combined and mediated by each other, and thus provide a better “[...] understanding of transnationalism as a socially negotiated process.” (Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 297). Family dynamics represent one of the mirrors reflecting positive and negative conditions of transnationalism, including realities and perceptions of transcultural lives. After analyzing my data from both theoretical and empirical standpoints, I point out the underpinning mechanisms of transnationalism to verify the following hypotheses:

- The concept of transnationalism includes more than one identity frame of reference for Hong Kong overseas families.

- *The definition and the location of this new identity frame of reference differs strongly between the two generations that I have focused on (i.e. 'parents' who arrived in Vancouver during the mid-80s and their 'children').*

- *A new identity exists, based on transnationalism, bringing a progressive disappearance of national identities and leading toward a new kind of universalism through the phenomenon of cosmopolitanism.*

These three hypotheses are key to understanding how those affected by transnationalism live and react to big changes in the new 'world society'. In addressing these hypotheses, it will be possible to understand more about some of the effects of international migration on families, how identity adapts to various contexts according to different backgrounds, and how the cultural frame of reference may transform conceptions about identity itself.

1.4. Structure of the Research

The study begins with the main questions, fields and dimensions of the project, and the three hypotheses regarding transnationalism and its implications. It continues with a theoretical section presenting the main concept - transnationalism - and related notions such as transnationalism according to varying global-local scales and as part of the broader notion of cosmopolitanism - understood here as the ability to adapt and to be 'at home' everywhere. Questions of spatiality and underlying approaches such as identity, perception and forms of capital, mainly as they are treated in North American literature on the subject, are also discussed. The third chapter covers the presentation of the case study - Hong Kong families in Vancouver. Here an empirical survey will criss-cross conceptual views with my own findings. Methodological aspects and the results of the survey are demonstrated in the analysis, more or less corresponding with the related theory, and represent the core of this master's thesis. The fourth part includes a discussion and an assessment of the survey in terms of the impacts this kind of migration has on the second most recent generations of Hong Kong families. This fourth part also opens a fundamental debate about the nature of new forms of identity, the role of culture and the position of national identities in the current trend of 'world citizenship'. It offers answers to the initial hypotheses, and includes further thoughts about transnationalism in an ever increasing context of globalization. This final part eventually demonstrates how practice reflects theories and makes some final remarks about the meaning and the real sense

of what we may call a ‘new universalism’. Is cosmopolitanism an expected consequence in the long term? Will nationalities become, in reaction, more pronounced from a desire not to lose their identities, or their points of reference, by creating new cultural social spaces all over the world? Or does cosmopolitanism have a stronger meaning for the second generation of Hong Kong migrants?

The following chapters represent an attempt to answer some of these questions. A presentation of transnationalism as conceptual framework with the related concepts of identity, perception and socio-cultural capital provide a useful starting point.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. The Concept of Transnationalism

2.1.1. Origin of the concept and multiculturalism

2.1.2. Conceptions and consciousness of transnationalism

2.1.3. Transnationalism and 'glocality' (global – local)

2.1.4. Transnationalism as a part of political neoliberalism: toward cosmopolitanism?

2.1.5. Trans-spatiality: networks, social spaces and deterritorialization

2.1.6. Limits of the concept of transnationalism

2.2. Theoretical Underlying Concepts of Transnationalism

2.2.1. Identity: plurality and perpetual evolution

2.2.2. Perception: auto-representation & hetero-representation

2.2.3. Social and cultural capital

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. The Concept of Transnationalism

The concept of transnationalism is vast and complex, encompassing many different aspects of migration, and not always precisely defined in the literature. Referring to Alejandro Portes (2006), Vic Satzewich and Lloyd Wong also argue that “[...] transnationalism is an extraordinary elastic concept that has been stretched to cover a range of activities and individuals.” (2006: 2). An adequate definition will necessarily include subjects such as migration, mobility, identity and networks. Many scholars define this term in accordance with their respective research disciplines, following a personal approach to transnationalism to provide a better overview of the term while highlighting specific features of it. For the purposes of the present study, I contextualize the notion of transnationalism in order to formulate a working definition that will constitute the essential background to my case study. Patricia Clavin states that “there is certainly a degree of woolliness in the current usage of transnationalism” (2005: 433). It is therefore necessary to begin with a clarification of the term.

2.1.1. Origin of the concept and multiculturalism

What does the concept of transnationalism actually cover? Etymologically, transnationalism is composed of two words: “trans”, which means ‘beyond’ or ‘go through’ in Latin and “nationalism”, originally taken from the word “nation” - ‘natio’ in Latin. The latter of these two terms originates from “natus” whose meaning is “born”, “birth” or “nature”. According to its etymological origin, ‘transnationalism’ would then mean ‘beyond where people are born’, ‘beyond birth’ or ‘beyond established cultural identity’. I use the term ‘transnationalism’ not in the sense of transpacific nationalism and its connotation with immoderate patriotism or extreme-right affinities used by nationalists and as it could be interpreted in the French language especially in the field of contemporary history. Instead I speak about it in the sense of ‘transnationality’, and I employ the appropriate English term ‘transnationalism’ to avoid the potential political or ideological connotations suggested by the French language.

The origin of this concept goes back to a major transformation in society during the 20th century. The impacts of the Industrial Revolution – i.e. an increasing movement of people and

economic goods - played an important role in the occurrence of this term early in the previous century. The term was created by Randolph Bourne (1916), an intellectual who defined 'transnationalism' in response to the displacement of people and the consequent need for a new way of thinking concerning relationships between different cultures. According to thought at that time, transnationalism was not only a fashionable new term describing a more or less abstract concept, it also represented a real type of group action, a social movement with repercussions such as intensified interactions between individuals of different cultures all around the world and the development of networks. In North America the term appeared in 1919 in the context of questions about migration and identity: transnationalism was "primarily employed to extending or having interests extending beyond national bounds or frontiers." (Ibidem : 433). It is necessary, however, to make a distinction in different approaches to transnationalism and its consequences on the development of society in the United States and Canada. Katharyne Mitchell underlines the Canadian perception saying that "[l]ater iterations of cultural pluralism, and then multiculturalism, grew out of this history and geography, and involved a strong demarcation from the philosophy and practices of the United States." (2004: 87). The Canadian historian Allan Smith describes American society as a theoretical 'melting pot' of cultures, but, in reality, involving the 'production' of new individuals more limited in real life by a certain tendency towards 'anglo-conformity' and a weak ability to negotiate (Racine & Marengo, 1998).

For Canada, A. Smith (2005) adopts the metaphor of a mosaic, suggesting that society is composed of a large assembling of cultural 'pieces', each keeping their own integrity and contributing to the emerging of global patterns. The term 'mosaic' was first introduced in 1922 by Victoria Hayward to describe the various and extended composition of Canadian society, which refers to cultural pluralism. In addition, the notion of multiculturalism itself is extended in the idea of well-organized communities (Racine & Marengo, 1998) and easier access to different cultures leading to an adaptation and an insertion of specific features into one another in contact with these diverse cultures (Smith, 2005).

But where does the notion of multiculturalism come from? Multiculturalism shaped up in the 1970s with a shift of the conception of immigrants and on their arriving in a host country. "At the level of public policy, multiculturalism was institutionalized in Canada in 1971 as a form of corporate pluralism [...]" (Gordon, 1981, quoted by Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 1). In other words, migrants were no longer regarded as foreigners having to adapt to the host society through cultural assimilation. Rather than conforming to the new culture and its frames of reference and potentially losing aspects of their native culture, foreigners cultural

differences were instead respected officially by the State and ideally by the public (Mitchell, 2004). Despite the wish to maintain respect for cultural diversity, reality was thus also sometimes idealized. As Daniel Latouche extrapolates critically, “[...] le *melting pot* apparaît de plus en plus pour ce qu’il a toujours été, une idéologie qui cache mal son penchant pour la domination.” (as cited in Eveno, 1998: 201). Canadian policies have been based on multiculturalism under a pluralistic vision since the 1970s, advocating a synergy between different cultural capitals instead of assimilation policies ‘à la française’. However, a kind of behavioural assimilation was often more present than the metaphor of the mosaic would suggest. For example, mastering the English language is considered one of the essential criteria to enter and to live in Canada. A. Portes adds that “‘true transnationals’ are ‘at least bi-lingual, move easily between different cultures, frequently maintain homes in two countries, and pursue economic, political, and cultural interests that require a simultaneous presence in both’.” (1997: 16). Furthermore, according to Jean-Bernard Racine and Marina Marengo (1998), quoting A. Piette, the concept of assimilation represents the bridge between the concept of accommodation and the notion of ‘interstice’. A. Smith’s (2005) mosaic mentioned above pictures different values, hence the idea of consensus instead of a political frame of real common values. K. Mitchell highlights that while previously, “[...] multiculturalism in Canada was produced through and reflected in a highly specific geographical logic of the territorial state.” (2004: 88), this logic changed “[...] in reaction to the twin processes of state deterritorialization and neoliberalism.” (Idem) to a new spatial configuration through the marked occurrence of transnational mobility in a context of global network connections based on weak and strong ties.

It is useful to view the nature of transnationalism within the above-mentioned context. In the 1950s, transnationalism¹ developed inside nation-states and was “used primarily as an alternative term for inter-state relations [...]” (Clavin, 2005: 433). More recently, Johanna Waters has pointed out that “the first ‘transnationalism’ is commonly used to describe the practices associated with recent trans-Pacific migration, defined more generally as the process by which migrants actively maintain a variety of ties (political, social, economic, emotional) to more than one country simultaneously.” (Ibid.: 362, referring to Basch et al., 1994). Two levels are implied here: First, a sociological aspect that includes people and social impacts of migration, and second, a mostly technical-political approach concerning the system of states

¹ In an economic context, this term of *transnationalism* was adopted by multinational corporations that wanted to rebrand themselves as transnational corporations during the 1980s because the term ‘multinational’ had become a dirty word, associated with greed and inequality.

and their policies on migratory processes. This thesis takes into account the first level of analysis, concerning socio-cultural impacts on the identity of overseas migrants.

Nancy Foner claims that “[t]ransnationalism is not new, even though it often seems as if it were invented yesterday” (Crang & Dwyer & Jackson, 2003: 442). It is indeed not a static notion; different dynamics in society make this concept dependant on temporal trends, modify its function and nuance the nature of transnationalism itself. According to P. Clavin, various versions of transnationalism are only “[...] rediscoveries of truths very apparent to an older generation of writers in international history and international relations” (2005: 434). A strict definition of ‘transnationality’, A. Portes (1997) concludes, “[...] requires near-instantaneous communication across national borders and long distances, the involvement of substantial numbers of people in these activities which, once a critical mass is reached, tend to become normative.” (as cited in Crang & Dwyer & Jackson, 2003: 444). In the same way of thinking and joining the pluralist vision of Canadian society, A. Portes argues furthermore that post-transnationalism which concerns direct and indirect impacts of transnationalism, has to be conceptualized as a “mode of adaptation” (as cited in Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 3) rather than through the assimilation model which prevailed several decades ago.

Transnationalism has always been influenced by different surrounding aspects and in turn also affected political organization, economic fields such as the labour market, family lives and perceptions, unavoidably affecting social, political, cultural and economic relationships. Yet, analyzing transnationalism today is different from observing it some decades ago: “[t]he nature of contemporary transnationalism among migrants has also evolved in recent years in the light of shifting political and economic circumstances in both sending and receiving countries.” (Vertovec, 2001: 574).

Technological progress, such as an improved telecommunications system, has given humankind better tools for all kinds of exchanges, including human capital. In an era of increasing globalization, economic and political interests attach significance to migration as an integrated and continuous circuit of flows. Transnationalism has also given rise to the establishment of a “circular model”. (Ley & Kobayashi, 2005: 123). In its basic representation, this model (see appendix n°1) comprises the arrival of the migrants in the new country, their integration with the help of various strategies, a relatively long period of time spent in the host country and a closure of the loop with the return of migrants to their initial country, as explained by Daniel Hiebert². The representation of migration as a circuit is also

² Prof. D. Hiebert, in a course on International Migration, WS 2007-2008, at the University of British Columbia.

used by David Ley & Audrey Kobayashi who point out that “[...] there is a perennial openness to further movement at distinctive passages in the life cycle” (2005: 123). Concerning especially contemporary migrants, “while others have approached migration by way of addressing transnationalism, Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt emphasize that it is the scale of intensity and simultaneity of current long-distance, cross-border activities – especially economic transactions – which provide the recently emergent, distinctive and, in some contexts, now normative social structures and activities which should merit the term of ‘transnationalism’.” (Vertovec, 1999: 448). By including new migration patterns and individual experience to an understanding of transnationalism, research has opened up new ways of thinking about the topic.

2.1.2. Conceptions and consciousness of transnationalism

According to Steven Vertovec, broadly speaking transnationalism involves a certain number of institutions - state and sub-entities - at different scales (global - local), acting separately or at the same time, and which are inextricably linked together. He claims that transnationalism is used as a frame of reference whereby the term itself implies “[...] the ‘multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-states’.” (Crang & Dwyer & Jackson, 2003: 439, referring to Vertovec, 1999: 447). In most of his work on transnationalism S. Vertovec views it as “[...] as social morphology, as a type of consciousness, as a mode of cultural reproduction, as an avenue of capital, as a site of political engagement and as a reconstruction of ‘place’ or locality.” (Crang & Dwyer & Jackson, 2003: 441). The phenomenon of transnationalism is thus more than a materialistic notion, it is more or less consciously inherent to people.

The analysis of transnationalism as ‘social morphology’ looks for the roots and significance of international migration, for the structure of transnational social formations - as represented by ‘astronaut’ families (Waters, 2002) as we will see in the next chapters - and for the systems of relationships such as those initiated by strategies of networks.

The second type of transnationalism, i.e. a ‘type of consciousness’ whose identification is shared between several moving identities³, does not only correspond to one nation, but to various states at the same time. It refers to a collective imagination and also accounts for individual preferences. Moreover, referring to Gilroy (1987, 1993), S. Vertovec indicates that

³ Depending on modifications such as changes of place, environment, experience, job or surrounding people.

“the awareness of multi-locality stimulates the desire to connect oneself with others, both ‘here’ and ‘there’ who share the same ‘routes’ and ‘roots’ [...]” (1999: 450). Arjun Appadurai and Carol Breckenridge, quoted by S. Vertovec, argue also that “[...] whatever their form or trajectory, ‘diasporas always leave a trail of collective memory about another place and time and create new maps of desire and of attachment’.” (Id.). As these researchers suggest, consciousness of mobility involves memories and ways of thinking, which are split and shared in multiple local places and where reality is sometimes biased by imagination and nostalgia, shaping identities in a perpetual rebuilding of cultural production. Transnationalism as a ‘mode of cultural reproduction’ concerns not only the re-use of cultural practices and customs from generation to generation, but also flexibility in behaviour and adaptation, social institutions and daily practices. It may lead to “[...] the production of hybrid cultural phenomena manifesting ‘new ethnicities’” (Hall, 1991, quoted by Vertovec, 1999: 451), then modified for ‘negotiated’ hybrid⁴ cultures or opening a way toward cosmopolitanism.

The third type of transnationalism, i.e. an ‘avenue of capital’, is linked with the phenomenon of globalization and transnational corporations where all kinds of transfers offer a way for migrants to use different strategies, especially taking advantage of the accumulation of capital located in various sectors due to the building up of social networks. Transnationalism, as a ‘site of political engagement’ is a resource for migrants to increase the value of their rights and to obtain equity with the rest of the population. This last type of transnationalism is characterized by a ‘(re)construction of ‘place’ or ‘locality’’. This means, as S. Vertovec (1999) conceives it, new social spaces are settings where individuals may recreate their original culture.

Transnationalism is finally featured as “[...] ‘the growing disjuncture between territory, subjectivity and collective social movement’ and by ‘the steady erosion of the relationship, principally due to the force and form of electronic mediation, between spatial and virtual neighbourhoods’. New ‘translocalities’ have emerged.” (Appadurai, 1995; Goldring, 1998; Smith, 1998, quoting by Vertovec, 1999: 456). In consequence, “[...] transnationalism has changed people’s relations to space particularly by creating ‘social fields’ that connect and position some actors in more than one country.” (Id., quoting Glick Schiller, Basch & Szanton-Blanc, 1992; Castells, 1996; Goldring, 1998). Following the broader line of S. Vertovec, K. Mitchell determines the concept of transnationalism more precisely as “[...] ‘an ongoing series of cross-border movements in which *immigrants* develop and maintain

⁴ According to the definition Mitchell (1997) found on hybridity, the standard dictionary defines it basically as “a thing derived from heterogeneous sources or composed of incongruous elements.”

numerous economic, political, social and cultural links in more than one nation.” (2000: 853) involving the combination of several social spaces physically and mentally speaking. Moreover, “[t]ransnationalism describes a condition in which, despite great distances and notwithstanding the presence of international borders (and all the laws, regulations and national narratives they represent), certain kinds of relationships have been globally intensified and now take place paradoxically in a planet-spanning yet common – however virtual – arena of activity.” (Vertovec, 1999: 447, quoting Glick Schiller, Basch & Szanton-Blanc, 1992; Castells, 1996; Hannerz, 1996).

A final distinction should be made between transnationalism and diaspora, since transnational communities and diasporas “[...] are not synonymous” (Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 5). “[During] the 1980s, Connor (1986, 16) defined “diaspora” as “that segment of a people living outside the homeland.”” (Id.). Cohen expands this definition claiming that diaspora concerns not only the people displaced from their own country, but also those who formed part of a whole community that moved because of professional and financial interests. Van Hear defines diasporas as populations exhibiting three qualities; “(1) the population is dispersed from a homeland to two or more other territories; (2) the presence abroad is enduring, although exile is not necessarily permanent, with those in the diaspora possibly moving between homeland and new host; and (3) there is some kind of exchange – social, economic, political, or cultural – between or among spatially separated populations.” (Id.). These two notions juxtapose each other, but it is possible to include diaspora as an element of transnationalism, the latter being a broader concept that encompasses it, although “[...] not all transnational communities are diasporas.” (Ibid.: 6). So, diaspora, while one form of transnationalism, differs from the kind of transnationalism we talk about in this research project. The previous clarification of the term makes it easier to focus our attention on global - local scales.

2.1.3. Transnationalism and ‘glocality’ (global – local)

As mentioned in the introductory section, the world has become more interactive, due to progress in information technologies and transportation. In order to satisfy the needs of the world economy by means of migratory flows, which are more or less sufficiently managed by governments⁵, new networks are set up. Manuel Castells claims that technologies are the core

⁵ The governments establishing migration policies and taking decisions.

of current transnational networks, but “the technologies do not altogether create new social patterns[,] but they certainly reinforce pre-existing ones.” (Vertovec, 1999: 449).

‘Global - local’ dimensions play a very important role in transnationalism, especially regarding different levels of networks. Rouse has a double approach to the concept of transnationalism: “On the one hand, the transnational operates as a figure that liquefies geographies, challenges appeals to local contexts and local studies, and evokes a condition in which we are all in some ways implicated. On the other hand, the transnational also operates as a more grounded and grounding notion, with the proven potential for correcting overgeneralized accounts of cultural globalization and displacement.” (Crang & Dwyer & Jackson: 2003: 440). Next to the basic idea that “[...] transnationalism is a global phenomenon marked by local distinctions” (Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 2), some other perspectives should be called into question.

Although the meaning of networks is becoming increasingly crucial to the process of transnationalism, there seems to be a paradox in this new configuration of society. Indeed, the ‘local’ appears more ‘global’, which decreases the anonymity between people because of their facilitated access to each other through new technologies. At the same time, however, this chosen and selected anonymity of today's world where ‘everyone knows the Other’ and may have extra information on everything and anyone else and their respective lives, makes such interaction humdrum. This observation fixes new norms, makes it more banal but more important according to its goal, and gives to traditional communication⁶ less value as well, hence a desire to go back. Indeed, “[...] the ‘loosening of the bonds between people, wealth, and territories’, which is concomitant with the rise of complex networks ‘has altered the basis of many significant global interactions, while simultaneously calling into question the traditional definition of the state’.” (as cited in Vertovec, 1999: 449, referring to Wakeman, 1988: 86). Networks can then be considered, on the one hand, as bringing people closer and integrating them, and, on the other hand, as expelling them from society.

Finally, global differences in cultures, nationalities or religions are no longer the main factors of exclusion. Nowadays, the success of being integrated in a society is equal to the ability to create, to be involved in, and to maintain individual and collective networks. J.-B. Racine & M. Marengo underline this aspect, saying that processes of integration, assimilation or segregation are defined by “[...] la façon dont les étrangers eux-mêmes gèrent leurs

⁶ In the sense of direct interaction, of ‘non-screening’ communication, of getting contact with someone face to face without particular interests.

rappports à la société d'accueil, leur inscription dans des réseaux, leurs modes de sociabilité, non pas en général mais dans la pratique de leurs activités quotidiennes.” (1998: 51). Furthermore, “[...] les facteurs contribuant à la réussite ou à l'échec de l'intégration est l'importance des formes de la participation des individus à une multitude de réseaux définissant l'intensité du lien social” (Racine, 1999: 19, quoting Tarrus, Marotel, Peraldi, 1988 and 1994). Based on this argument, the 'local' may manage to join the 'global' and sustain it. In a certain way, then, when thinking in terms of networks, it is not only the vast number of 'local' entities which build and influence the notion of 'global', but also the 'global' which induces the 'local', as we may notice in questions about networks.

The overview of global - local relations above serves to clarify why and how global stakes may rearrange - or even provoke - big changes in societies and families when they confront global - local relationships with culture and identity. This is a double-edged chain reaction, in two directions: on a vertical spectrum the levels of the scale reach from Global to Local. It is also important to point out the horizontal dimension associated with interactions maintained between people in the Local and between institutions and governments in the Global.

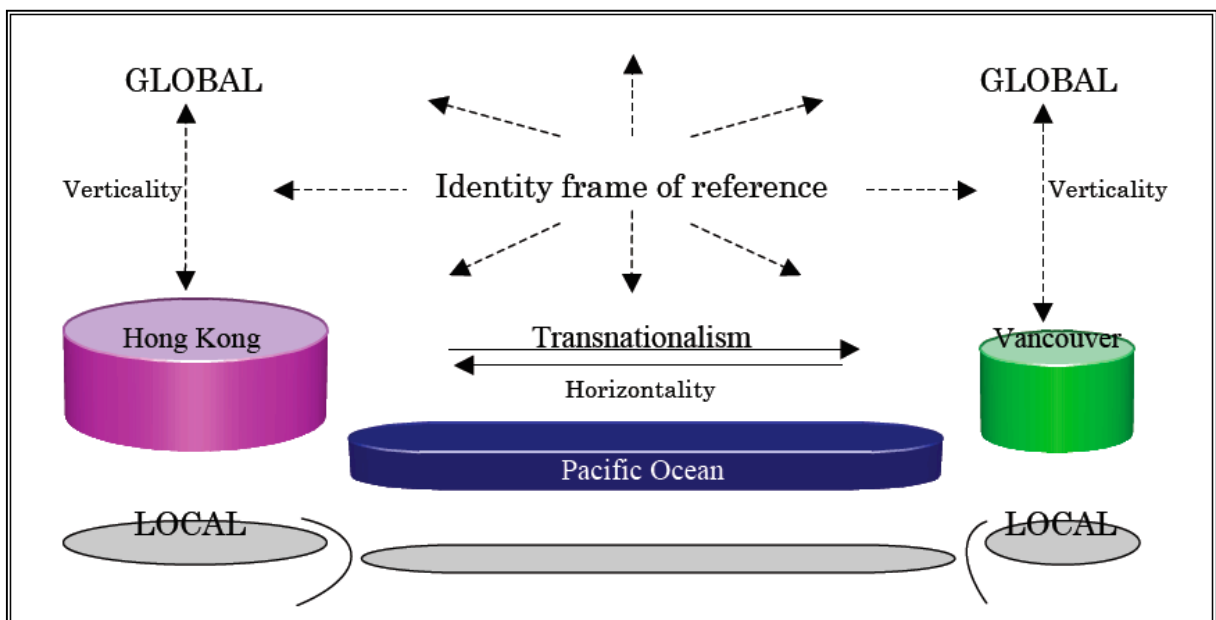


Figure n°1: Sketch made by the author to schematize the Gobal-Local connection and the Vertical-Horizontal

The global - local relationship also includes a certain number of symbols about identity and frame of reference. For example, historical places (collective thought) which may be childhood places as well (individual thought), can be fixed strongly in someone's mind and

have a totally different significance for another person in the same place. D. Ley states that “emotional sites may be in geographically distant places, so that people live a kind of polycentredness, requiring multiple site ethnographies” (2004: 155). These ‘emotional’ original places can then be transferred to other localities and may be defined as places where “[...] les potentialities de co-présence culturelle sont possibles ou probables” (Racine & Marengo, 1998: 47) demonstrating that all locations are liable to create or to receive intercultural society. However, yet another theory has emerged in the current context of neoliberalism about transnationalism and a world ‘without borders’: the idea of cosmopolitanism.

2.1.4. Transnationalism as a part of political neoliberalism: toward cosmopolitanism?

K. Mitchell points out in her introduction to *Crossing the Neoliberal Line* that “[...] neoliberalism and the market appeared inevitable and unstoppable, a smug and self-sufficient duo with no barriers in sight, global coverage the ultimate goal, and victory the annihilation of all alternate forms of social and economic organization. An unflagging belief in the economic logic of laissez-faire capitalism seemed to be the new global hegemony, and it was a logic that appeared perfect, infallible.” (2004: 1). This statement, as fatalistic and critical-looking as it may appear, reveals how transnationalism, new political liberalism and the free market are inextricably interconnected. Moreover, Aiwaha Ong considers transnationalism⁷ as both a migratory process and also a kind of flexibility that “[...] is a product and a condition of late capitalism.” (1999: 240). Different kinds of flows, such as human, financial or informational capital, move and accelerate through this system. Even though some people may observe the pernicious effects of a globalized economy, such as relocation or mass redundancies due to big investments abroad⁸ (see appendix n°2), neoliberalist interests also create growth involving complex and highly prosperous mechanisms at other levels. Social inequalities, a decrease of state power or reduction of chances for developing countries are indeed an indisputable part of reality, but at the same time, new dynamics are then economically and politically deployed to give an opportunity to people with potential to move from one country to another and to live up to competitive goals. Indeed, more than the fact that “neoliberalism

⁷ Or ‘transnationality’, according to use A. Ong’s word.

⁸ An example reflecting the world economic trend for the last two decades is the amount of direct investment that multinational companies made in China. From 1994 to 2001, US companies’ investment was multiplied almost by 5x in China (see appendix n°2).

thus can be read as both an ideological rationalization for free-market globalization *and* an ideological force in opposition to a nationally based agenda of social liberalism” (Mitchell, 2004: 32), the state itself is in perpetual transformation, which also impacts on individuals and their respective life-styles. So, economic neoliberalism is not only strongly present in the current trend but - as a consequence of economic interests - it also embodies the related idea of a political neoliberalism whose transnationalism acts as a mainspring of international migration. Emphasis on migratory flows holds a mirror to the world’s economic situation; this indicator highlights “[...] the end of old, static, and socially proscribed traditions and practices, and the beginning of a new world order.” (Ibid.: 2). Neoliberal state formations can be realized by and thanks to global flows, especially by transnational migrants and their capital, which will turn out to be of paramount interest in this study.

Different scales of the concept of transnationalism can be detected. Transnationalism indeed may be a part of a broader package. S. Vertovec asserts that “although invoked with a variety of meanings, ‘*transnationalism*’ provides an umbrella concept for some of the most globally transformative processes and developments of our time.” (1999: 459). The notion of transnationalism encompasses then not only sub-notions such as questions of identity or the contribution of capital, but it also includes a bigger trend, which we may define as ‘cosmopolitanism’.

Cosmopolitanism covers many interpretations and multiple scaled features (Vertovec & Cohen, 2002). It is a vast topic which requires careful consideration. Besides the basic idea that cosmopolitanism upholds that all human beings belong to a single moral community in a “sense of global identification” (Ibid.: 4), which Ulrich Beck views as trivial⁹, cosmopolitanism, I think, should be identified with several various phenomena associated with broad present and future political interests and economic expectations. In the current trend, S. Vertovec & R. Cohen make some suggestions, attempting to define what ‘cosmopolitanism’ means and implies: first of all, they suggest that cosmopolitanism “(a) transcends the seemingly exhausted nation-state model; (b) is able to mediate actions and ideals oriented both to the universal and the particular, the global and the local; (c) is culturally anti-essentialist; and (d) is capable of representing variously complex repertoires of allegiance, identity and interest.” (Id.). The idea of transcendence refers to connecting all nations removing all borders. The second idea is linked to the third one, where horizontal and

⁹ Beck sees the basic notion of cosmopolitanism as trivial because it does not take into account other surrounding factors such as individual experiences, economic context and cultural background.

vertical interactions fit into a homogenized view of cultures, which build and maintain themselves at all scales in a continuing dynamic between the Global and the Local. This notion leads also to the fourth one, with the individual propensities to switch from a collective frame of reference¹⁰ to another one through systems of knowledge and ties. As S. Vertovec & R. Cohen point out, “cosmopolitanism seems to offer a mode of managing cultural and political multiplicities” (Id.) in which various affiliations in populations are promoted by international politics. In addition to the previous idea, “[...] the growing internationalization of the economy has often been associated with the ideology of cosmopolitanism” (Ley, 2004: 159). The pro-globalists thus maintain in this way of thinking the principle of ‘world citizens’ via democratic systems.

In theories of urban utopia, D. Latouche explains cosmopolitanism as an extension of metropolitanism, saying that “[I]es cosmopolitains sont des métropolitains qui ont su assumer leur statut d’étrangers (*à la Simmel*) et le détachement qui seul leur permet de survivre dans la métropole moderne” (as cited in Eveno, 1998: 191). D. Latouche proposes various features to define cosmopolitanism along broad lines, such as distinct and independent communities able to integrate outside aspects, where the visibility of these groups are recognized and expressed in institutions, demonstrations and particular spaces. The groups and political authorities also encourage plurality and each community keeps a distance between each other but favors exchanges and mutual tolerance at the same time (Ibid.: 193). D. Latouche insists on the fact that cosmopolitanism is more than a way people mentally detach themselves and open to universalism; instead, a cosmopolitan city or place is “[...] celle qui permet d’être ailleurs tout en restant ici.” (Ibid.: 191).

However, there are three main challenges to cosmopolitanism. The first preoccupation provokes tension between giving a status to cultures while simultaneously not giving them a strong sense of national determination. But the principle of a happy medium is clear: “So on the one hand, the cosmopolitan encourages cultural diversity and appreciates a multicultural mélange, and on the other hand, the cosmopolitan rejects a strong nationalism.”¹¹ Cosmopolitanism has also been seen to come exclusively from a Western way of thinking. S. Vertovec & R. Cohen refute this previous criticism arguing in favor of “cultural relativism” (2002: 16) saying that “[...] the idea can find fertile soil in many cultures and many contexts” (Id.) through the idea of ‘unity in diversity’, universality encompassing different forms of communication and traditions and going beyond the uniqueness of cultures and mentalities.

¹⁰ Mainly represented by cultural identity.

¹¹ Information taken from the website : <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/cosmopolitanism/>

An additional controversy is that cosmopolitanism is often labelled as elitist (this was often the case in the past for the upper-classes who had the financial means and the possibility to travel and to learn). D. Hiebert draws attention to the previous conception of a cosmopolitan public defining it as Ulf Hannerz (1996) or A. Ong (1999) did. He notices that “[...] the cosmopolite is a class figure and a white person, capable of appreciating and consuming ‘high quality’ commodities and cultures, including ‘ethnic’ culture [...]” (as cited in Vertovec & Cohen, 2002: 212), implicitly referring to well off people of colonial times and of current time. Nevertheless, D. Hiebert, following parts of this definition, does not see “cosmopolitanism [only] as a way of living based on an ‘openness to all forms of otherness’, associated with an appreciation of, an interaction with, people from other cultural backgrounds” (Id.).

The apparent disorder of the various definitions of cosmopolitanism also includes diversity, its meaning and different forms of behaviours in daily life, but D. Hiebert instead regards this notion as a “‘cultural ‘outreach’, with the everyday practices of hospitality [...] between people of different cultural backgrounds” (Id.). While certain scholars consider cosmopolitanism as a newly recognized form of everyday behaviour, S. Vertovec describes cosmopolitanism more as a ‘practice’ or as a ‘habitus’. U. Hannerz makes a further distinction between what he calls ‘true cosmopolitans from merely globally mobile people [...]’ (Ibid.: 8). He states that “[...] the ‘true’ cosmopolitans exhibit a culturally open disposition and interest in a continuous engagement with one or other cosmopolitan project” (Id.). The other group of ‘globally mobile people’ seems to employ the notion of cosmopolitanism as an ‘impression from abroad’. I would tend to agree with U. Hannerz’s vision of ‘real’ cosmopolitanism because he gives it legitimacy emphasized by the words of James Clifford who demystifies “the ‘naturalness’ of ethnic absolutisms [...]” (Id.) and promotes the transcendental side of cultural transitions and interactions on different social levels.

The way cosmopolitanism is defined is indeed multiple and complex, and authors often emphasize different traits of the term according to their sensitivity. However, S. Vertovec & R. Cohen separated out six tendencies that reflect elements of all scholars definitions. In their typology (Ibid.: 9), they conceive cosmopolitanism as:

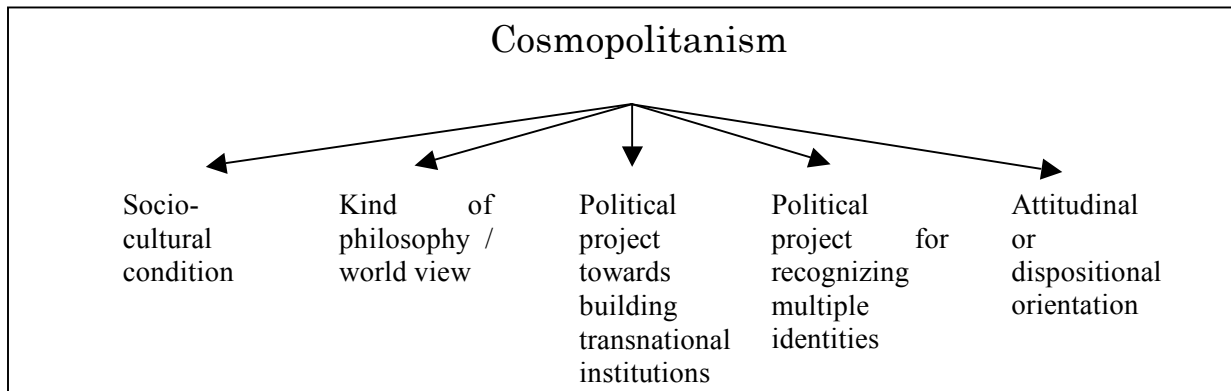


Figure n°2: *Diagram of tendencies of Cosmopolitanism, made by the author*

The first component, cosmopolitanism as socio-cultural condition, is closely related to current trends and the progress of technologies. People are more involved in worldwide news, travel, and modes of consumption, well informed about what happens all around the world and influenced by the increasing ‘globalization’ of information, transport and people flows. As we saw in previous chapters, globalization - regardless of opinions on it - is ubiquitous, dependent on the role of human, trade and capital flows, and makes a number of elements converge into one.

The second component is given by a philosophy of world-view where cosmopolitanism is opposed to specific features given by essentialist tenets and principles of particular groups. Cosmopolitanism refutes then the communitarian theories involving ideologies of nationalism or patriotism, as seen before, and allows for international migration and cultural exchange. Ulrich Beck, in his ‘Cosmopolitan Manifesto’ stands up for “a new dialectic of global and local questions which do not fit into national politics” (1998: 29-30), arguing that politics should be rethought with ‘globality’ in the centre of political interests, organization and actions. Similarly, S. Vertovec & R. Cohen speak about a “new order of transnational political structures” (2002: 11), which could fit in the current time with the cosmopolitanization of democracies. Following Kant’s idea, “cosmopolitanism refers to a philosophy that urges all to be ‘citizens of the world’, creating a worldwide community of humanity committed to common values.” (Ibid.: 10). H. K. Bhabha (1994) calls this formation of one’s identity and consciousness, “third space”, a ‘layer’ where cosmopolitanism is limited. The advent of ‘world culture’ fuses with the effects of globalization including the increasing of cross-cultural contacts, and leads to the new consciousness of identities and their nature to include them in ‘globalism’ - which in turn embodies cultural diffusion, the desire to consume a

broader range of products and ideas and to adopt new technology and practices. Socially, this is an achievement of free circulation by a large amount of people in almost all nations.

The third tendency refers to any political project through transnational institutions, which would uphold a cosmopolitan institution dealing with precise tasks and co-working with the state (Kaldor, 1999). The political project would then be essential in managing social cohesion or unity of cultural diversity.

The second political project, inspired by the fourth type of S. Vertovec & R. Cohen's typology of cosmopolitanism, is linked to multiculturalist principles in the sense that multiple identities should be recognized and promoted through the democratic political principle of "the legitimacy of plural loyalties." (2002: 12). This conception supposes that citizens should learn "to become a "cosmopolitan citizen" as well" (Id.).

The fifth component of cosmopolitanism concerns the attitude engendered by this idea of cosmopolitanism and is modelled on the point of view of U. Hannerz, for whom cosmopolitanism involves a 'vision' in the long term, openness towards the difference and the experience of cultures, leading cosmopolitans to enlarge "'habits of mind and life' through which he or she can end up anywhere in the world and be 'in the same relation of familiarity and strangeness' to the local culture, and by the same token 'feel partially adjusted everywhere'." (Vertovec & Cohen, 2002: 13, referring to Iyer, 1997: 30, 32). According to John Tomlinson (1999), that cultural approach also implies a sense of global belonging.

The sixth and final condition, linked to the previous one, concerns skills and the propensity to think 'cosmopolitanely'. Often, ideas such as those of U. Hannerz do not correspond to real life, which is complex and where "people's practices [...] amount to a mere cultural mix-and-match". (as cited in Vertovec & Cohen, 2002: 14). Identities are in perpetual evolution, moulded and sometimes subjected to be used in a "[...] multiculturalization of society [...]" (Id.) with more and more expected skills, leading to a loss of identity-focusing or at least to its eclipse. My case study will try to make this notion of cosmopolitanism clearer by locating and giving it a position. Finally, two levels of cosmopolitanism can be detected and include the previous described six tendencies of Cosmopolitanism: a *moral* one, calling for respect between individuals, a *legal* one, which refers to universal rights and responsibilities (Vertovec & Cohen, 2002).

Given the definition of cosmopolitanism, heterogeneous aspects of the world become obsolete, resulting in a general homogenization of person, culture, power or stress, and bringing the idea of *universalism* closer. But does reality reflect this apparent statement of fact?

2.1.5. Trans-spatiality: networks, social spaces and deterritorialization

“There are other theoretical issues at stake, such as the creation of a social space that transcends and challenges national borders” (Ley & Kobayashi, 2005: 123, referring to Ley, 2003; Ong, 1999). But globalization materialized by the gradual elimination of borders that leads to one global space - or as K. Mitchell defines it, to a “spacelessness” (2004: 6) - and defended by liberal thought, is problematized by the construction or the reconstruction of spaces by migrants. Indeed, taking into account that desires and interests are different from one level to another, between global guiding lines and local and personal individuals sustaining this global system and its way of thinking, Mitchell specifies migration outcomes as a “respatialization” (Ibid.: 8) instead of a “deterritorialization” (Id.) of people. Hence the importance of interrelations or interconnections of vertical relations embodied by spatial scales and acting on practices and policies of liberal thought. Nevertheless, “[...] economic globalization has deterritorialized the Chinese diaspora communities, making them flexible and highly mobile, and that the shifting experiences of diaspora Chinese require them to rework the conditions of flexibility.” (Li, 2005: 11, referring to Ong & Nonini, 1997). Transnational flows and networking, initiated by the ideology of neoliberalism, reveal a certain resistance through adaptation that involves important social transformations in family practices sometimes leading to family fragmentation. Different surveys sustain that “transnationalism among migrants can be understood as either a mode of resistance to, or in contrast as a pattern of incorporation into, shifts in global capitalism.” (Vertovec, 2001: 577). People were and are affected by these reforms in social life. K. Mitchell spotlights this aspect arguing that “the disjunctures between a neoliberal rhetoric of neutral space and economic competition, and a national liberal rhetoric of pride of place, universal inclusion, and social harmony, became visible and contestable in Vancouver through the local urban struggles over trees, houses, zoning and multicultural ideology.” (2004: 34).

In his trilogy *The Rise of the Network Society, The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture* (2004), M. Castells argues that, in relation to power in a context of globalization, territories are losing their importance to the strategies of networks. He considers this transition as parallel to the rise of transnationalism and the decline of the State. Other opinion, on the other hand, “recognizes the continuing importance of states; people are not deterritorialized but live their lives on earth, in states, and in communities.” (Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 20). In the same way of thinking, countries, regions, areas, at different scales,

“influence the creation and perpetuation of transnational social spaces.” (Id.). As a result, there is a duality in the question whether or not deterritorialization in the rising phenomenon of transnationalism is carried by the wave of globalization.

A key issue is to know if international migration causes a kind of cultural cosmopolitanism involving a phenomenon of deterritorialization, or whether transnationalism allows communities and transnationals to rebuild social spaces with their own practices, based on backgrounds and on individual heritages, to recreate collective original values elsewhere than in the homeland. The debate is whether there will be an eventual ‘smoothing’ of identities into a unique form, maintained by networks, and recognized by everybody (in one space or in a ‘spacelessness’?), or if the ‘reliefs’ of identity differences are exportable and can be maintained and kept despite the current trend (globalization). As M. Castells (2000) upholds, forms of social organization - societies - are structured according to a bipolar opposition; on one hand, the Net, an organization we could define as more ‘horizontal’, is based on networks in which vertical hierarchies are disappearing. On the other hand, the Self, which tries unconsciously or not to maintain cultural practices and then to revalue an identity, can be depreciated by a relatively quick geographical change of place. What was true for the first generation of Hong Kongers may not always be valid for the second generation who are born in another country.

S. Vertovec underlines A. Caglar’s broad point of view in which, according to the latter, “[...] transnationalism represents a new analytic optic which makes visible the increasing intensity and scope of circular flows of persons, goods, information and symbols triggered by international labour migration’.” (as cited in Vertovec, 2001: 574). A kind of vagueness of the concept exists until 1990s, when a new approach introduced to this notion that “focus(es) much more widely on the relationship between these models and the alternative images of transnational social spaces and multi-local affiliations.” (Ibid.: 573, referring to Rouse, 1995: 355). Thomas Faist made a typology of transnational social spaces with three forms: “transnational kinship groups, transnational circuits, and transnational communities.” (as cited in Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 5). Incorporating the notion of space, these transnational social spaces represent particular types of transnational morphologies. “In the case of Canada, this social space can also be thought of as an extension of ethnic pluralism beyond national borders.” (Id.).

However, some scholars do not agree with the term ‘network’ and prefer to “think of a transnational community not as an enmeshed or bound network, but rather as a honeycomb, a

structure which sustains and gives shapes to the identities of nation-states, institutions and particular social and geographic spaces. It contains hollowed-out spaces where institutions, individuals and ideas wither away to be replaced by new organizations, groups and innovations. For a transnational community to survive, its boundaries must remain open, porous, revisable and interactive.” (Clavin, 2005: 438-439).

M. Seymour (Audio 1 “Diverse, Plural and Fluid Identities”, June 2007) argues that ideas from ‘political liberalism’¹² are based on the principle of a political attitude of toleration (not tolerance) against the individual liberalism of Kant and Mill, which is autonomy-focusing, plus “the “principles of equality of opportunity” occurred from the liberal reform, “state intervention and support”, and politic of redistribution as “narratives of state legitimacy” (Mitchell, 2004: 29). However, “[...] communities should be seen as a network, which need not necessarily take a spatial form. Since an immigrant network can cross different geographical locations, we will use the term ethnic economy instead of ethnic enclave” (Salaff, 2006: 3, referring to Wellman, 1999).

As we will see in the next chapters, this conception of political neoliberalism is closely linked with the concept of identity and its specificity of plurality and evolution.

2.1.6. Limits of the concept of transnationalism

Three problems seem to challenge the concept of transnationalism: first of all, according to Crang et al., the notions underlying transnationalism are deployed too broadly, paying (only) modest attention to local activities and sensibilities. Linked to that, “the boundaries of what is understood by ‘trans-’, ‘multi-’ and ‘international’ have become increasingly blurred. Transnationalism is in danger of becoming a catch-all concept, with almost as many meanings as there are instances of it.” (Clavin, 2005: 434). Secondly, the historical overtone that characterizes the notion of transnationalism has difficulties to adapt and to be redefined along with time-changes: “[...] while transnationalism may have radical implications for our understanding of citizenship and nationhood, the nation state continues to play a key role in defining the terms in which transnational processes are played out. Nina Glick Schiller (1997), in her critique of some of the more celebratory studies of transnational identity

¹² Political liberalism is the name of a new version of liberalism and considers social agency allowing by their institutional presence in the political round → institutional identity (not metaphysical view).

formation, argues that ‘while borders may be cultural constructions, they are constructions that are backed by force of law, economic and political power, and regulating and regularizing institutions. What they come to mean and how they are experienced, crossed or imagined are products of particular histories, times, and places’.” (as cited in Clavin, 2005: 442). Thirdly, an amalgam between transnationalism and progressiveness is dreaded, although there is “nothing intrinsically ‘given’ about the politics of transnationality. Those who make appeals to concepts of non-fixity, in-betweenness and third spaces as inherently progressive, construct transnationality in equally one-dimensional terms with the operations of monolithic, American-centred transnational corporations.” (Ibid.: 443, referring to Mitchell, 1997). Finally, for these three authors, three features are included in a transnational field; a multiply inhabited area, a multidimensional aspect and a experienced social field. In other words, this notion entails multiculturalism notions, different space-time scales and interactions between individuals including social networks, practices and perceptions.

Some scholars criticise the fact that transnationalism is an abusively extended and overused notion, (Satzewich & Wong, 2006). The concept of transnationalism risks imprecise definition. Excessive use of this notion is also inappropriate and would allow for a lot of grey area and give license to multiple contradictory interpretations. That is the reason why the definition of this notion is fundamental. Further questions would be: who is regarded as a transnational migrant? As we saw in previous chapters, there is the question of whether transnationalism is a new carrier for cosmopolitanism leading to the end of identities represented by nationalities. Transnationalism also has limits concerning its scope on the nature of nationalities. As A. Ong says, ““Non-Western” cultures are not disappearing but are adjusting in very complex ways to global processes and remaking their own modernities.” (1999: 240).

2.2. Theoretical Underlying Concepts of Transnationalism

Other notions must be taken into account; as well as approaches framing the definition of transnationalism, they underpin this broader concept and are more or less directly involved in its impacts on transmigrants. Having framed the concept itself, attention must be paid to ‘sub-concepts’ such as identity, perception and ties with forms of capital.

2.2.1. Identity: plurality and perpetual evolution

Transnationalism inevitably involves questions of identity, especially cultural identity. This underlying approach has to be defined according to the main concept. Before analyzing this aspect in context, we should first take into consideration the main features of the nature of identity. As M. Seymour says in one of his lectures, identity, in the current postnational era of diversity, may be approached from ‘above’ or from ‘below’. According to him, it is necessary to go beyond nationalities because “people have multiple identities” (Seymour, Audio 1 “Diverse, Plural and Fluid Identities”, June 2007). Moreover, identity is “dynamic, fluid and constantly changing” (Id.) from one individual to another. Imposing a national single identity, an identity built in the process of socialization, in and by interaction, may violate the principle of equal respect - allegiance - between individuals. Moreover, as J.-B. Racine and M. Marengo point out, “[...] les appartenances hybrides, les syncrétismes culturels, la capacité d’innovation dont témoignent les expériences de migration et d’interethnicité urbaine mettent en crise le modèle monolithique dominant de l’identité.” (1998: 50). According to Waldron, meaning in life comes from several cultural indexes - which determine our choices and also our identity - and come not only from one single culture. Furthermore, as the latter principal suggests, in the multiple cultural systems in which we are living, “[...] there is something artificial and absurd about the attempts to preserve and keep intact a single culture. One cannot preserve in full cultural identity and cultural rights.” (Vertovec & Cohen, 2002: 26-27). It is therefore important to take into account multi-identities initiated by and through migration experiences.

Nationality is also responsible for the creation of a common culture as a collective individual. Seymour argues that identity appears in societal culture, in society where there are collective rights and where this identity is institutionalized by citizenship. He points out the idea from Will Kymlicka, who argues that societal culture is the structure of culture embodied in a crossroads of different influences from everywhere and offering a context of choices (Audio 1). The structure of culture involves three important aspects: language, institutions, and historical trajectory. Notions of citizenship and moral identity are to be taken into account as well. Neil Bissoondath sustains previous ideas of changing identity, according to which “[c]ulture is life. It is a living, breathing, multi-faceted entity in constant evolution. It alters every day, is never the same thing from one day to the next. Stasis is not possible.” (1994: 81).

How is identity sustained by transnationalism? The concept of identity “[...] can suggest ways in which people conceive of themselves and are characterised by others.” (Vertovec, 2001: 573). S. Vertovec argues further that transnationalism can be juxtaposed with identity because “on the one hand, many peoples’ transnational networks are grounded upon the perception that they share some form of common identity, often based upon a place of origin and the cultural and linguistic traits associated with it” (Id.). This involves a sense of community and sharing of the same values for people living in a new situation together and coming from a familiar place. “On the other hand, among certain sets of contemporary migrants, the identities of specific individuals and groups of people are negotiated within social worlds that span more than one place” (Id.). This involves a mix of personal experiences and the perceptions of people living in several places - physical or mental - at the same time. One of these important aspects is identity, including ethnicity, culture, mentality and personal experiences. As Sarah Wayland also points out, “[t]ransnationalism involves the creation of new identities that incorporate cultural references from both the place of origin and the place of residence.” (as cited in Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 18). In other words, the process of going from one place to another engages organically an embodiment of initial identities with new frames of reference.

According to S. Vertovec (2001), each place or locality represents an assortment of identity-conditioning factors. Personal experiences, clichés, sense of belonging, ethnic differences, accessibility, perceptions, regulations, are a small sample of these various factors. A concept of transnationalism that “[...] emphasizes the active constitution of identities through the process of commodification [¹³] across specific national spaces” (Crang & Dwyer, & Jackson, 2003: 452) involves not only a “[...] coexistence “symbiotique” de multiples communautés ethniques non seulement adaptées et intégrées à celui-ci mais aussi gardant leur propre identité, leur propre culture, voire leur propre territoire au sein d’un ordre cosmopolite plus vaste” (Racine & Marengo, 1998: 43, quoting A. Piette, 1990; Racine, 1999: 20)) given to the concept of accommodation¹⁴, but also all the previously quoted factors, instead of stressing only national movements. The multi-local life-world presents a wider, even more

¹³ The term ‘commodification’ is an attributed value of what is normally a process of non-commodity to a commodity one.

¹⁴ Accommodation in the sense of “political process permitting the ‘symbiotic’ co-existence of multiple ethnic communities who are not only adapted and integrated into said process, but who also maintain their own identity, their own culture, even their own territory within the greater cosmopolitan order”, through commodification and adaptation.

complex set of conditions that affect the construction, negotiation and reproduction of social identities and “[...] simultaneously exist above and beyond the social contests of national societies.” (Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 5, quoting Pries, 2001: 23). These identities play out and position individuals in the course of their everyday lives within and across each of their places of attachment or perceived belonging. Together, the multiple contexts create what N. Glick Schiller (1992) has called a ‘transnational social field’, Ludger Pries (1999) a ‘transnational social space’, Peggy Levitt (2001) a ‘transnational village’ or Arjun Appadurai (1995) ‘translocality’. The transnational experience with the incorporation of multiple identities – *hybridity* – for transmigrants means that they are “subject to a deterritorialization of social identity.” (Ibid.: 11).

Indeed, not only is there a physical separation, but also perhaps weightier, a ‘rupture’ with local culture. However, while individuals materially disconnect their identity from a place, they do not necessarily do so mentally, or in terms of identity frame of reference. The identity is contextualized geographically. In the same way of thinking, “the notion of deterritorialization can relativize or decentre a local “place” or territory rather than exclude or negate it.” (Ibid.: 12). These two authors argue that original identity cannot be cancelled because of a change of place. Although a place is physically abandoned, it does not mean that transmigrants do not keep it in mind and do not use it, at least partially, in their way of thinking of a place. Transnational processes involve the ideas of “rootedness” and then of “embeddedness” of initial places where people lived before and cannot set aside because they are incorporated in the migrants themselves and, by extension, in their daily behaviour. Materially, identity can so be recreated or maintained by the “social spaces” discussed in subsection 2.1.5. That is the proof that geographical points in space can go beyond formal borders and then, “[...] transnational identity formation shows that identity is not singular but plural, and is always evolving” (Id.). Placed in the context of current day globalization, can an end to nationalist values be expected? Is it the beginning of a world universalism? Is everyone concerned by this new global tendency? The theory advanced by the previous author - through its very important last sentence - will be verified by the empirical survey in the next chapters of this study.

As V. Satzewich and L. Wong state, “ethnic identity is mediated through host-state institutions, practices, and traditions.” (Ibid.: 20). The issue of practices play an important role in this research project. However, it is interesting to add that at the same time, states are different from each other and they have “[...] various conceptions of citizenship and ethnic

belonging.” (Id.), depending on political systems, citizenship policies¹⁵ and models of minority incorporation¹⁶. Canada permits a particular path for migrants, which influences the definition of identity in this context. “Differing migration processes, group and individual experiences, policy contexts, institutional settings, organisational developments and cultural flows are recounted by way of suggesting ways in which local identities are shaped by transnational factors.” (Vertovec, 2001: 578). Clearly, not only the original culture has an influence on post-migration identity. The phenomenon of *transnationalism* itself may also ‘cast’ identity in a certain direction in the host country and in the host locality.

2.2.2. Perception: auto-representation & hetero-representation

Within the sub-concept of identity, transnationalism involves also more or less an imaginary world of perception and representation. This feeling, based on senses, can be defined as a process of translation of reality from our mind. This ‘information’ can be true or biased for anyone. There is a double dimension to take into account: on one hand, individuals participate to build the society they want, and on the other hand, they reproduce what they see according to their own cultural belonging and their personal and collective experiences. People maintain and change position and, as a result, they also have different levels of perception.

The concept of representation is basically described by Pierre Bourdieu: “[cette] théorie de la pratique, ou mieux du sens pratique, se définit avant tout contre la philosophie du sujet et du monde, comme représentation. Entre le corps socialisé et les champs sociaux, deux produits généralement accordés de la même histoire, s’établit une complicité infra-consciente corporelle” (1984: 75). This complicity signifies that social and cultural facts, experienced by individuals, with a subjective conscious including objective features, are a form of reality. Representations take root in a social and collective imagination whose individuals unconsciously take on the principles, unconsciously interpreting them according to their categorized belonging in a social imaginary layer coming from cultural, historical and social environments.

I will focus on one section of this concept of representation; the constitutive elements of socio-cultural representation, which fits our topic. I would like to split it in two parts: first of

¹⁵ Citizenship policies to become a citizen depend mainly on *jus sanguinis* (ex: Switzerland, Germany, Sweden) and *jus soli* (ex: Canada, US, France) principles.

¹⁶ Models of minority incorporation include assimilation (France), differential exclusion (Japan) or cultural pluralism under official policies of multiculturalism (Canada, Australia, Sweden).

all, “auto-representations” (Gohard, 1995) are images conveyed by representatives of a culture on their own culture and on their own society. They include preexisting representations dependent of social belonging and of individual and family backgrounds, themselves dependent of social group history with its own norms and codes likely for a particular social group. More than defining a reflection of a subject in terms of how a person sees it - individually and collectively - in society, this image may change perceptions if the person is self and in the other, and at the same the identity of an individual and its perception from others. D. Ley (1999) speaks then about “self-fashioning” and, as D. Hiebert (2003) has asked, are immigrants responsible themselves for their image? Or are others in charge of putting a personal or a collective representation on the subject? Surely everyone builds one’s self according to some traits generally coming from culture, their milieu and their experiences. This sense of self concerns individuals and their membership in a certain culture and particular spaces, and takes into close account personal and collective stories.

Secondly, “hetero-representations” (Gohard, 1995) are images conveyed by representatives of a foreign culture on another culture, including preexisting representations dependent on social belonging and on individual and family backgrounds, while also dependent on social group history with necessarily different norms and codes. This definition corresponds to the activity of the subject, to the perception from one person to another person or object. The pictures and views from individuals are built according to their background, their auto-perception of people involving their own views on and pictures of other people as well. “But major anthropological accounts of transnationalism have been consumed less with migrants and their reception in host countries and more with issues of cultural flows and the social imaginary in a transnational world. [...] despite the widespread dissemination of the trappings of globalization [...] cultural forms have not become homogenized across the world.” (Ong, 1999: 10). According to A. Ong, reshaped social spaces embody identities whose perception give a certain freedom for recategorization and classification in imagining the world. As a social and individual creation of relevant patterns of reality in our context and more and more nowadays, perceptions have a bigger meaning for people and represent a rich sector of research.

Representations have various components, whose stereotypes act sometimes as short cuts for the society in which they are produced (Gohard, 1995). They are the representation of an object more or less untied from its objective reality and shared by memberships of a social group. Although stereotypes may be positive, considering the biological likeness of individuals, stereotypes also represent a reductionist feature unavoidable for people driven by

the fear of the Other. Stereotypes are at the same time universal and particular; universal because of their use and existence and particular because they are the singular translation of a world point of view and of a vision from one culture to another, or from one nation to another, and sometimes accompanied by strong meaningful symbols. Stereotypes are a kind of 'economic' tool in the perception of real life; they help categorizations - invented by the actors of colonization, and reveal as much information about the categorizing culture as the categorized one. Stereotypes are apparently included in socio-cultural representations, and are embodied more or less in cultures. People indeed make pictures from their experience, environment and personality.

Furthermore, these levels of perception give value to and generate social practices as Bourdieu pointed out with "des habitus, systèmes de disposition, durables et transposables, structures structurées prédisposées à fonctionner comme structure structurante, c'est-à-dire en tant que principe générateur et organisateur de pratiques et de représentations qui peuvent être objectivement adaptées à leur but, sans supposer la visée consciente de fins et la maîtrise expresse des opérations nécessaires pour les atteindre, objectivement « réglées » et « régulières » sans être en rien le produit de l'obéissance à des règles, et, pour cela, collectivement orchestrées sans être le produit de l'action organisatrice d'un chef d'orchestre." (Bourdieu, 1980: 88-89).

In the present context, questions of perception should be jointly approached. As J.-B. Racine suggests, referring to Carmel Camilleri, cultural relations and their corresponding representations, should be tackled both objectively - from the perspective of sociology or ethnology - which try to understand specificities of cultures and relations it engenders, and subjectively - from social psychology - which focus on "[...] la façon dont l'identité et les relations entre personnes appartenant à des cultures différentes sont vécues par les intéressés : les attitudes, les sentiments et les jugements qu'ils adoptent le uns à l'égard des autres : les « stratégies identitaires » qu'ils mettent en œuvre (Camilleri, 1990) ; les discours par lesquels ce vécu s'exprime ; les images mutuelles qu'ils véhiculent." (as cited in Huriot, 1998: 189-190). In parallel, Allan Smith (2005) argues that the metaphor of mosaic in Canada does not exactly correspond to reality because of the power relations, influence, and prestige claimed by British Canadians. He argues that immigrants to Canada could not adopt a very new lifestyle; instead, the desire to maintain their original links with their initial society is reinforced. This situation of consensus encourages diversity and freedom, individually and collectively. Multiculturalism in society represents groups as distinctive entities, rather than a

homogeneous collection of people. The verticality of the Canadian mosaic acts to reduce this hierarchical structure encouraging structural assimilation instead of the maintaining of an identity as an ethnic group (Smith, 2005: 210). The policy objective is a social context where ethnic communities can maintain their cultural identity and at the same time, participate fully in national life.

At the same time as analyzing origins, strategies and mechanisms of transnationalism, these above-mentioned aspects of perception will be treated in the following chapters of the survey. In most cases, the consciousness of self and of others, including different perceptions of each other, provide another way to interpret the data according to these different angles. Furthermore, more than individual perceptions, the vision of the world may also be very personal, as Tony Bennett noticed, the idea coming originally from N. G. Canclini, who said that “la globalisation se positionne différemment dans chaque culture, de même que le domaine local ne pénètre pas toujours dans l’ordre global de la même façon.” (as cited in Bonnet & Négrier, 2008: 35). At the individual or collective level, perceptions are always moving and different from one person to another or from one group to another.

2.2.3. Social and cultural capital

The question of forms of capital - mainly social, cultural and symbolic capital - are very important in understanding how transnationalism becomes an agent of various tools to acquire and to hold stronger cards and greater bargaining power for migrants when they arrive in a new country where cultural, language and habits are more difficult to fit to the original ones. Starting with those concepts, I would like to present different visions according to the authors P. Bourdieu, J. Coleman, R. Putnam and A. Portes.

First of all, although both are complementary, social capital must be distinguished from human capital; the former is a quality/position created between agents while the latter is a quality/position proper to individuals (Bevort & Lallement, 2006). In the 1960s, J. Jacobs introduced the notion of ‘networks’ as a city’s irreplaceable social capital. After her, U. Hannerz defined social capital as a reflection of the resources individuals made for another person. Social capital, however, would only really emerge in the 1970s-1980s with P. Bourdieu and his definition: “[...] the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition.” (1995: 248). P. Bourdieu defines social capital as a

means or an instrument to improve social condition and status through involvement in group life and acts of sociability. For him, connections allow for various strategies necessary to the creation of social networks, where social capital is accumulated, transmitted and reproduced. He splits social capital in two parts; “first, the social relationship itself that allows individuals to claim access to resources possessed by their associates, and second, the amount and quality of those resources.” (Portes, 1998: 3-4). He identifies social capital as a means to improve social condition and position in society. According to him, social capital measures the ability to be known and recognized in society. It includes practices based on the fact that social capital is mainly built on exchanges and individual and inter-community relations, which allow the migrant to rise in position and eventually to find a form of recognition in the way Charles Taylor upholds. P. Bourdieu mentions the reduction of all forms of capital (social, cultural) to the economic one regarded as an accumulation of human labor. Glenn Loury (1977) took into account the rise of social status, including the environment of social capital, its social context as an undeniable factor of influence.

Social capital can be described, as J. Coleman does, as a collective value of all norms and social relations allowing a synergy of coordinated actions to reach common goals (as referred in Bevort & Lallement, 2006), or as a set of behaviours and mental dispositions favouring cooperation in social life, according to the idea of Patrick Hunout. In 1990, J. Coleman described social capital by its function “[...] as a variety of entities with two elements in common: They all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain action of actors - whether persons or corporate actors - within the structure” (as cited in Portes, 1998: 5). The latter emphasizes the importance of the procedure leading to the emergence of social capital, its consequences and the context of its causes and impacts. Social capital is then dynamic, productive and inherent to the social relations between individuals.

Not mentioned by J. Coleman but raised by P. Bourdieu, “it is important to distinguish the resources themselves from the ability to obtain them by virtue of membership in different social structures [...]” (Id.). However, at the opposite direction of Burt - who sees in less affinity “structural holes” (Ibid.: 6) favouring personal movements of migration - J. Coleman puts a strong significance on density of connections through networks. R. Putnam, borrowing ideas from J. Coleman, focuses on the importance of “civicness” (as referred in Portes, 1998) in communities or associations to create social capital, and on social links to have a chance to be integrated in society. He focuses as well on the notion of trust developed afterward. He defined social capital especially with three levels of definition: the ‘bonding’ - closed links or networks as a kind of glue sticking people through ties, the ‘linking’ which gathers people

with the same socio-cultural identity, and the ‘bridging’ which creates open links between civil society and institutions. He emphasized that social institutions depend on civic commitment, in which social networks play an important role, by creating trust relations which are fundamental to the creation of social capital, and allow the coordination and collaboration of collective actions. Furthermore, such networks of organized reciprocity combined with civic solidarity forge the necessary conditions to build the process of socio-economic modernization as we know it today (Bevort & Lallement, 2006).

For R. Putnam, a typology of social capital with variable conditions should be made, one which acknowledges that certain forms of social capital are institutionalized and others not, and that social capital and its features evolve over time. He argues that in the United States there has been a lack of commitment - in the sense of public-spiritedness and involvement in communities - these last thirty years and this has been the mainspring of the decline of social capital. R. Putnam’s controversial *Bowling Alone: America’s Declining Social Capital* published in 1995, demonstrates the “logical circularity” (as cited in Portes, 1998 : 19) of his theory and throws social capital as a cause and effect back into question. For R. Putnam, then, social capital takes its frame of reference from some characteristics of social organization focused on networks, norms and social trust framed by cooperation and coordination elements for mutual advantages.

Antoine Bevort and Michel Lallement define social capital as a whole set of current or potential resources linked to the “[...] possession d’un *réseau durable de relations* plus ou moins institutionnalisées d’interconnaissance et d’interreconnaissance ; ou, en d’autres termes, à *l’appartenance à un groupe* comme ensemble d’agents qui ne sont pas seulement dotés de propriétés communes (susceptibles d’être perçues par l’observateur, par les autres ou par eux-mêmes) mais sont aussi unis par les *liaisons* permanents et utiles.” (2006: 31). Furthermore, social capital, as a feature of social organization, involves these relations of proximity as something that cannot be reduced to total objectivity because, as material and symbolic exchanges are inseparable, this proximity supposes its recognition to exist and to be maintained in time. Social capital can be ‘measured’ due to the extent of networks and of other preexisting forms of capital (economic, cultural, symbolic). Like P. Bourdieu, A. Bevort and M. Lallement (2006) note that forms of capital are not independent from each other because their inter-recognition supposes that recognition is viewed as an ‘objective’ homogeneity and also has a multiplier effect on preexisting capital.

Whatever the opinions on how to emphasize the aspects of the definition of social capital, A. Portes notices a consensus that “social capital stands for the ability of actors to secure

benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures.” (Portes, 1998: 6). He distinguishes two uses of social capital; “[...] consummatory versus instrumental motivations to do so.” (Ibid.: 7). ‘Consummatory’ in the sense that people should obey blindly because of an obligation to do so and ‘instrumentally’ because of social pressure or expectations. A. Portes supports three functions of social capital which may fit in different contexts with the present study. He describes social capital “(a) as a source of social control; (b) as a source of family support; [and] (c) as a source of benefits through extrafamilial networks.” (Ibid.: 9). Related to the basic idea of R. Putnam, the first function of social capital of A. Portes expresses rules to various institutions (familial, school, state) - formal and informal - in accordance with the norms of society through community connections and interrelations. As the latter says, “[s]ources of this type of social capital are commonly found in bounded solidarity and enforceable trust, and its main result is to render formal or overt controls unnecessary.” (Ibid.: 10).

In the same vein, in order to create social capital, J. Coleman believes in official institutions and thinks about them as a substitute for informal communities and familial structures. Furthermore, the second type of social capital highlights the previous argument in the sense that parents and relatives are a strong source of social capital for their children, especially where the meaning of family plays a central role and is more or less emphasized according to different cultures. As A. Portes notices, “social capital tends to be lower for children in single-parent families because they lack the benefit of a second at-home parent and because they tend to change residences more often, leading to fewer ties to other adults in community.” (Ibid.: 11). He compares social capital with financial capital talking about impacts of parental heritage and transfer of values saying; “social capital is greater in two-parent families, those with fewer children, and those where parents have high aspirations for their young.” (Id.). The first and second functions of social capital are linked and act as a pair of scales; when one is lighter - community bonds for example - it needs to be compensated by the other one - family stability and support - which should be heavier. This second function directly influences children in key domains such as educational goals to reach, behaviours or work contribution. The third function is closer to P. Bourdieu’s idea of the ‘address book’ whose extended familial networks are powerful means to increase social capital and cultural capital at the same time with the measure of the heritage culture given by parents to their children, influenced by socialization effects, and culture transmitted through the educational system. Moreover, he establishes the link between cultural capital and social reproduction because cultural capital can be accumulated, transmitted to the next generation and its

assimilation in the past and in the present is a requirement for social reproduction. “Cultural capital is said to exist in three states: “institutionalized” by the academic qualification, “embodied” in the attributes and characteristics of the person, and “objectified” in material artifacts.” (Waters, 2006: 180, quoting Bourdieu, 1986). In other words, cultural capital, as power, exists through specific skills, by embodied traits attached to the overseas education - *habitus* P. Bourdieu calls it - and by the geographically differentiated nature of cultural capital in relation to specific social relationships. “The active accumulation of cultural capital represents the principal means by which the middle-class seeks to reproduce its social status across generations.” (Waters, 2006: 180, referring to Brown, 1995). This represents the influence of cultural capital from the parents to their children by demonstration and then impregnation of their own background.

Accumulation is narrowly linked to class reproduction - unconsciously or consciously - and to social networks too. This accumulation is more or less efficient according to circumstances and interests, and a context for using it in an optimal way. In this sense, Mark Granovetter and Ronald Burt believe in the “strength of weak ties”, or “the power of indirect influences outside the immediate circle of family and close friends to serve as an informal employment referral system.” (as cited in Portes, 1998: 12). This follows the idea that dense networking is not an efficient way to take advantage of the results of the ways to social capital. However, taking the common argument of P. Bourdieu, R. Putnam and A. Portes about encouraging density of networks, this notion is of great relevance to our case study as will be observed in the analysis of chapter 3, especially concerning the presence, the role and the power of community networks in the life of second generation Hong Kong populations.

As A. Portes points out, “[...] mobility opportunities through niches are entirely network-driven.” (Ibid.: 13). As the balance described before for the first and second functions of social capital, the third one can also cancel out the others by putting a stronger accent on the family resources, “[...] including preservation of the cultural orientations of their home country.” (Ibid.: 14). As a result, the third function may be counterbalanced by the other functions but it is not substitutable. However, the balance does not perfectly fit all the time and conflicts between the intentions of a function with another one are sometimes unavoidable. In other words, one function cannot be amplified indefinitely without compromising the optimization of the other function. For example, an enforcement of social control may be weakened if interrelations of networks become too close and infringe on the norms of the first function to improve interests given through these connections (Portes, 1998). As A. Ong argues, “[...] in a transnational context, there must be social limits to the

accumulation of cultural capital, so that ethnic Chinese who are practicing strategies of flexible citizenship find greater social acceptance in certain countries than in others.” (1999: 18).

Concerning symbolic capital, including all forms of capital (cultural, social, economic) having a particular recognition in society, A. Ong points out that “as an ideological system of taste and prestige, symbolic capital reproduces the established social order and conceals relations of domination” (Ibid.: 89). For this reason, symbolic capital is important and it should be taken into account because “Bourdieu’s insights into symbolic capital are addressed to the practices of capital accumulation in a social system that was conceived in a relatively homogenous and static fashion.” (Id.). However, “[...] when the world is the arena of strategies of accumulation, subjects coming from less privileged sites must be flexible in terms of the cultural symbols they wish to acquire.” (Id.).

The conceptual framework discussed in this chapter is composed of two dimensions: firstly, the concept itself, the understanding of its nature and origin, its spatial configurations and economic context with a perspective on cosmopolitanism. Secondly, there are the underlying concepts of transnationalism framed and surrounded by three main axes: identity, perception and socio-cultural capital. This conceptual framework provides strong theoretical foundations for the topic of this thesis. Analyzing its components and combining it with the interpretations of the results of the case study is the focus of the next chapter.

3. Case Study: Hong Kong Families in Vancouver

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3.1.1. Method

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3. CASE STUDY: HONG KONG FAMILIES IN VANCOUVER

3.1. Presentation: Methodology of the Research

3.1.1. Method

In order to demonstrate how theory and practice interact I will now analyze the case study. Firstly, I will examine it according to theoretical sources based on academic references and articles, which I have already covered. Secondly, my analysis will concentrate on a survey that includes two methods; the questionnaire and the interview. I asked selected children to fill out a questionnaire (see appendix n°3) and I interviewed half of them for further information about them and their parents. Moreover, in order to define more effectively the past and current perceived situation of the children, I asked their parents to fill out a similar but slightly modified questionnaire. In my concern for one appropriate method of application, I conducted semi-directive interviews. Such interviews left much room for manoeuvre for the interviewees, but, at the same time, were directed by precise questions. While guiding the interviewees according to the questions, I also let them speak freely about their experiences. In light of the goals of the study, I look at the survey qualitatively and include an analysis of the content of the questionnaires and the interviews (in contrast with a discourse analysis) to answer my three hypotheses.

My analysis of the results of the empirical qualitative survey is in no way exhaustive. The reasoning and the results stem come from an empirical methodology, but they are undeniably sustained by the deductive aspects involved in gathering and interpreting the data of a limited sample. Nor can the results be totally objective; the answers to the questionnaires and interviews are mainly descriptive in nature, and they demonstrate an understandable lack of organization due to the spontaneous manner in which they were given. It is left to the researcher to subject these results to interpretation and/or symbolization (Racine & Marengo, 1998). My aim is to discover tendencies and also to evaluate the appropriateness of such a survey. Satisfaction, expressed by the sense of belonging to Vancouver or to Hong Kong, the feeling of being more Canadian or more Chinese¹⁷, or the extent of being integrated in Canadian society, are tendencies I explore. In order to satisfy the quality of the reasoning, I selected participants for this survey in sufficient number to obtain answers to both the

¹⁷ Even though the sense of belonging is something much more complex.

questionnaire and during the interviews, and to combine the results of the various questions in the two methods and to improve the quality of the survey. The data could otherwise be biased or incomplete if only treated with the one of the two methods. My survey is mostly based on the results of the questionnaire completed by the children - the target group in my thesis - but refined and completed with the support of the interviews and the questionnaire done by their parents.

3.1.2. Presentation and selection of sample

My sample covered the following criteria: the selected group represented about fifty people, divided in two categories: a part concerned Hong Kong parents living in the Vancouver area and forty of their children studying at UBC¹⁸. I focused especially on the second generation of children with their parents representing additional, but important information to figure out the initial background of the children. These two generations of Hong Kong families were to fill in the prepared questionnaire and be immediately interviewed upon finishing it. The parents were Hong Kongers who arrived in Vancouver in the 1980s and fell in the age group of 45 to 65.

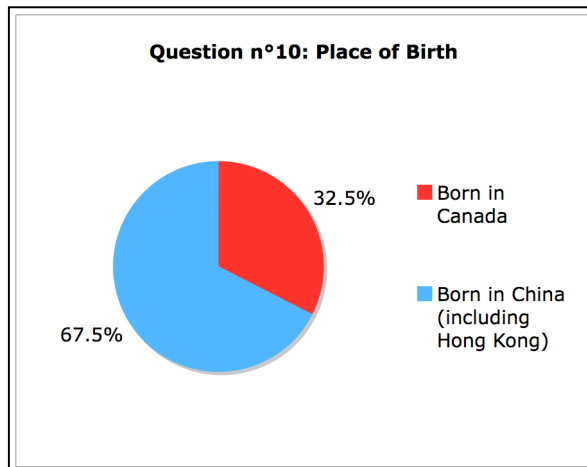


Figure n°3: Graph of the place of birth of the children, made by the author (see appendix n°3)

Their children arrived in Vancouver between the ages of 0 and 10 years or were born in Vancouver in the 1980s. They are studying at UBC and are between 16 and 26 years old. The sample of children allows a better idea of their current circumstances; how they see Canadians and how they are perceived not only by Canadians or other people outside of home, but also and especially by their parents. Moreover, the sample allows for the observation of how data

from real life matches the theory about the different forms of capital accumulated by these selected people, as well as other strategies and implications relevant to sketch the features of their identity. Aspects of daily life will not be treated in any detail. This survey rather tries to answer the main questions about transnationalism and its impacts.

¹⁸ University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

3.1.3. Set up of interviews

The interviews were conducted under the shelter of anonymity and started with either planned or spontaneous meetings. These meetings were set up in two parts: first of all, I asked the participants to fill out the questionnaire individually in about 10-15 minutes. Right after that, I asked them to answer the six-seven questions of the interview telling to them that, as participants in an anonymous survey, they could feel free to answer as they truly felt.

All forty young people were interviewed and filled out the questionnaire. The twenty parents I expected to interview did not accept to be interviewed either because of considerations of language, time, or for no apparent reasons, even though I tried to facilitate contact. Some of their children explained to me that their refusal to take part in the interview process was related to globalization, which has a strong impact on their commitment at work; they generally feel under different types of pressure such as efficiency, fear of the future, and, thus, work comes before everything else. However, most of this category accepted to fill out the questionnaires, which still brought in the essential information.

Meeting the children was easier because of factors such as age, mentality, closeness to UBC and language. Although the graph of question n°2 of the questionnaire shows that almost three quarters of the participants were female, this was not deliberate on my part. I did not intend to distinguish between genders.

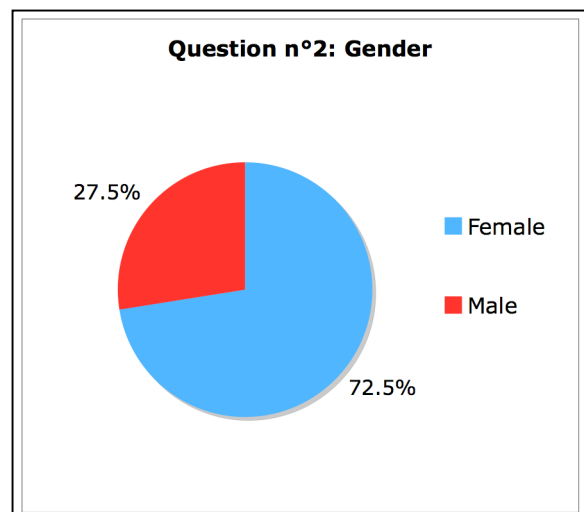


Figure n°4: Graph of the gender of the sample (see appendix n°3)

The majority of the children agreed to participate in this survey, and they were enthusiastic about contributing to this master's thesis. Just two or three participants were mistrustful of my questions, believing that I had preconceived negative notions about their original culture - Hong Kong - because it is not regarded as a 'Western' one.

The children played an intermediary role in giving the questionnaire to their parents and returning it to me, in person or by email. It was interesting to notice how the children acted as a buffer between their parents and me. This reflected perfectly the situation that is true for a majority of these Hong Kong families: the children who can speak English become responsible for their parents who speak little or no English, particularly when a situation

outside of home has to be managed. This aspect will be treated in greater detail in the following sections of the analysis.

More than merely generating data, face-to-face interaction with the interviewees helped me to ‘feel’ their impressions, to elaborate on their answers and also to define better the issues that appeared in the initial questions. Thus, while the raw data were important as a basis to my analysis, the manner in which the survey took place and developed proved another significant factor to take into account.

3.2. Historical Aspects of Transnationalism

3.2.1. Chinese immigration in Canada

Canada is undeniably a country of immigrants and according to S. H. Olson and A. L. Kobayashi, it is “[...] characterized by cultural diversity and the absence of a single dominant cultural group.” (1993: 138). With more than half of British Columbia’s residents living in Vancouver, which has more than two million inhabitants (Census 2006)¹⁹, this city occupies an important and strategic location close to the US and opened to the Pacific Ocean and to the Asian world. Although 13% of Canada’s population live in BC, “The 2001 to 2006 period also saw an improvement in British Columbia’s net migration exchanges with the rest of Canada, reversing the trend that was evident in the previous intercensal period” (Census 2006: 18). Indeed, “Two-thirds of Canada’s population growth was attributable to net international migration” (Census 2006: 5). Furthermore, Canada received a large number of Asian immigrants during the last 30 years, with the peak of the measurement of 2001, as can be observed from the graph below.

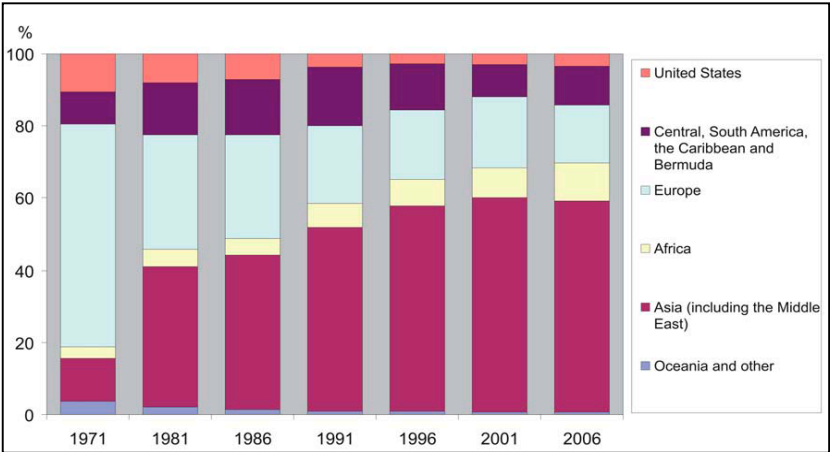


Figure n°5: Region of birth of recent immigrants to Canada, 1971 to 2006, from the website <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/immcit/index.cfm>

¹⁹ Canadian Population in Census 2006, on: <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/index.cfm>

This graph is composed of six categories of immigrants distributed by continents and corresponding to census year. This recent bout of immigration spans from 1971 to 2006, taking into account that migrants arrived 5 years prior to a given census year. The two major aspects of this graph may be observed with relation to the European and the Asian population of migrants. Indeed, many Europeans came to Canada in the 1970s and this proportion decreased from 61.6% of all immigrants to 20-25% in 1991 and down to 16.1% in 2006. While the rate of European migration decreased, the Asian one, in contrast, increased substantially from 12.1% in 1971 to 38.9% ten years later. This proportion of Asian immigration continued to increase to 50.9% in 1991, until 59.4% in 2001 and decreased very lightly in 2006 to 58.3%. This graph shows also the rate of African immigration, which increased from 3.2% in 1971 to 10.6% in 2006. The number of immigrants from Central America, South America, the Caribbean and Bermudas increased in 1971 and declined starting in 1991 to reach 10.8% in 2006. Migration from the United States decreased from 1971 to 2006, from 12% until 3.5% today. “Though the province experienced net losses in its migration exchanges with the rest of the country, especially other parts of British Columbia, Vancouver is the destination of many international immigrants. [...] Because of international immigration, Vancouver continued to experience a higher population growth rate than the provincial average in the 2001 to 2006 period (6.5% versus 5.3%).” (Ibid.: 30).

Canada has a long history of Chinese immigration, and “[c]ommentators note that some appreciation of the history of Chinese migration is important to an understanding of the astronaut phenomenon” (Menene, 2000: 22). A historical perspective sheds light on other impacts of transnationalism on children of migrants, the subject of the next paragraphs²⁰.

At the end of 18th century, Chinese artisans came to the New World, especially to Vancouver Island, for trade. They moved to other regions to partake in the expanding British Empire and to benefit from the colonialists’ ever heavier obligation to pay Chinese traders in silver in exchange for tea. What was called ‘Chinese Canada’ was in this period of prosperity for China, called the Chinese Era. In order to cope with an increasing shortage of funds, the British introduced opium as a new bargaining tool, knowing that this product was very addictive to Chinese people. Two opium wars followed: between 1839 and 1842 and between 1856 and 1960. After the gold rush at the end of the 1850s and at the beginning of the 1860s “[r]oughly 4,000 Chinese miners, nearly all men, came through California or via direct route

²⁰ Historical aspects are mainly based on the handout and course Hist 485 on migratory history of overseas Asians given by professor Henri Yu at the University of British Columbia, 2008.

from Hong Kong and China”²¹ and moved to the Fraser River valley in Canada. The beginning of Chinese Canadian commercial exchanges²² commenced and the Canadian Pacific railway²³, built in most part by Chinese, also led to the development and the extension of Chinese communities in the whole country. This growth in Chinese communities further allowed for the development of a huge social and information network (Chan, 2000). The presence of Chinese was too perceptible for the Canadian government, which introduced in 1885 an “Act to Restrict and Regulate Chinese Immigration and its head tax system” (Ibid.: 6) with a progressive tax over the years. This measure against “the “yellow peril” [viewed] as competition for jobs [...]” (Bourne & Ley, 1993: 142) in Canada provoked tension between the Chinese empire of Qing and the Canadian government. The myth of the Chinese as a sojourner persisted, although many Chinese showed clearly through demonstrations the wish to settle in Canada. Besides the apprehension of an increasing number of Chinese having lower wage jobs than “Caucasians”²⁴, another argument from the Canadian government to reject a status of permanent settlers was represented by the fear that Chinese men came without their family to Canada and might try to marry white women. The depiction of Chinese was also spoiled through stories, newspapers, and reports, all showing them to be unsuitable to become Canadian citizens. The Act of 1885, however, did not slow down the Chinese arrivals; on the contrary, they increased in number. In reaction, Canada started an “Exclusion Act on July 1, 1923.” (Chan, 2000: 8), on Dominion day, also called “Humiliation Nation day” by Henri Yu, for Chinese. The Chinese Era thus passed to the Canadian Era. Confined to Chinatowns, the population²⁵ of Chinese started to decline in British Columbia. However, this isolation reinforced ties and links within Chinese communities. As Henri Yu points out, “[...] while the exclusion act effectively barred Chinese immigration to Canada, what developed in the remaining Chinese communities across the country was a distinct Chinese Canada with its own unique allegiance, culture, economy and politics.”²⁶. These first Chinese immigrants, before those in the next big group who came during the revolution of

²¹ Quote taken from the website of the McCord museum about Canadian history: <http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca/scripts/printobject.php?accessNumber=M609&Lang=1&imageID=194146>

²² Chinese Canadian capitalism began in 1858 with the establishment of the Victoria franchise of the Kwong Lee Company owned by a San Francisco merchant.

²³ Between May 14, 1880 and July 29, 1885, 15,000 Chinese labourers completed the British Columbia section of the CPR and saved the company \$3-5 million.

²⁴ Until the middle of the 20th century, the dominant notion of “Canadian” was based on a stereotype of the “White Anglo-Saxon Protestant” (WASP), used until today by Asians, under the appellation of “Caucasian” referring to the North American concept of ‘race’.

²⁵ The Chinese population declined from 27,139 in 1931 to 21,740 in 1936 in British Columbia.

²⁶ Prof. Yu, Hist 485 course handout, 2008.

1949, kept certain cultural behaviors and customs such as Confucian lines²⁷, from generations to generations, in Canada.

These behaviors evolved differently in time and in space; overseas from place to place and over the years as well, both in an ongoing changing context. New arrivals at the end of 20th century did not have the same cultural background as the Chinese of earlier times. The latter saw their identity evolved in a different way: restrictive Canadian policies on immigration in the 1920s entailed a forged identity which tended to be more Canadian over generations. Chan (2000) upholds that “the intermingling of these young Chinese with the wider western culture resulted in their own adaptation of a Chinese Canadian culture.”²⁸. More than an unconscious attitude, these Chinese had a deep desire to be integrated in Canadian society. Furthermore, the allegiance with which a lot of Chinese enrolled in the Canadian army during the Second World War should not be forgotten. They were involved in the international scene, working in various places and introducing Canada progressively in global affairs, even though the Pacific war stopped temporarily the entry of migrants into the host country (Salaff, 2006). At that time, Canada entered a Global Era. In 1952, the Act on immigration amended by Ottawa promulgated the admission of immigrants based on their educational skills, professional skills and work experience and their level in English or French. According to Robert Elliott (1979), from the end of 1970s, Chinese from most parts of the world²⁹ arrived in massive numbers in Canada, especially in Toronto and Vancouver, which went global. In the Global Era of 1967, when the new law of immigration regarded Chinese Canada in relation to the politics of China, and just after the Cultural Revolution, many Chinese escaped to Hong Kong and to North America. At the same time, investors from Shanghai developed Hong Kong. Indeed, “The efficient workings of the Chinese family economy enabled many migrants from Shanghai in the 1950s to start businesses again in Hong Kong.” (Salaff, 2006: 3, referring to Hamilton & Kao, 1990; Wong, 1988). Based on that previous fact, can Hong Kong inhabitants be said to have a real Hong Kong identity? For H. Yu, this identity is not specific to Hong Kong because Hong Kongers were mainly Chinese from Shanghai. However, time and specific features such as the geography of place, history, and economic development, gave them a proper local identity in addition to their Chinese identity, itself integrated in a broader Asian identity.

²⁷ For example, marriages involved the union of two families whose political commitments should be marked.

²⁸ Prof. Yu, Hist 485, course handout p.9 , 2008.

²⁹ Chinese arrived in Canada especially from India, Jamaica, Philippines, Singapore, Peru, South Africa, China and the United States.

Chinese Canadian³⁰ was an identity in itself because it existed before and independently from China on Canadian territory to this bedrock established a long time ago. Other new waves of overseas Chinese to Canada were added giving a particular tone to this identity. Indeed, the ‘Chinese Born in Canada’, called ‘CBC’ by the students themselves, were impacted by the arrivals of new Chinese who were directly impacted by the events in China. These so-called CBC were affected in the sense that they had really committed to Canadian life, students were accused - as foreigners in the eyes of some Canadians³¹ - of taking the seats of European Canadians. This important event in Chinese Canadian history revealed the efficiency and the adaptability of Chinese Canadians in their organization: deep-rooted in Canada, Canadian Chinese had already developed solid networks through media, politics, marketing, and other (infra)structures which demonstrated their strength and the cohesion. As H. Yu underlined in his course, “it had found its political identity, became confident of its destiny and was ready to defend its rights and privileges in a Canada that boldly espoused freedom and equality.”

The question is to define the identities of newcomers in the 1980s whose Chinese Canadian identity has also been represented in Canada in a context of preexisting various ethnicities. This configuration is important because its influence on the identity of the second generation of Hong Kong migrants would not be the same if Canada had already had another identity pattern such as the current one - an already established Chinese Canadian identity, amongst a preexisting Anglo-Canadian one as a basis and other various identities from all around the world defined as a multicultural society. Furthermore, besides this aspect of a preexisting similar identity to these Chinese Canadians, Hong Kong refers to Chinese culture in China too, but also partially modified by the British Empire which was there between 1841 and 1997, and which gave to Hong Kong migrants of the 1980s (already) a bicultural background with the same kind of crossing of both cultures. By 1979, Chinese Canada was itself a multi-layered cultural entity with Chinese immigrants from Africa, the Americas and Europe as well as Asia.

³⁰ For further information about migration from China, see the following website: www.iupui.edu/~anthkb/a104/china/chinamigration4.htm by Ronald Skeldon.

³¹ Some Canadians opposed to the Chinese students gathered in a group called W5.

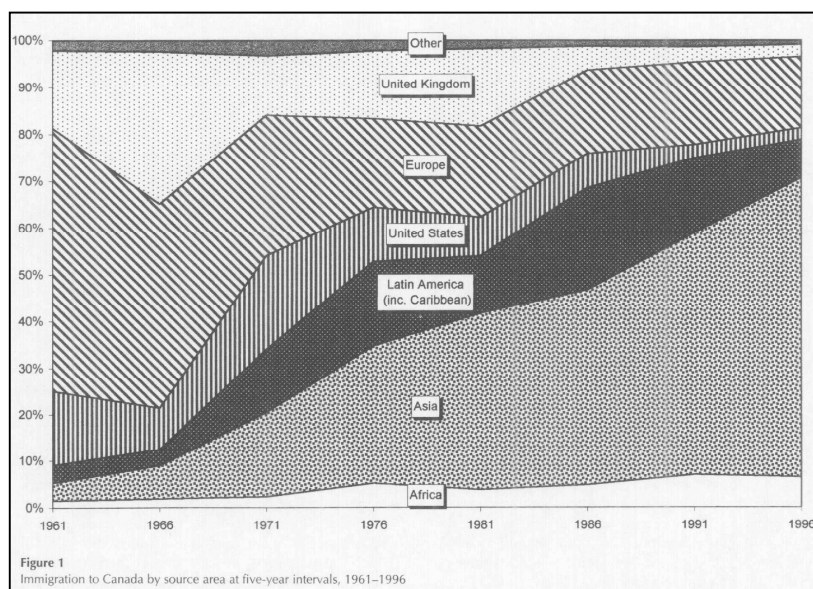


Figure n°6: *Graph of the arrivals of immigrants in Canada whose Asian component was continually increasing, taken from the article of D. Ley, 1999: 18*

3.2.2. Hong Kong immigration in British Columbia, 1980-2000

In this context of international migration, I would like to introduce a specific case study based on theoretical reports and go into the matter closer with my own field research including a survey. To analyze direct impacts of transnationalism on Chinese families, the case study will look at the last two generations of Hong Kong migrants - parents and children - of the mid-80s, which Marilou Carillo³² regarded as the decade of family migration, globally speaking, compared to the other previous ones in which sometimes only the father left his country. Specifically closer to our case, “[t]he level of Chinese immigration to Canada took off during the mid-1980s. Chinese immigrants came mainly from three areas: China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. During the two-decade period from 1981 to 2001, an average of 35,400 immigrants arrived from these three sources each year.”³³. More precisely, “Vancouver and Hong Kong represent two critical nodes in recent trans-Pacific migration; in 1992 approximately 38000 people left Hong Kong for Canada (Skeldon 1994), whilst in 1993-1994 almost 16000 (principally “business-class”) immigrants arrived in Vancouver from Hong Kong (CIC 1999).” (Waters, 2006: 182). The number of Hong Kong immigrants increased in

³² Marilou Carillo in Women’s and Gender studies at UBC, was one of the speakers at the interdisciplinary conference on Asian Migrations “Pacific Worlds in Motion” at the University of British Columbia, March 2008, 14-15.

³³ Canadian Social Trend, March 2005, n°76, p.27: <http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/11-008-XIE/0040411-008-XIE.pdf>

the middle 1980s and early 1990s. The majority of them lived and is living in Toronto and Vancouver. Several waves of overseas Chinese immigrants came to Vancouver: 1978, 1986 and 1997 were the three most recent periods of exodus to Canada (Ley, 2003). In this research project I will pay a particular attention to arrivals of the two last periods in the 1980s-1990s. The big majority of Hong Kongers in my sample arrived to Canada in the 1990s. According to H. Yu, “[i]n 1981, 6,451 Hong Kong inhabitants emigrated to Canada. By 1987, 16,170 left the British colony. In 1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993, Canada welcomed 29,261, 22,340, 38,910 and 36,570 immigrants from Hong Kong respectively.” (Chung, 1998: 235, 243)). More broadly, from 1980 to 2000, about 380,000 migrants from Hong Kong arrived to Canada and “[i]n 1992, around 38,000 people left Hong Kong for Canada [...]” (Waters, 2005: 361).

Following the physically prominent presence of the newcomers in Canada, the discovery of a certain political power and the emergence of an identity, anonymous for a long time, happened before Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997. Besides political power, Chinese Canada also had financial dominance through Chinese entrepreneurs like Li Kashing, helping also to support political wishes on a massive scale with measures to favor culture and consciousness of the existence of this culture, what H. Yu calls ‘cultural flowering’. Moreover, he emphasizes that “[d]uring the 1980s and 1990s, culture in Chinese Canada began to develop not as a reflection of China, Hong Kong or Taiwan, but within the experience of the Chinese in Canada” as a unique identity itself. “By 1993, about 700,000 people of Chinese ancestry lived in Canada with much of the immigration (97,681) arriving from Hong Kong. From 1988 to 1993, 166,487 Hong Kong immigrants settled in Canada in Ontario (50.57%), with British Columbia (26.71%) receiving the bulk of these new Canadians. By 2010, there will be more than a million Canadians of Chinese ancestry.”³⁴.

The analysis series of the 2001 census revealed several tendencies of the targeted period from the 1980s-1990s. One out of three inhabitants of Vancouver were Asian in the 2001 census (for 1996 in reality), so more than the 28% measured in the 1996 census as a visible minority population, over half of which, 53%, were born in China. Furthermore, “The People’s Republic of China, Hong Kong (SAR) and Taiwan topped the list of birthplaces for 1990s immigrants living in Vancouver in 2001, followed by India and the Philippines. Combined, these countries accounted for 62% of 1990s immigrants to Vancouver.”³⁵.

³⁴ Prof. Yu, Hist 485, course handout p.13 , 2008.

³⁵ Information coming from the Analysis series of 2001 census, p. 35.

Order	2006 Census	2001 Census	1996 Census	1991 Census	1981 Census
1	People's Republic of China	People's Republic of China	Hong Kong	Hong Kong	United Kingdom
2	India	India	People's Republic of China	Poland	Viet Nam
3	Philippines	Philippines	India	People's Republic of China	United States of America
4	Pakistan	Pakistan	Philippines	India	India
5	United States of America	Hong Kong	Sri Lanka	Philippines	Philippines
6	South Korea	Iran	Poland	United Kingdom	Jamaica
7	Romania	Taiwan	Taiwan	Viet Nam	Hong Kong
8	Iran	United States of America	Viet Nam	United States of America	Portugal
9	United Kingdom	South Korea	United States of America	Lebanon	Taiwan
10	Colombia	Sri Lanka	United Kingdom	Portugal	People's Republic of China

Figure n°7: Top 10 countries of birth of recent immigrants, 1981 to 2006, from Statistics Canada, census of population, 1981 to 2006

The graph above shows that Hong Kong, after placing 7th among the ‘countries of immigration to Canada’ in the 1981 census, had the higher proportion of immigrants who came to Canada in the 1991 and 1996 census. This means that according to the calculation of 5 years prior, Hong Kong was the first country of immigration between 1986 and 1991. In the 2001 census, since 1996, the proportion of Hong Kong immigrants decreased relatively speaking compared to other countries and arrived in 5th place in the ranking.

The above-mentioned historical context offers a better feel for the tradition of Canadian immigration. It compares especially the Chinese from Hong Kong with the previous situation, showing how many people came to Canada, years after years. We should carry our interest to the reasons of this massive overseas immigration of Hong Kong families. Moreover, “[a] transnational perspective facilitates an understanding of the ways in which Chinese families have utilized spatial strategies in the accumulation of different forms of capital within the family unit.” (Waters, 2005: 362).

3.3. Transnational Factors, Processes and Practices

In order to understand the background of the development of the identity of the second generation of Hong Kong families in the particular context of Pacific-Rim migration, the presentation of their reasons will give us the germ of the development of multiculturalism, because “[f]rom one perspective, transnational practices and identities can be viewed as the logical extension of multiculturalism” (Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 1) and will show us the motives of the variation of their identity.

3.3.1. Geopolitical reasons and citizenship

Before going through the results of the data, it is necessary to explain first the political factors which urged Hong Kong people to quit their location and to go overseas to Canada. Besides the factor that China was under constant political uncertainty, the 1980s confirmed these doubts with a certain punctual event: the massacre of students on Tiananmen Square in 1989. This event also reinforced the influence and the power of Beijing. Furthermore, the announcement of the handover of Hong Kong³⁶ - still under British rule - to China in 1997, increased some ambiguities about the plans of the Chinese government on its new territory, giving the feeling of fear to Hong Kongers (Ley & Kobayashi, 2005), who lived progressively in their country. Indeed, as Janet Salaff pointed out, “Many Hong Kong Chinese immigrated in the skilled worker and business categories surrounding the 1997 political reversion of Hong Kong to China.” (2006: 8).

Multiple meanings are tied up with having Canadian citizenship; this new means to define identity through official institutions broadens the notion of identity to induce and to embody a sense of belonging. Indeed, “Foreign residency is becoming a marketable item with price tags’, fostering an inevitable ‘disjuncture between legal citizenship and personal identity’ for some new residents.” (Waters, 2003: 221, quoting Ip & Inglis & Wu, 1997: 363). Furthermore, “[...] transnational practices, like obtaining dual citizenship and becoming involved in the politics of both homelands, would suggest a sense of belonging and attachment that extends beyond Canadian borders and that thus poses a challenge to the present form of multicultural policy.”(Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 1). However, “[i]mportantly, the specifications of the Business Immigration Program omit reference to the ‘qualities and

³⁶ Hong Kong, under the terms of the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984, became a Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China in 1997.

attitudes of its citizens' or 'their sense of identity' [...] as well as any requirement of longer-term residence or commitment from the applicant." (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994: 352–353, quoted by Waters, 2003: 224) Continuing in this vein, then, "[a]lthough citizenship regimes determine who has access to the polity, their impact on transnational relations is less clear." (Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 22). It is here that strategies of social capital accumulation come to play an important role, especially concerning the three functions of social capital that A. Portes (1998) defined, as we saw in section 2.2.3, as a source of social control through associations, a source of family support and help and a source of benefits through extrafamilial networks. These aspects are fundamental to an understanding of official citizenship and mental belonging to Canada as well. Almost one third of the parents in my sample are involved in an association in Vancouver. But more powerful than this first source of social capital, extrafamilial networks demonstrate the scope of the various relations preexisting or created overseas with relatives, friends or colleagues. But how it is for the second generation of these migrants of the 1980s? According to my sample of 40 children, the questionnaire revealed some tendencies about the question of citizenship; almost a half (19 out of 40), that is to say 47.5%, possesses Canadian and Hong Kong citizenship at least. 37.5% have only the Canadian passport and 7.5% only the Hong Kong one. The last 7.5% did not answer this question. V. Satzewich and L. Wong say that "[m]ultiple citizenship is really the institutionalization of people's already existent transnational ties." (2006: 12). In conclusion, certainly 34 out of 40, or 87.5%, of these students possess at least the Canadian passport. For those who have both passports, J. Waters, referring to Bloemraad (2000), upholds that "[...] transnational practices are incompatible with an important traditional component of citizenship involving loyalty to and identification with one country." (2003: 220).

The notion of "civic multiculturalism" advanced by the Canadian government in the last 10 years is responsible for "creating a sense of belonging and attachment to Canada among immigrants" (Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 1) and for sure, "New strategies of flexible accumulation have promoted a flexible attitude toward citizenship" (Ong, 1999: 17). However, "[i]t is now a well-established fact of contemporary migration that many immigrants actively maintain deep social, economic and emotional ties with their countries of origin, even after the acquisition of a new citizenship." (Waters, 2003: 220). That is indeed true for the parents, but what about the second generation? According to the sample, 28 out of

40, or 70% of the children keep in touch with their relatives or friends living in Hong Kong. “[...] contemporary immigrants tend to ‘forge and sustain multistranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement’ (Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton 1994,7).” (Ibid.: 221).

3.3.2. Socio-educational factors

Hong Kong families have always considered education as paramount to succeed in society and to support the family. Indeed, “For many ethnic Chinese in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia, both the well-off and the not-so-rich, strategies of accumulation begin with the acquisition of a Western education.” (Ong, 1999: 95) Besides the gain brought by social capital - especially by the second function (family support) that A. Portes (1998) described - the cultural capital also plays a very important role - including its combination with social capital. J. Waters, referring to Brown (1995), points out, “the active accumulation of cultural capital represents the principal means by which the middle-class seeks to reproduce its social status across generations.” (2006: 180). Thus, by their own background, parents impregnate their children’s minds with a certain wish to succeed and they count upon the prestige given by North American university degrees. This accumulation of cultural capital is the means by which children of immigrants may reach a better position and more elevated status in society, certainly also related to the social reproduction theory of P. Bourdieu, but the goal is to go even further than the model of their parents and to succeed in search of the ‘more than expected’. J. Waters emphasizes this point saying that “[i]n reality, the children that occupy these positions - those for whom migration is intimately connected to parental aspirations regarding their education and future careers - often desire a different set of goals as a consequence of their experiences of settlement.” (2003: 228). Children, who have other aspirations than their parents, enter a different process of acculturation which involves two different directions, “[...] the retention of heritage cultures and the adoption of mainstream culture” (Hiebert, 2003: 4, quoting Berry, 1997; Ryder & Alden & Paulhus, 2000).

Regarding questions n°6 and n°7 of my sample, the raw data revealed that a majority of parents finished their studies with a High School diploma and that their children had obtained at least the same kind of diploma. Almost the half of my sample (19 out of 40 = 47.5%) wants to get a Master degree, 30 % a Bachelor degree, 10% a BA or a MA degree, 2.5% a MA or PhD degree and 10% a PhD.

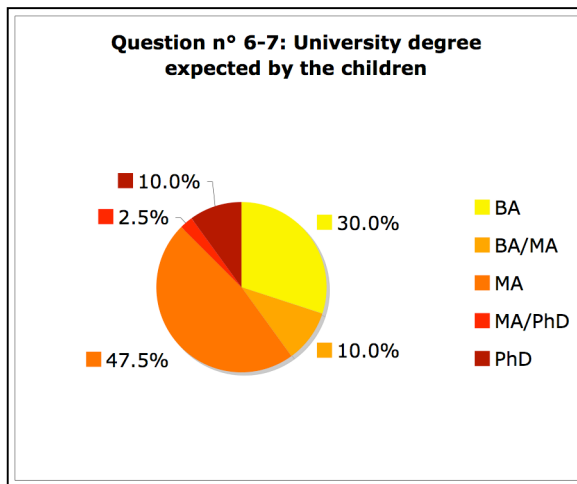


Figure n°8: Graph of the university degree expected by the children (see appendix n°3)

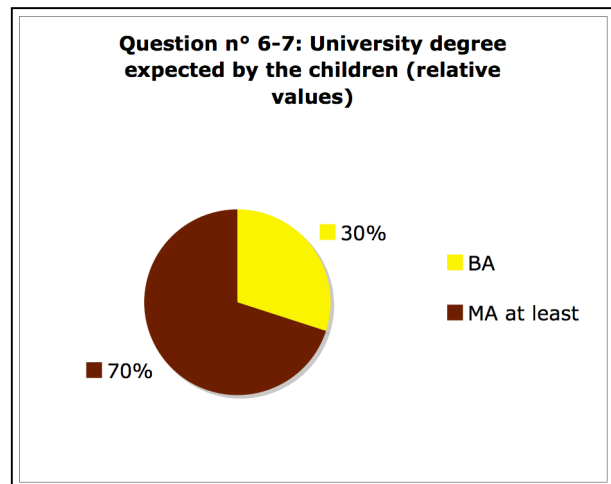


Figure n°9: Graph of the university degree expected by the children in relative values (see appendix n°3)

Relatively speaking, my sample in its totality would like to get a BA at least, and between 23 and 28 out of 40 students, that is to say between 57.5% and 70%, would like an MA degree, so 70% would like a MA at least.

Quoting A. Ong (1999: 95), J. Waters emphasizes that “[...] [f]or many ethnic Chinese in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia, both the well-off and the not-so-rich, strategies of accumulation begin with the acquisition of a Western education.” (2003: 227). Furthermore, referring to K. Mitchell (1997), J. Waters adds that on “[...] account of Hong Kong businesspersons in Canada, command of the English language is deemed crucial in the constitution of what she terms the ‘cultural citizen’.” (Id.). The results of the survey and theory demonstrated by the initiative of parent’s education is linked to different reasons such as expectations of current time in what I would like to call a ‘spiral of elevation’ projected by the labour market, sustained also by the vicious circle of the perception of other students by others, putting a certain continuous pressure which leads them to generate a certain representation of themselves and of their goals. Indeed, “As access to education expanded, so educational “distinction” became increasingly linked to academic *selection*.” (Waters, 2006: 183). For Hong Kong families, immigration was the only way to access this opportunity. In Hong Kong, many students could not access universities easily; strong competition between students raised the grade point average, and examinations³⁷ at the end of High School are

³⁷ At the age of 15-16 years old, students in Hong Kong have to face a hard examination called HKCEE, which, in case of failure, can abruptly stop their career. Another examination, the HKALE, should be passed at the age of 17 years old.

particularly hard³⁸, leaving few chances for ‘standard’ students to find a way. Waters emphasizes that “[...] the “symbolic potency” of academic credentials varies *spatially*; access to the “best” educational opportunities is directly related to spatial mobility” (2006: 182). Furthermore, “For middle-class families, a child’s failure (or perceived failure) in the Hong Kong education system may directly threaten household social reproduction.” (Waters, 2005: 362). As she points out, the notion of ‘choice’ is also important to observe; this category of people - middle-class families - does not correspond to the connotation of the word ‘migrant’ often used in relation to poor people, and what D. Ley (1999) called the myth of the immigrant underclass. In this case, “When middle-class students are faced with the prospect of failure in the Hong Kong school system, the links between education, spatial mobility and social reproduction are brought to the fore. Overseas education offers an *escape* – a way out of a highly competitive, highly stratified and unforgiving local education system and an easier academic route [...]” (Waters, 2006: 184).

Moreover, “[f]or these particular graduates and their families, Vancouver and Hong Kong constitute a single, transnational field of social interaction, capital accumulation and exchange.” (Ibid.: 187, referring to Basch *et al*, 1994)). With this aspect, as “[*t*]ruly cosmopolitan, Hong Kong parents were highly strategic in their decision to engage with an international education market, choosing to travel significant distances in pursuit of educational opportunities.” (Ibid.: 182).

As J. Waters says, emigration is a “win-win situation” (Ibid.: 184). It provides the benefits of a Western education, appreciated by companies in Hong Kong on one hand, and simultaneously allows for the avoidance of a real or anticipated initial failure and potentially greater success on the other hand, with an overseas education. Such a situation leads to expected social reproduction at least (Id.). “The ‘overseas education’ offers, in this circumstance, something ‘rarer’ and consequently more valuable than the norm.” (Waters, 2005: 367). In these transnational networks, the international market of education has impacts at different scales and on the global-local connection; “[...] transnational social capital may operate at astonishingly small spatial scales (e.g. high-school connections) at the same time as it extends over vast distances.” (Waters, 2006: 188). Besides the opportunity and the prestige associated with attaining a Western degree, a number of other factors preoccupy Hong Kong parents. Their interests and concerns are also tied to questions of what going overseas could bring them in terms of financial gain.

³⁸ Most of the interviewees told me that HKCEE and HKALE were especially arduous events for students.

Another element of understanding is located in the role and position of the family itself for its success. Referring to A. Ong's words, J. Waters points out that "[...] the family unit is crucial. The successful dispersal of family members as part of the strategy of capital accumulation relies upon long-established notions of familial loyalty, including a sense of filial piety and an acceptance of a patriarchal structure, to ensure that discipline is maintained across the globe." (2003: 223).

Another aspect should be broached: not focusing on the family as a unique unit but taking into account individuals themselves as entities of this family. "The children, in turn, are the focus for the accumulation of cultural capital. These gender and generational distinctions are significant, as they indicate the highly differentiated experiences of mobility, settlement and citizenship within the household⁷ obscured by literature that focuses on the family as a unit. Emphasis on the functional efficiency of the family unit also underestimates the ways in which individual, personal experience may undermine overall 'cultural capital' objectives." (Waters, 2003: 223).

Family business and the democratization of education reduce the value of local credentials with an increasing competition, and a recent economic downturn in Hong Kong "[...] have made the 'overseas education' a particularly valued and desirable commodity." (Waters, 2005: 372) and "[t]he children's education was found to be one of the most important reasons for initial immigration to Canada and *the* reason why the 'satellite kids' remained in Vancouver when their parents returned to Hong Kong." (Ibid.: 370-371).

3.3.3. *Economic gain*

Since the introduction of the point system in 1967 (Waters, 2003), Canada set out to create, under the pressure of progressive globalization, a selective migration process. Similar to almost thirty nations, the Business Immigration Program was then introduced in Canada in 1978 as a global instrument of national economic development, encouraging the mobility of *homo economicus* and of their business experiences abroad (Ley, 2003). Canada thus expected to receive investors³⁹ who would contribute to economic development by creating new jobs on Canadian territory. According to that, "Hong Kong Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs mobilize their Hong Kong based enterprises to start businesses in British

³⁹ Three kinds of economic migrants exist in Canada: entrepreneur stream with a min. of \$ 300,000 CAD and experiences (1978), passive investor stream with a min. of \$ 800,000 CAD (and the half to invest) and business experiences (1986) and self-employed stream (Waters, 2003).

Columbia.” (Salaff, 2006: 3, quoting Wong & Ng, 1998). Furthermore, “[i]n the past decade, the economic power of the Pacific Rim has become the dominant element of the British Columbia economy.” (Ley, 1995: 189). However good financial intentions were, they were not without consequences. D. Ley indicates that besides economic contribution, “contemporary globalization theorists identify an international “space of flows”, movements of capital, labor, commodities, and information that erode the power of nation-state.” (2003: 427). Furthermore, Vancouver is not really the place to make money⁴⁰; opportunities may start in the sector of services, but real investments remain weak. Through immigration, Canada welcomed new arrivals with their dreams and hopes, using Canadian citizenship as a life-guarantee against political uncertainties in the home country in return for entrepreneurial actions in the host country. However, the State seemed progressively bowing to the authority of economic interests. The latter reason would also have strong impacts on Hong Kong families, establishing a new phenomenon of migration of temporarily going ‘back home’ to earn money, as we will see from the following.

An economic recession happened in 1995, which did not help matters. So, the Business Immigration Program gave rise to criticism, particularly in that it enticed migrants into almost unavoidable economic failures and did not guarantee them the development of a prosperous business (Ley, 2003). The Canadian government faced people with great potential but a lack of resources and this meant that the government could not adequately deal with these “[...] resourceful transnational migrants.” (Ibid.: 438). J. Waters (2003) speaks about a certain weakness of national solidarity, a ‘commodification’ of citizenship in a sense of a business contract between migrants and the State. However, as D. Ley (2003) says, migrants played the state’s game and took advantages of it for their own gain, making the decision, for example, to go back overseas - which would have strong impacts on Hong Kong families - to make more money and to support the family, choosing astronaut lifestyles; the father working in Hong Kong and coming back to Vancouver punctually during holidays, 2-3 times a year to see his wife and their children in Canada. The goals of the Business Immigration Program to create new jobs in Canada became less and less concrete, but the wish for migrants to obtain a permit for permanent residency, and ultimately Canadian citizenship (after three years) was a priority even though “[...] the business immigration programme has not unfolded as expected” (Ley & Kobayashi, 2005: 114). Instead of becoming a place of investments,

⁴⁰ According to Ley & Kobayashi, “Individual incomes for Hong Kong immigrants in Canada in 1996 were very low, with 45 per cent earning less than \$ 1000 CAD a month, and mean incomes fell below half the level of returnees working in Hong Kong” (2005: 115).

Vancouver developed its service industry with people parking or spending their money there. This turn of events had some consequences for the families.

Besides the astronaut phenomenon, another effect of staying for three years to get the Canadian passport was that migrants returned to Hong Kong with the whole family to make new business there. Concerning astronauts families, the children, now adults, reconsidered the decision made by their parents 20-30 years earlier and “[...] some would renew the trans-Pacific migration cycle.” (Ibid.: 118). The Hong Kong government estimated that of about 100,000 of its returnees, 40% came from Canada in 1999 with a big majority of them being young adults (Ley & Kobayashi, 2005).

Hierarchically, it is possible to see priority reasons for making the decision to move overseas; “Yet, whilst economic restructuring and related feelings of uncertainty are clearly important in the decision of families to seek sanctuary and cultural capital in Canada, this is not the full story. For many, the impending reality of *academic failure* presented a more immediate and serious threat to the social reproduction of the family.” (Waters, 2006: 184). Moreover, D. Ley adds that “[...] middle-class emigrants were frequently ‘reluctant exiles’, driven from their homes, not by the hope of economic success in Canada, but by geopolitical uncertainties: ‘Most are in conflict. They may wish to exit for political reasons, but to remain for economic reasons.’” (2003: 438). But although political reasons may appear prominent, J. Waters underscores “Prior academic accounts have generally relied upon parents’ explanations for household migration and parents are understandably reluctant to admit to their child’s failure, offering instead an acceptable ‘political’ explanation”. (2005: 361). The children I was in contact with, however, were more ready to confess that their own underperformance in local examinations had led directly to the submission of an immigration application. But, comparatively speaking, it remains easy to deduce that geopolitical uncertainties are still the main reason for immigration, even though they do not seem to be the primary factor, but rather the education of the children and in third position, economic interests. Of course, the factors are linked and J. Waters, quoting K. Mitchell (1997), says that “[...] becoming the ‘cultural citizen’ in Vancouver is part of a process of capital accumulation by a Hong Kong business elite.” (2003: 228). A fourth factor should also be noticed; quality of life, although this generally occurs towards retirement, when Hong Kong parents lived in astronaut conditions and wanted to go into retirement in Vancouver.

All the above reasons may be gathered into one wish: stability, by any standard. As said in chapter 2, the economic interest of globalization fathered mobility and spaces of networks and flows. As opposed to these economic expectations, transnationalism complicates “[...] invincible identities of transnational subjects well-endowed in human capital.” (Ley, 2004: 152). Indeed, how may the second generation manage a sense of belonging and an identity in this particular context?

3.4. Strategies in Management of (Post-)Transnationalism

In order to demonstrate certain mechanisms of supervision of flexible citizenships (Ong, 1999) used by Hong Kong families, I will focus on four specific axes of research; cultural logics, social networks, accumulation of social capital and embeddedness. C. Camilleri defined broadly identity strategies as “[...] le résultat de l’élaboration individuelle et collective des acteurs et expriment, dans leur mouvance, des ajustements opérés, au jour le jour, en fonction de la variation des situations et des enjeux qu’elles suscitent - c’est-à-dire des finalités exprimés par les acteurs - et des ressources de ceux-ci.” (1990: 49). These factors represent a hub in the management of the cultural differences and will also allow the detection of divergences in the evolution of the identity of the children with regards to their parents. “A transnational perspective facilitates an understanding of the ways in which Chinese families have utilized spatial strategies in the accumulation of different forms of capital within the family unit.” (Waters, 2005: 362). Transnationalism causes various kinds of mobility; I am going to focus on the ‘mental’ part of this flexibility instead of the physical one, which is quite obvious and is not relevant to the topic, at hand. On the other hand, the psychological consequences of transnationalism on the construction of identity and its social and cultural components, as described below, require a deeper analysis. These components - cultural logics, social networks, cumulative capital and embeddedness - represent keys for analyzing strategies used by migrants in the management of the impacts of transnationalism on their identity, its evolution in the context of integration, and adaptation in a host society through generations. How do these notions fit with our case study?

3.4.1. Cultural logics

Cultural logics, as cultural frames of references and respective cultural standards, are one of the bedrocks supporting the understanding an interactions between different cultures.

Cosmopolitan aspects help in communication between different ways of thinking and lean on multiculturalism. “However, transnationalism can also be viewed as challenging forms of multiculturalism that are bounded by the nation-state.” (Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 1). Some disjuncture that may slow down, indeed provoke irreparable tensions, sometimes in the process of adaptation to another culture, should be observed in order to see where the eventual nodes could occur in this crossroads of cultures. Eventual tensions may be located in the fact that “[c]haque culture, chaque pays a son propre langage de l’espace, tout aussi singulier que le langage parlé, parfois même davantage.” (Hall, 1979: 65).

I would like to highlight the meaning of my questions in the questionnaire. These questions were focused on ‘cultural behaviours’, ‘mentality’, ‘sense of belonging’ and ‘identity’. But what do these notions mean in this specific context? By ‘Western behaviours’, I mean the behavioural features, mentality and way of thinking of North American people. Although there is a big diversity of opinions and life styles, a kind of unity may be observed about mentality and it may be distinguished from other cultures. I would try to distinguish these different ways of thinking at a broad level - continents - especially between Asian and North American ones. By ‘Asian behaviours’, I mean cultural aspects we can generally see in Asia as a frame of reference, but which can be exported to other countries as well. Cultural behaviours include ways of thinking, kinds of food, habits, TV programs, festivals, education, manners, appropriate codes and norms for given cultures and societies.

The main point of cultural logics is located in the cultural traditions regarding growth of ‘modernity’. For each nation, change differs according to speed, type, adaptation and, of course, between people from different cultures who lived through these modifications in their own ethnicity and who finally meet each other and have to manage their interaction together. The notion of ‘white supremacy’ associated with the concept of “domesticity” (Mitchell, 2004: 163) is involved in these multiple factors such as cultural logics of the relationship between the dominant and dominated. It plays an important role as a perpetual background because in “[t]ransnational processes are situated cultural practices, so that the cultural logics of governmentality and state action in Asia Pacific countries are rather different from, say, those in a former world power such as England.” (Ong, 1999: 17). Chinese culture refers mainly to Confucianism which is “[...] the source of the moral authority, instrumental rationality, and network organization that is associated with powerful states and the dynamic, mobile capitalism that is reconfiguring the Asia Pacific region. By claiming a distinctive

Confucian spirituality and instrumentality that is ultimately in dialogue with the West, such as normative *Asian* regime also acts as a check to Western claims of universality.” (Ibid.: 53). In other terms, Asian people should be aware of their identity today and take a stand in the context of current time.

Due to investors from Shanghai, Hong Kong became one of the most important economies in the world and is endowed with various dynamics given, among other things, by the British Empire since the middle of the 19th century, just after the end of the war of opium. The position of Hong Kong is then a special one in comparison to other places in China or in the rest of the the world, because of its historical, political, economic and cultural combinations. However, despite its quite unique situation, Hong Kong has a modernity close to the Western one in the sense that it tends towards a global economy. In this context, the deal is changed through historical and socio-cultural specificities. A. Ong goes further and explains her “[...] use [of] the term *alternative modernities* to denote not so much the difference in content between Asian and Western modernities but the new self-confident political reenvisioning of Asian futures that challenges the basic assumption of inevitable Western domination.” (Ibid.: 81-82). However, since a growing interest through relatively recent economic successes, A. Ong argues that “Chinese modernities are new racial imaginaries and regimes of domination that decenter Western hegemony in the global arena.” (Ibid.: 83). This last claim is partially true, because on one hand, at a broad level, economic successes carry and carried Asian cultures all around the world, and they developed specific features ages ago in attitudes or communication to survive overseas and to earn collective power in the face of other big nations. But, on the other hand, at a local scale, interactions between individuals of different mentalities are not obvious, even for the second generation of Hong Kong migrants who grew up in Vancouver.

The interviews revealed a certain embarrassment of being truly regarded as ‘Western’ because of the appearance of their initial identity faced with a ‘white supremacy’ whose scope of reference and of prestige still has a strong worldwide influence today. Incidentally, the wish to be recognized also as Canadian was still stronger, although perceptions do not often allow that from European Canadians, called ‘Caucasians’.

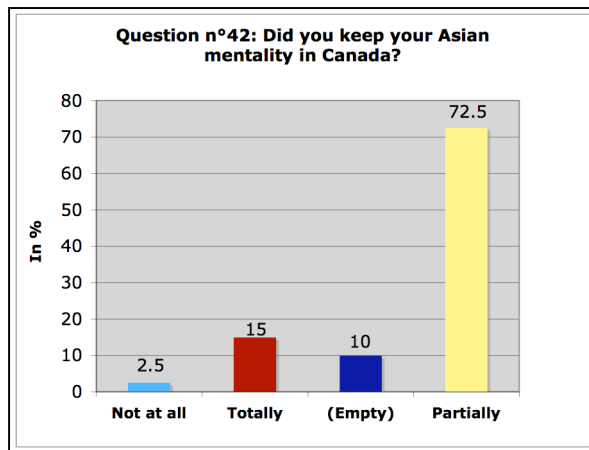


Figure n°10: Graph of the Asian mentality in Canada (see appendix n°3)

According to question n°42 of my sample, 29 out of 40, or 72.5% answered ‘partially’, 6 out of 40 or 15% answered ‘totally’, 1 out of 40, or 2.5 % ‘Not at all’ and 4 out of 40, or 10% did not answer this question. These results strongly reveal hybrid identity and the awareness of a mishmash mentality, openly claimed.

Various strategies are then produced at a local scale to respond to these various ‘anti-globalizations’. The initial culture rooted in Asia always stays in the background, including other different identity specificities linked to the nation - Hong Kong for example - which are influenced by its exclusive and inclusive environment, bringing it changes more or less important in time. These aspects firmly rooted in the initial culture as background occur and adapt with cultural aspects of another country. In the situation of immigrants, although initial culture is always the frame of reference that is more or less visible, it is different for the second generation who were born or grew up in Vancouver. There is the idea of a double assimilation, where the first one is not necessarily the most prominent one. In other words, there is eventually a reverse assimilation in the sense that children do not have to assimilate the Canadian life style because they were born in Canada and so they already have the Anglo-conformity. However, in the opposite way, they have to assimilate the Asian background of their parents. Yet, the background of the family often has a greater influence than the local context or the cultural environment. Perceptions are also vital in this regard; the children are Canadian but they are perceived as Asian because of their physical appearance and attitudes, which come from their parents, and which reinforce a belonging to the initial culture. Individual experiences play a role as well but remain quite similar when people encounter common situations and are alike in a certain sense.

A. Ong (1999) takes up the notion of being Chinese and tried to redefine it in the context of the mobility of families and their eventual hybridity through immigration. Flexible citizenships change the whole notion of national identity - belonging to one country - and then tends “[...] to refer especially to the strategies and effects of mobile managers, technocrats, and professionals seeking to both circumvent *and* benefit from different nation-state regimes by selecting different sites for investments, work, and family relocation. Such repositioning in

relation to global markets, however, should not lead one to assume that the nation-state is losing control of its borders.” (Ong, 1999: 112). Power relations are conceivable at different scales; global at an interstate level and local between individuals. These systems of management of society bring rules and govern the behaviour of individuals at a local scale, transcending the global modalities of governmentality and tending to standardize it. Culture is then not only shaped by ancestral traditions, such as Confucianism, but also by current trends and by a new holism at various levels such as the globalization of the economy, the weavings of networks and the universalism of cultural behaviours leading to identities gradually deprived of their initial features. At the same time, “[...] “flexible citizenship” also denotes the localizing strategies of subjects who, through a variety of familial and economic practices, seek to evade, deflect, and take advantage of political and economic conditions in different parts of the world” (Ibid.: 113). This cultural repositioning happens according to the context and “[...] Chinese family discipline is in part shaped by the regulation of the state and by the rules of the global marketplace, but the convergence of Chinese family forms with flexible strategies of capital accumulation enables them to bypass or exploit citizenship rules – whatever the case may be – as they relocate capital and/or family members overseas.” (Id.). “It may sound contradictory, but flexible citizenship is a result of familial strategies of regulation.” (Ibid.: 117-118).

These strategies are also established to varying degrees, in family ties and through practices with individuals outside the close family. First of all, we should take an interest in tendencies inside a Chinese family. As A. Ong says, “The entry of Chinese into mercantile capitalism ruptured the traditional links of filiation among Chinese subjects, Chinese families, and the Chinese social order.” (Ibid.: 114). Filial piety (*xiao*), an element of Confucianism, was an important component of hierarchical order⁴¹ fixed by the criteria of age and sex among membership of the Chinese family. This moral order inside families also occurred on a broader scale between the population and institutions. The notion of filial piety was discussed in Chinese society not to only be reserved for a loyalty of family but also to belong to a loyalty for the new modern Chinese state. However, the sense of “filial piety thereby became the substance for shaping other ways of being Chinese in the world.” (Id.). “One can say that filial piety has been bent and channeled to serve the governmentality not only of the family but of global capitalism as well.” (Ibid.: 127).

⁴¹ Hierarchical relations between father and son, husband and wife or older and younger brothers.

In the case of Asian international migration, an analysis of *guanxi* - the manner to maintain relationships or connections between people outside the close family - is a way to understand these changes in structures of Chinese society. Furthermore, these connections all around the world were to their advantage because of economic and political uncertainties and a commitment not strongly attached to the nation. “This turning away from the Confucian social ethics toward a family-centered notion of Confucianism found its greatest expression among overseas-Chinese communities that developed under Western capitalism in Southeast Asia.” (Ibid.: 115) where transnationalism was a part of the colonial and postcolonial western capitalism. The extension of overseas Chinese kept attention on family interests but did not create a real political loyalty. Sending younger relatives to different places all around the world allowed a continuing promotion of *guanxi* in spite of the distance with their country. “Launching family businesses on the edge of empires, Chinese subjects depend on a careful cultivation of *guanxi* and instrumentalist family practices. These habits, attitudes, and norms are not a simple continuation or legacy of some essentialized bundle of “traditional” Chinese traits. *Guanxi* networks in Southeast Asia are historically contingent; they are a kind of (post)colonial habitus, that is, they are the dispositions and practices that emphasize pragmatism, interpersonal dependence, bodily discipline, gender and age hierarchies, and other ethnic-specific modes of social production and reproduction in diaspora and under foreign rule.” (Ibid.: 116). The development of these links overseas reoriented the frame of reference for these Chinese very often involved in business and trades; they became “[...] subjects of global trade rather than [...] loyal subjects of the Chinese motherland.” (Ibid.: 115). “Thus, the *guanxi* institution, as invoked and practiced, is a mix of instrumentalism (fostering flexibility and the mobility of capital and personnel across political borders) and humanism (“helping out” relatives and hometown folk on the mainland).” (Ibid.: 117).

A. Ong points out a very important aspect arguing that “[...] the interweaving, cross-border narratives about Confucian culture and *guanxi* economism in Asia – whether in state pronouncements or in everyday practice – produce a vision of modernity without deracination in opposition to Western modernity.” (Ibid.: 52). *Guanxi* is then an inherent cultural instrument to preserve identity, also for the second generation - the children of my sample - born in Vancouver (32.5%), or who came at a very young age (67.5%). *Guanxi*, in other word, underlies relationships with the country of origin and their inhabitants, and is thus an element of identity.

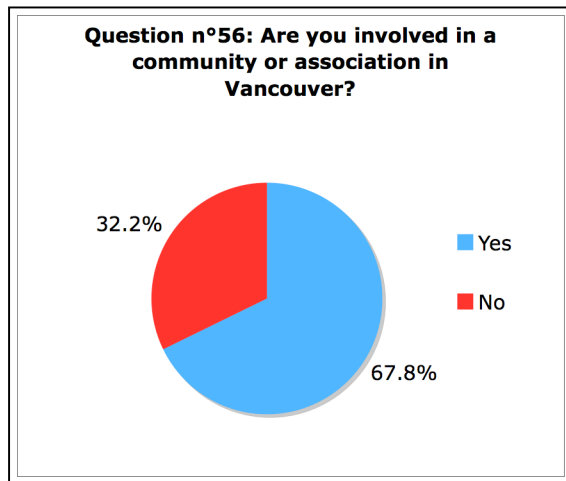


Figure n°11: Graph of the involvement of the children in a community or association (see appendix n°3)

Social cohesion inside communities is also an aspect to take into account. Associative life, very strong in North America for a long time, is a means for migrants to recreate cultural social spaces which suit their identity. According to my interviews, 27 out of 40, or almost 70% of the second generation of Hong Kong migrants, have or held membership in a Chinese Association on the campus of the University of British Columbia (UBC) among other associative groups. They are involved mainly in cultural, social or religious associations. The

main arguments to join the associations were based mostly on cultural identity and meeting other students with the same background. Being involved in an association as a volunteer is also a means to access opportunities and to obtain a better professional position in society. As Portes says, social capital is possible according to certain circumstances whose associative world allows it and it is a source of social control as well.

However, Allen Chun stresses that transnational success may happen because “[...] adaptative practices rather than reliance on Chinese concepts like *guanxi* are the essential traits of Chinese enterprise because, contrary to the way that the authors suggest the distinctness of certain cultural concepts as central to a Chinese mode of production or modernity generally, the pragmatic tendency of Chinese business to operate within local specificity rather than on the basis of accepted legal standards or other modes of “rational organization” is precisely in my opinion the key of their success.” (1998: 1452). This mix of *guanxi* and adaptative context is also present in my sample, as we will see in the next chapters. Hsing, quoted by A. Chun, demonstrates further that “*guanxi* may be a traditional concept, but the key to the success of Taiwanese businessmen is also partly the consequence of local/official discrepancies that prompted them to resort to *guanxi* as an adaptative strategy.” (Id.). Moreover, A. Chun points out that “[i]n Lee’s case, there are clearly Chinese cultural logics, but they adapted to different institutional contexts and social matrices.” (Id.).

So, the cultural logics are the process by which interactions between people were managed in terms of the cultural context. These cultural practices underpin or are included in

a broader whole - social networks - contributing also to shape an environment in which these strategies are used. Cultural logics are the means associated with networks at a broader level.

3.4.2. Social networks

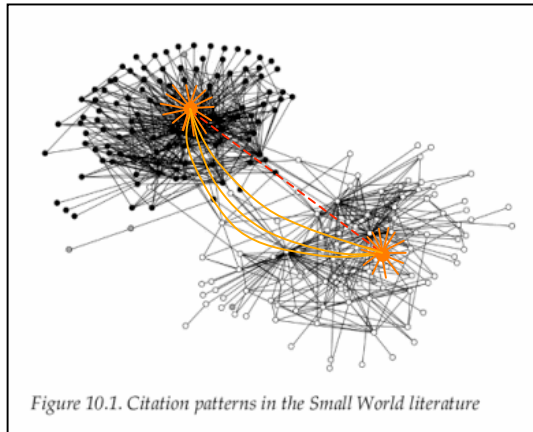


Figure 10.1. Citation patterns in the Small World literature

Figure n°12: diagram about the development of social networks taken on: <http://crookedtimber.org/2005/05/19/isolated-socialnetworkers/> and adapted by the author for the case of individual Transnationalism.

Social networks build and use their bridges, which are generators that make different ways according to various interests: “[t]hese traits [confidence, sociability, cosmopolitanism, and possession of valuable social capital] receive (at least some of) their value through and within specific transnational social networks.” (Waters, 2005: 363). According to M. Castells, power “is diffused in global networks of wealth, power, information, and images, which circulate and transmute in a system of variable geometry and dematerialized geography.” (1996: 359). The idea

of ‘spaceness’ in the background is reoriented by the nature of the interactions, which give it an order and a structure.

In the context of my case study, questions n°12 and n°13 show that 82.5 % of the students of my sample went back to Hong Kong, punctually 4 times in average in their life for visiting family and/or for holidays.

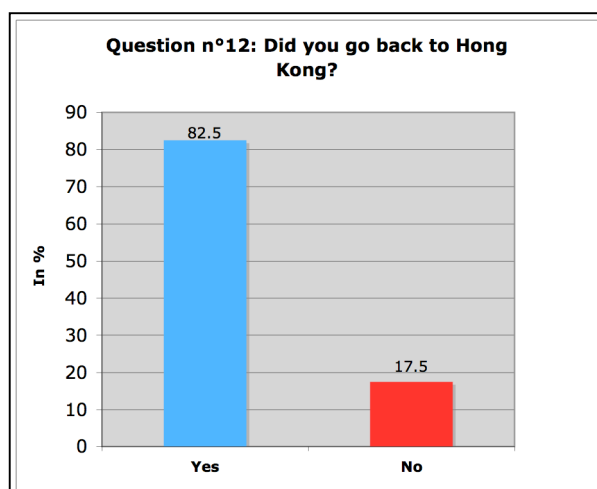


Figure n°13: Graph of the percentage of children being back to Hong Kong (see appendix n°3)

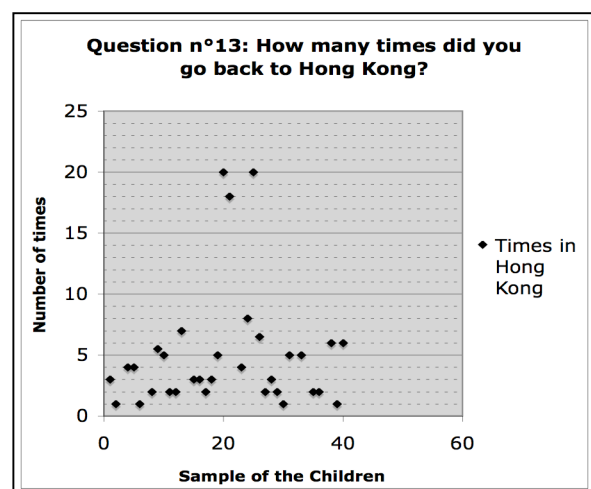


Figure n°14: Graph of the times the children went back to Hong Kong (see appendix n°3)

The interviews demonstrated that Hong Kong is associated with tourism instead of a permanent resident or workplace.

The results of question n°40 are quite amazing considering that the students of my sample were born in Canada (32.5%) or came to Canada at a very young age (67.5%). The survey revealed that 67.5% of these 40 children still had relatives or friends in Hong Kong after having come to Canada. According to the significance of the family as ‘extended’ for Asian people, these results may be biased because of the different cultural conceptions of the ‘family’. But in spite of that, it means that at least two thirds

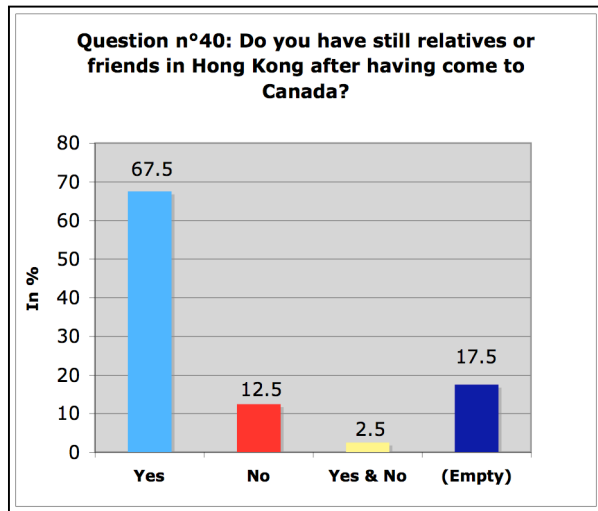


Figure n°15: Graph of the relatives or the friends in Hong Kong when children went to Canada (see appendix n°3)

of my sample know people in their initial country and keep a more or less regular overseas connection with them. These exchanges suggest that mental affective space is broader than material residency area.

A. Portes (1998) also defines the source of social capital according to the support of the family and through it, to extra-familial networks. In this specific case, the second and the third function of A. Portes fit with the empirical data at first glance. Nuances should, however, be provided. Extended networks between family members are incredibly developed even though children were born in Vancouver. It does not mean, however, that these connections are really used. Nor does it explain at what intensity. Question n°41 of the sample about the intensity of contact with relatives or friends in Hong Kong gives very scattered results from once a year to everyday contact. It depends also on the means of this contact, which may vary between phone, email, written letter or face-to-face contact, and which do not have the same effect. But a weak frequency contact does not mean a weak efficiency to built social capital. As Mark Granovetter (1983) points out, weak ties or strong influence of indirect contacts or of relationships in which the content of discussions does not seem to have a fundamental meaning at the first sight, are stronger than expected. The value of ties corresponds to a combination of different factors such as the intensity of contact, its frequency or its nature. Weak ties allow the given individual to keep a margin and to avoid that the other person included in the relationship knows too much about him. However, the results of my sample

seem to fit better with direct and close ties and so, fit better with the theory of A. Portes. However, in spite of various visions about this question, “[...] there are limits to social network support.” (Salaff, 2006: 2, referring to Chu, 1996; Portes, 1998) especially without the sources A. Portes describes in his theory of social capital. Furthermore, social control may be improved due to the variety of ties and the trust it brings. “A central feature of direct ties is their extent of overlap. Two people can share economic, friendship, or kinship roles, and thereby form multiplex networks.” (Ibid.: 4, referring to Granovetter, 1985; Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993). It is then the capacity of networks to extend that brings success to strategic adaptations and the preservation of cultural ties. This theory is confirmed by the previous graphs of the sample.

Another aspect is that “Some draw on the social networks they developed before emigration to connect the new business to transnational networks. Others combine resources in the new country with those of the home country in order to create a business that appeals to the local market. If they do not expand their networks more widely, entrepreneurship remains limited to the ethnic economy.” (Salaff, 2006: 5). Another strategy consists of political commitment as a means of integration. Parallel to associative life, being involved in a political party also enables one to reach a certain power in a given society and even change eventual stereotypes.

All these public activities are part of an active multiculturalism where commitments through various actions are the key to emerge and to gain a hearing. The public recognition pointed out by Charles Taylor is then very important for increasing the value of identities, especially when an identity is perceived differently than expected. As C. Taylor says, “[...] la reconnaissance forge l’identité [...]” (1994: 89).

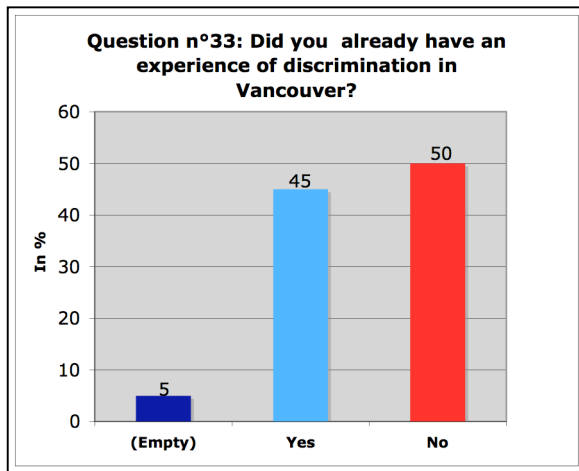


Figure n°16: Graph of the degree of discrimination to the children (see appendix n°3)

According to question n°33, my sample of students is then quite revealing; out of 40 children, although the half of them did not know an experience of discrimination⁴², 45% were discriminated against. The interviews revealed that it happened in the school surroundings and the actors of discrimination were quite young. For example, a Hong Kong family parking their car was shouted to “Go home!” by a ‘Caucasian’ (Interview n°11, Kitty). This is suggestive of what may be said

at home in Canadian families, as well as a feeling of general discomfort in society. Although the results of the sample are quite astonishing in a country where principles of multiculturalism should be broadly integrated, it is interesting to observe that wishes do not always fit with reality. However, these results should be interpreted carefully.

Indeed, question n°52 about the acceptance of culture counterbalances the idea in the previous results. 37 out of 40, or 92.5%, of students felt that ‘Caucasians’ accept their culture. More than tolerance, it is a real acceptation of Otherness and of a different cultural background, even though the feeling of discrimination suggests something else, as we saw in the results of question n°33. Multiculturalism in Canada could therefore be a process of perpetual readjustment towards a social and cultural consensus.

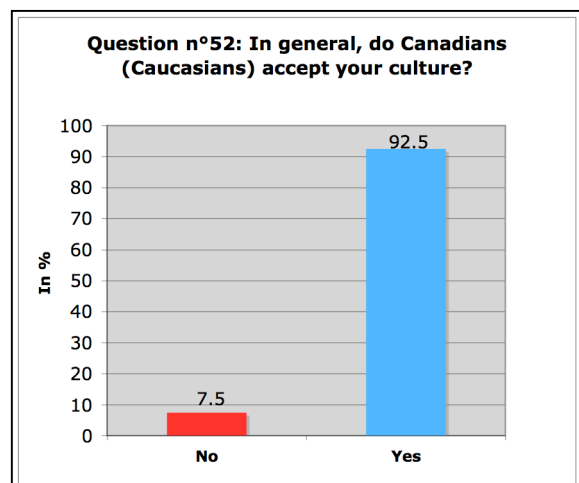


Figure n°17: Graph of the acceptance of the culture of the children (see appendix n°3)

According to S. Vertovec, “[...] multiculturalism depends on a public recognition of communal and cultural rights within a nation-state and [...] transnationalism extends this recognition to communal and cultural rights of affiliation outside of the nation-state” (Satzewich & Wong, 2006: 4) leading to nationality and citizenship. Social networks

⁴² By discrimination, I mean “the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, esp. on the grounds of race, age, or sex” (Dictionary Thesaurus).

combined with cultural logics showed other interesting tendencies. Besides the results of the questionnaires, the interviews refined data. Concerning social networks and social life, question n°3 - ‘Are most of your friends Hong Kongers or do you have friends from different nationalities? Why?’ - the interviews showed a general majority tendency through the following very representative responses for the whole sample: “80 % are Asian... because... yeah, we have the same background... It’s easier to understand and to be understood...” (Interview n°23, Viviane), or such as “More Chinese (giggling)... like 80-90% yeah.. about. yeah... Chinese (no hesitation)... because our culture is like similar, right...” (Interview n°1, Jackie).

The general tendency showed that students tend to be with people in the same situation they live, so with other students of the second generation of Hong Kong migrants. Like Chinese Canada in the 19-20th century, this unique identity is growing because of a selected network focused on similarity and common shared values. In this case of a recent immigration, the second generation seems to keep their Asian initial identity from Hong Kong through the influence of their parents and their contacts with their family and friends there, but they tend to recreate specific cultural social spaces in Vancouver with similar stories of other people. Effects of environment are not trivial concerning the influence it may have on students. The UBC campus has about 43,000 students⁴³ of whom about 36,000 are Undergraduates (Bachelor) and about 8,500 Graduates (Masters and PhD). Besides three quarters of Canadian graduate students (76%), the second majority of graduate students (12%) come from Asia (see appendix n°4). Of course, we should take into account the fact that many students of the second generation of migrants possess Canadian citizenship and represent then a part of this 76% of Canadians on post-graduate studies. Prof. Yu estimated that about 35-40% of all students at UBC are originally from Asia and mostly from China. This aspect unconsciously and consciously also has a strong influence on how social networks are developed considering that the children - students at UBC - spend most of their time on campus. They thus build their relationships in this area and, as a snowball effect, see and perceive their networks in a certain manner. Although there is not only the campus, but the school in the previous times, and other clubs or associations, the campus plays a particular role, because it is quite the most important center for the occurrence of social networks. It has many social spaces such as coffee shops and study rooms, places where contact may happen

⁴³ Statistical data found on the website of the University of British Columbia:
<http://www.pair.ubc.ca/statistics/students/students.htm>

and where weak ties may be strengthened in the long term, while strong ties are also maintained inside a family.

3.4.3. Accumulative capital

Besides cultural logics and social networks, another strategy may be the process of immersing and mastering social capital through cultural behaviours, for example ways of thinking, daily habits, education, appropriate codes and norms. This process needs time and is an accumulative rather than a cumulative phenomenon that would not be gradual. As we saw in 3.3.2., a western education is the first way for a family, and especially for the second generation of migrants, to assimilate social capital in the host country. Supported actively by their family, other factors of social capital such as “Education, degrees, property, and green cards, more than wealth itself, are the cultural capital sought as steps toward being accepted by the host society.” (Ong, 1999: 96). The measure of this accumulation may be calculated according to the degree of integration in the host society. While this integration was quite hard for the parents, their children adapted with less difficulties in general due to their knowledge of the language and their immersion in one Western environment since a young age. Perception by ‘Caucasians’, however, nuances this fact slightly. My sample shows how the students perceive themselves regarding a bicultural identity, how they conceive of the identity of their parents, and questions if a difference may be made between behaviours inside and outside of home.

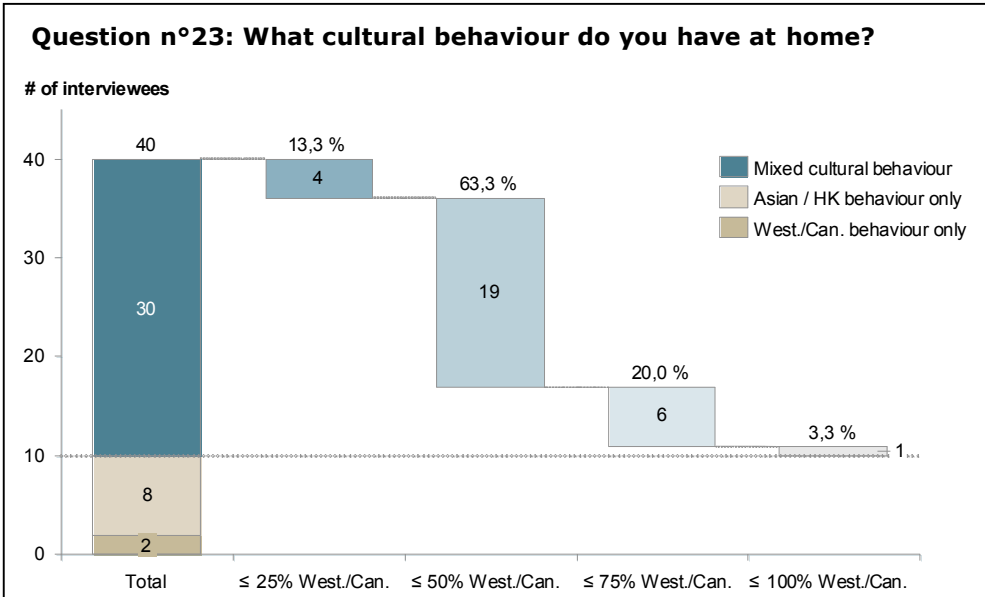


Figure n°18: Graph of cultural behaviour of the children at home (see appendix n°3)

On the graph above, the results of my sample are clear; 2 students out of 40, or 5%, consider themselves as having only Western/Canadian behaviours at home, whereas 8 out of 40 students, or 20%, regard themselves as having only Asian/Hong Kong cultural manners at home. A big majority of students, 30 out of 40, three quarters of the whole sample, take both (Asian/Western) cultural behaviours into account. More interesting is to break these 75% of the sample up into parts to discover that 13.33% of them feel, as if they have $\leq 25\%$ Western/Canadian (West./Can.) behaviour at home, 63.33% $\leq 50\%$ West./Can. behaviour, 20% $\leq 75\%$ West./Can. and 3% $\leq 100\%$ West./Can. The majority of this ‘both’ category is between 25% and 50%: 9 out of 30 of this ‘both’, so 30% feels 50% Asian and 50% Canadian. So, according to this data, the average of Hong Kong students see her-/himself as 40-45% Canadian and 50-55% Asian (approx.) This little tendency to the Asian side can be reinforced by the fact that 8 students out of 40 have totally Asian behaviours at home compared to the remaining 2 out of 40 who feel totally Western.

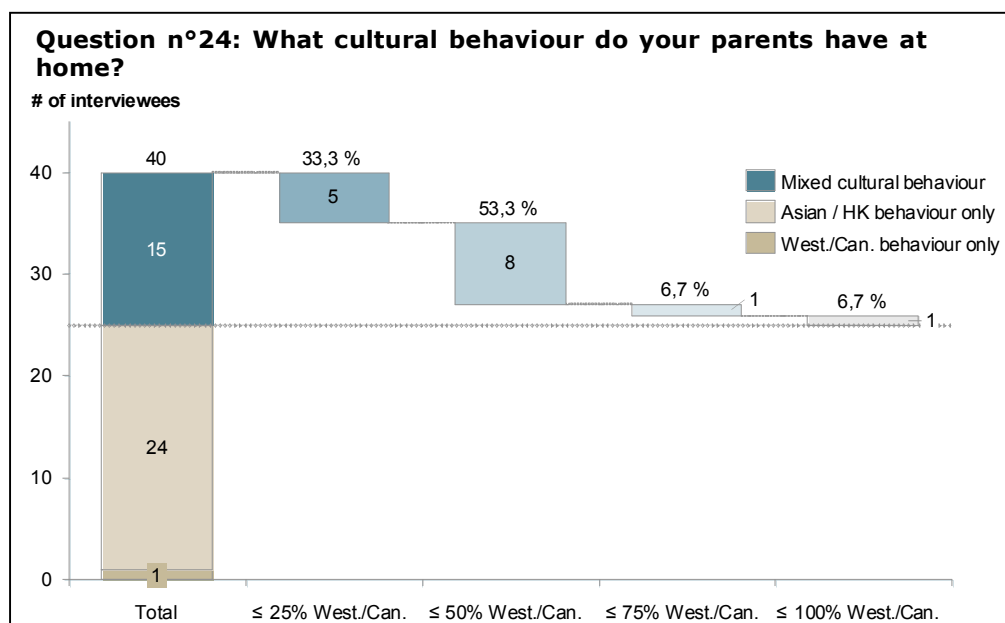


Figure n°19: Graph of cultural behaviour of the parents at home (see appendix n°3)

Question n°24 concerns the perception the children have on the cultural behaviours of their parents. The majority of them, 24 out of 40, or 60% of the whole sample, consider their parents as having exclusively Asian behaviours at home. 15 out of 24, or 37.5% of them have mixed cultural behaviours and, astonishingly, as we should expect to have a higher proportion of mixed behaviours with $\leq 25\%$ Western/Canadian behaviours, the results of the sample

reveal the highest rate of mixed with more than a half of $\leq 50\%$ Western/Canadian behaviours.

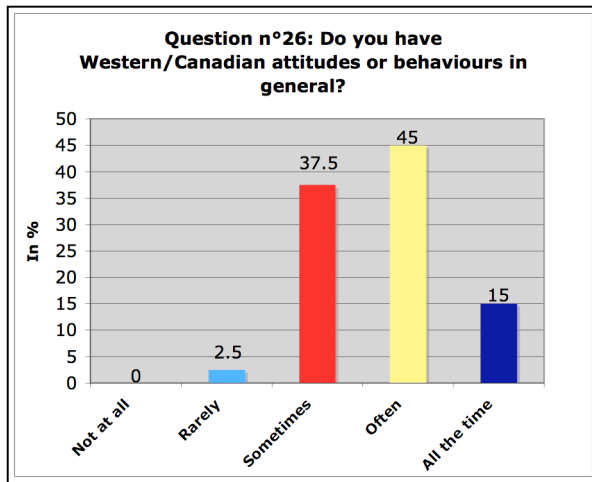


Figure n°20: Graph of Canadian behaviours of the children (see appendix n°3)

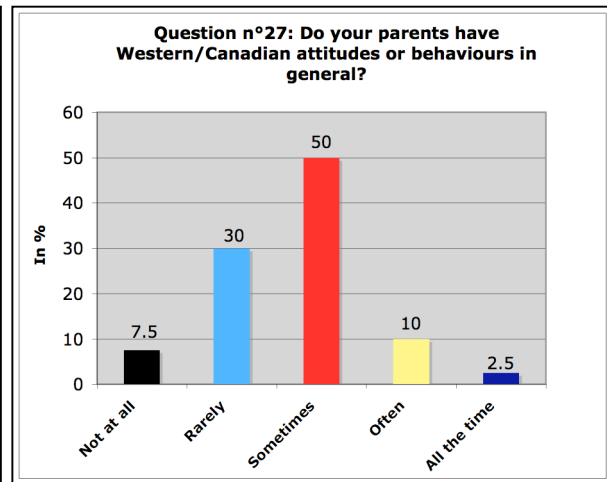


Figure n°21: Graph of Canadian behaviours of the parents (see appendix n°3)

On the two graphs above, the majority of children, 45%, think they often have Western/Canadian behaviours and 37.5% think they have them sometimes. These children observe that 50% of their parents have Western behaviours sometimes and that 30% have them rarely. 7.5% do not have them at all. These results underline the fact that children cultivate the ‘other’ culture more than their parents. This observation would signify that the parents, as the first generation of migrants, have a behaviour close to assimilation while their children feel more integrated: it would indicate that the measure of accumulative capital needs time and at least one generation and to change behaviours and attitudes to have major significance on identity construction.

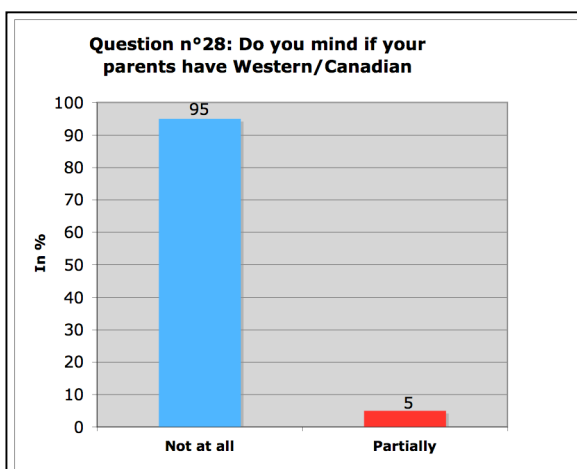


Figure n°22: Graph of the degree of tolerance the children have for their parents about Canadian behaviours (see appendix n°3)

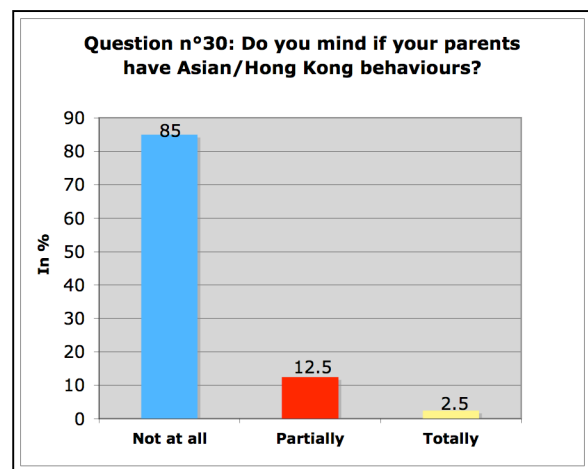


Figure n°23: Graph of the degree of tolerance the children have for their parents about Asian behaviours (see appendix n°3)

The two previous graphs illustrate that a big majority of the 40 students of my sample do not mind that their parents have Asian behaviours in general, which seems normal at first sight. But a minority of 12.5% mind it partially, as question n°31 of the questionnaire asked to explain why, because of the main reason that children think their parents are sometimes too conservative compared to a Western culture regarded as modern, powerful, full of changes and featured by freedom of thinking. According to my interviews, some of students “do not understand” attitudes or behaviours of their parents sometimes. Figure n°22 represents the results of question n°28 about children and their parents having Western behaviour; here clearly, 95% of the students do not mind that their parents have Western/ Canadian attitudes.

Other graphs, as the following ones, may reflect the tendency of the second generation of Hong Kong migrants and the evolution of identity in general.

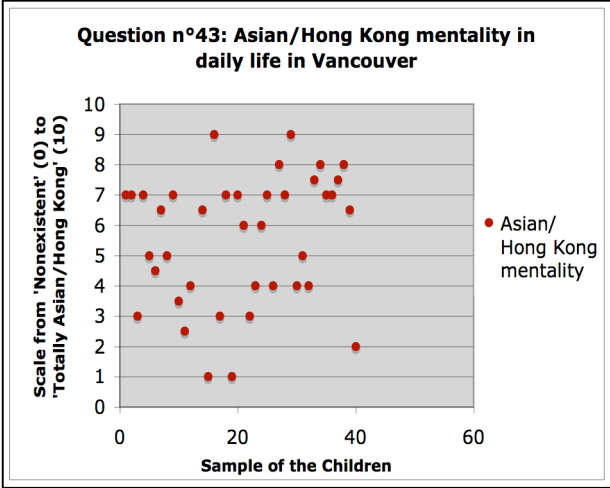


Figure n°24: Graph of Asian/Hong Kong mentality according to the children in daily life (see appendix n°3)

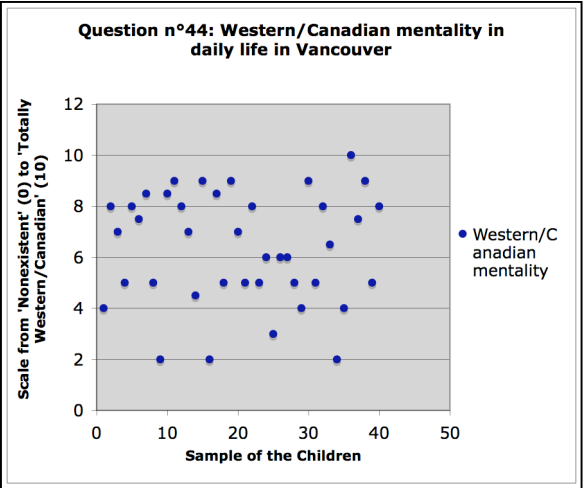


Figure n°25: Graph of Western/Canadian mentality according to the children in daily life (see appendix n°3)

	Question n°43	Question n°44
average	5.564102564	6.41025641
median	6.5	7
standard deviation	2.143470769	2.18810118
variance	4.594466937	4.787786775
covariance	-2.596811308	-2.596811308

Figure n°26: Board of different measures

The second aspect is the tendency to have a concentration on scale 7, from ‘Non-existent’ (0) to ‘Totally Asian/Hong Kong’ (10). The graph of question n°43 reveals an average of 5.56, weighted by 6.5 of the median, which softens extreme values and gives a more exact idea of

Two big tendencies may be observed on the graph depicting question n°43; One between scale 2 and 5 and one between those of 6 and 8. These two concentrations are not excessively conspicuous but may reveal the beginning of a polarization. The

the real tendency of these values. The standard deviation⁴⁴ indicates a spread of values of 2.15, a variance⁴⁵ of 4.6. Although the graph of question n°44 shows that two poles may also be observed; the first one between 7 and 9, and the second one between 4 and 6, from ‘Non-existent’ (0) to ‘Totally Western/Canadian’ (10), the average is 6.41 and the median 7 (out of 10), which means that the feeling of identity is strong at 70%. The standard deviation is almost similar to the one of question n°43 with 2.19 and the variance as well, with 4.79 for question n°44. A negative covariance of 2.6 defines how the two sets of variables represented by questions n°43 and n°44 vary together and this means that the two sets of variables are dependent to 26 % from each other. In other words, the relation between the values of the variable of question n°43 and the variable of question n°44, is weakly dependent from each other. According to these results, it is then very interesting to see that the answers of these two questions did not follow a logical line because the same children answering these questions would consider themselves as 56% Asian and as 64% Canadian on average at the same time. The previous results may be biased because of personal components. Moreover, compared to question n°46, this observation may qualify the answers as emotional instead of rational and demonstrate, at the same time, a vagueness of the definition of cultural identity with an eventual wish to favour one over the other identity of belonging.

Furthermore, by superimposing these two graphs of questions n°43 and n°44, we may observe that the dispersion of the points do not reveal a tendency about the prominence or the importance of cultural frame of reference in identity; it is very variable according to the individuals themselves and collectively as well, although it could be said that more points are concentrated between the scale 6 and 8 but not so significantly.

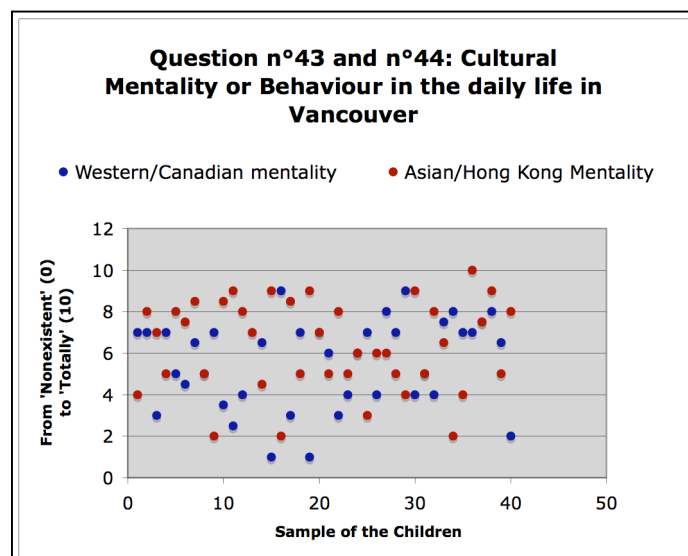
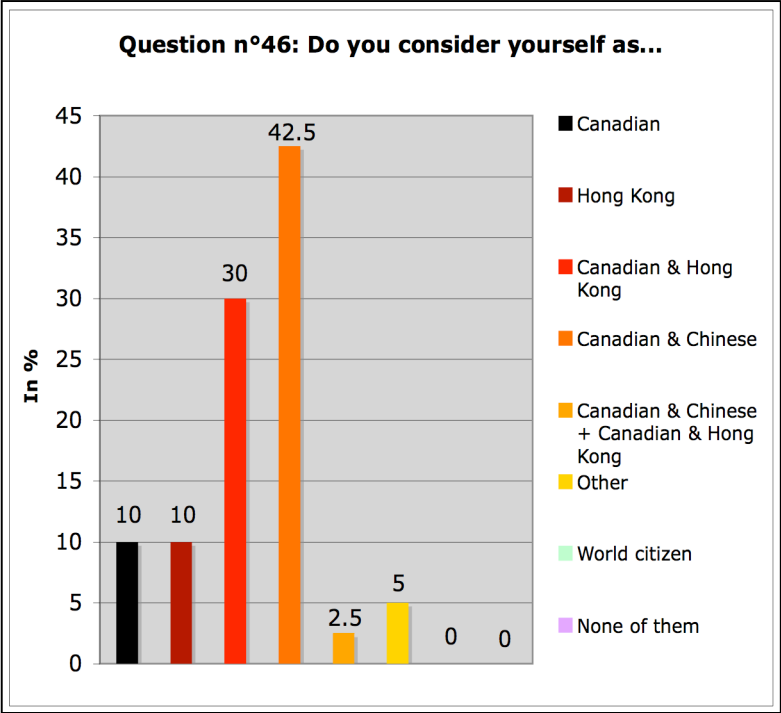


Figure n°27: Superimposed graphs of Asian/Hong Kong and Western/Asian mentalities of the children in daily life in Vancouver (see appendix n°3)

⁴⁴ The standard deviation is defined as the root mean square deviation of values from their arithmetic mean (average).

⁴⁵ The variance, as one measure of statistical dispersion, is the average of the squared differences between data points and the mean (average).

What is significant here is that an impression of ‘being in search of’ identity clearly emerges from the analysis.



Question n°46 shows clear majorities for a bicultural identity in children, with 30% of the sample for Canadian & Hong Kong together and 42.5% Canadian & Chinese. Put together, 72.5% would be biculturally regarded as Western and Asian together, so almost three quarters of the whole sample. The uniqueness of identity reached a small score with 10% Canadian and 10% Hong Kong.

Figure n°28: Graph of the perception of identities (see appendix n°3)

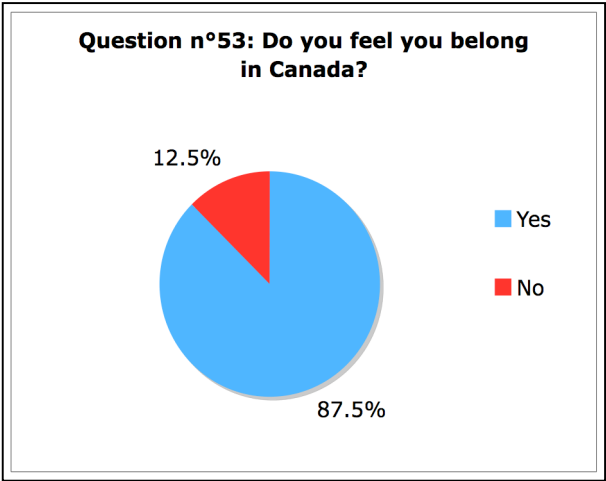


Figure n°29: Graph of the sense of belonging of the children (see appendix n°3)

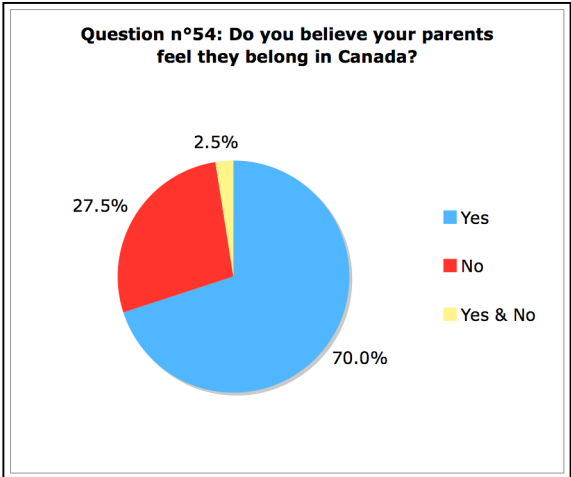


Figure n°30: Graph of the sense of belonging of the parents, seen by the children (see appendix n°3)

Finally, question n°53 demonstrated that 87.5% of my sample of children feel they belong in Canada while 12.5% do not have this feeling. Question n°54 represents the perception the children have of their parents and shows that the majority of them, 70%, believe that their parents feel they belong in Canada while about a quarter think their parents do not belong in Canada.

All these graphs reflect that Hong Kong families seem to have switched their role in a certain way, so that children take responsibilities for the whole family through the skills their parents lack, and try to build a bridge towards the culture of the host country in the management of their overseas life. As I said previously, according to the interviews, children play the role of a ‘buffer’ between their family and their environment outside. The survey shows also that through assimilation, the consequences on integration and identity vary between generations and will define personal ways of life. “[...] immigrants do not arrive as ‘ready-made ethnics’”. Ethnic identification is a sense of belonging that emerges in relation to a complex weave of state and non-state, institutionalized and everyday cultural practices.” (Pratt, 2002: 8, quoting Ong, 1997). But as we saw, assimilation is more open directly to children than to parents; indirect assimilation characterizes them instead. But according to questions n°53 and n°54, their sense of belonging varies and “[...] this notion of cultural citizenship [as a set of cultural practices that demand both the right to a distinctive social space for Latino Americans in the United States, and a sense of belonging within the nation] gives the erroneous impression that cultural identification is self-made. For A. Ong (1997), ideas of belonging and not belonging are produced within complex fields of cultural and economic power.” (Ibid.: 12).

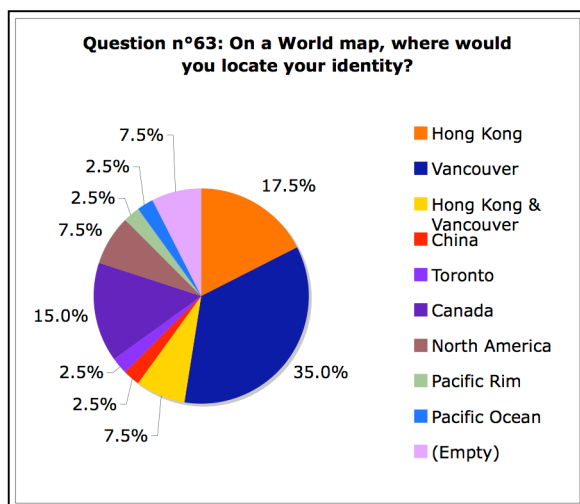


Figure n°31: Graph of the location of identity of the children (detailed) (see appendix n°3)

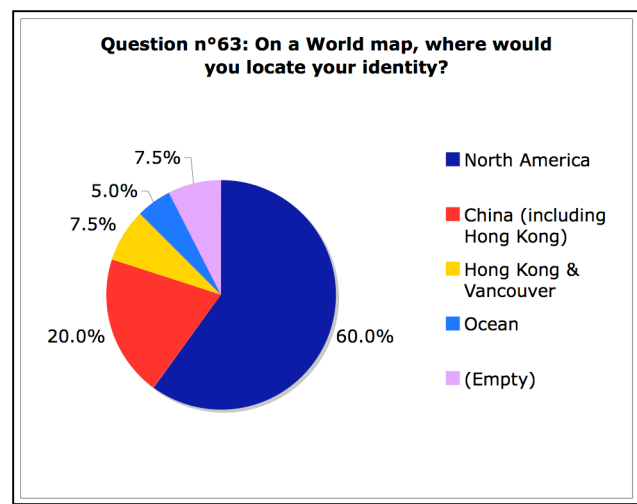


Figure n°32: Graph of the location of identity of the children (see appendix n°3)

The two graphs above demonstrate - in details (on the left of the page) and more broadly (on the right of the page) - where children locate geographically their identity. Globally, a majority of 60% locates it in North America with 35% in Vancouver, 15% in Canada, 2.5% in Toronto and 7.5% in North America. 20% see their identity in China including Hong Kong.

This notion of belonging moves from one place to another, may include more than one location, and is narrowly correlated to the way in which migrants accumulate capital. “As in other Western countries with finance-based immigration, citizenship has become an instrument of flexible accumulation for the nation-state; it is a way for the nation-state to subvert its own regulatory mechanism in order to compete more effectively in the global economy.” (Ong, 1999: 130). Mobility is then very important to be able to adapt to any situation all around the world. “Flexible capital accumulation is dialectically linked to the search for flexible citizenship as a way to escape the regime of state control, either over capital or over citizens.” (Ibid.: 123). Furthermore, besides the consequences of migration, the causes also play an important role and “[...] the effectiveness of their accumulation strategies is conditioned and limited by their racial and social origin. The dissonance between these racialized immigrants and the cultural skills they wish to acquire produces structural limits to the conversion of economic wealth into social prestige.” (Ibid.: 96).

3.4.4. *Embeddedness*

A fourth strategy in the management of transnationalism is the combination of the three described previous means - cultural logics, social networks and assimilation capital. Spatial distances between the family do not alter the links in social relations. Practices are indeed included in multiple spatialities and as M. Granovetter says, economic rationality is embedded within social relationships. Linked to that, a fourth element “[...] concerns the importance of locality – the concept of trans-localities has become increasingly influential, capturing the ways in which trans-migrants are embedded in place, unable to escape their local context despite being ‘transnational’ [...] As D. Ley (2004) reminds us, transnational migrants are not always in the air but must necessarily touch down *somewhere*.” (as cited in Waters & Featherstone & Phillips, 2007: 384).

The sociologist M. Granovetter theoretically defined the notion of embeddedness in the 1980s for social networks in economic relationships. This theory may fit absolutely in a broader level of society, which represents the basis of economic needs and the social structures of an economy.

Embeddedness may be viewed from two perspectives; relational and structural. The relational one concerns “[...] the quality and depth of a single dyadic tie” (Granovetter, 1992: 35) featured by strong ties while the structural one can be defined as “[...] the extent to which a "dyad's mutual contacts are connected to one another". (Id.) where A and B interact

together, and are also connected indirectly with their environment, C, which, in fact, is represented by networks. According to R. Burt (1992), quoted by M. Granovetter, “[t]he more structural embeddedness there is in a network, the more information about each player is known to all the other players and the more constraints there are on each player’s behavior.” (1992: 35). Embeddedness, especially the structural variety, is essential to an understanding and to an awareness of various and complex social mechanisms to build and preserve exchanges. If we add the cultural factor to that, the relationship increases in complexity. Cultural embeddedness underlines that cultural aspects shape economic institutions and the business world and, according to Weber, that economic actions are inspired by norms and values, various beliefs and cultural habits (Huault, 1998). However, M. Granovetter proposes, in our case, a type of embeddedness which is structural and where economic relations are included in continuous and concrete systems of social relations. Interrelations, on the other hand, fit into local levels but also connected with global networks (Id.). This intimate link with economic needs allows for this social conception of human actions to have a frame by which to avoid under- or oversocializing. More than a tool of communication, embeddedness is a means of coordination and of spreading of information, values and norms. Networks form, grow, and increase but should be under control with a normal size to avoid fragmentation of social cohesions if too tight or, on the other hand, should be strong enough to avoid losing those who may provide information⁴⁶. The role of social links in economic activities is fundamental and exchanges that are made on the market bring in trust rather than hierarchical relations. Networks are founded on social forms defined by the sense of belonging, reciprocity of relations and cemented by trust.

Embeddedness is then involved in capital forms and their eventual convertibility. A. Ong (1999) says that symbolic capital is interchangeable with economic capital, according to the idea of P. Bourdieu. However, individual decisions also need to be taken into account and Raymond Boudon (1997), as an individual methodologist, thinks that the limited capacity of individuals to have information, and to make decisions, is related to the position of this individual compared to others. He makes the distinction between functional (process of interaction between social role of individuals) and non functional systems such as interdependency systems.

⁴⁶ Information taken from the website: <http://www.analytictech.com/borgatti/netgov4.htm>

3.5. Implications of (Post-)Transnationalism in Context

Flexibility may have real implications on Hong Kong families such as the starting of certain global behaviours induced by several factors. Besides a change of the structure of the family, Hong Kong had to face other challenges.

3.5.1. Astronaut phenomenon: as flexible as expected?

As said in 3.3.3., investment opportunities were not satisfying for overseas economic migrants. Although the education for children and the quality of life is better in Vancouver, Hong Kong offers better remuneration and allows getting a job at the right level of competence. This aspect is not taken into account in Canada either because of language or because of a gap in the inter-state professional equivalences. The phenomenon of Astronaut families started in the 1980s and was represented usually by the commute of the head of the family - the father or husband - from Canada to his country of origin to earn money for his family, wife and children, who stayed in Vancouver. The term of “[...] ‘astronaut families’” was coined by the Hong Kong mass media to describe contemporary dispersed, middle-class, nuclear families.” (Menene, 2000: 19). This phenomenon is independent of the given culture. It is not unique to overseas Hong Kong families; it may happen to any migrants with a similar newly-triggered family structure (as opposed to ‘cosmonaut’ families, couples without children). “With new modes of travel and communication, familial regimes have become more flexible in both dispersing and localizing members in different parts of the world. Hong Kong papers talk about the business traveler as an “astronaut” who is continually in the air while his wife and children are located in Australia, Canada, or the United States, earning rights of residence.” (Ong, 1999: 127). Historically, however, “[a]stronaut families were first identified among Hong Kong and Taiwanese migrants.” (Menene, 2000: 8) and in general Asian people seem to be more concerned by shuttling.

However, as A. Ong highlights, “[i]n some cases, the flexible logic deprives children of both parents.” (1999: 128). Indeed, the children of these astronaut parents are called “parachute kids” referring to children left with one parent in the host country. They sometimes have also to manage alone, or, if their parents are gone, they may live with an ‘auntie’, who is a part of the family, with official relatives or with a very close friend. Some Australian scholars have made a typology of astronaut families, finding three different kinds in this particular family structure:

“Reluctant astronauts”: families that originally intend to settle permanently in the host country but then change their plans, usually because of difficulties in finding employment or establishing a business. The aim is that one day the returnee will permanently rejoin the family.

“Willing astronauts”: families that intend part of the family to settle permanently in the host country while one or more members continue working or doing business in their country of origin. The astronauts shuttle back and forth to maintain family bonds, but the long-term intention is for the whole family to return to the host country when and if circumstances allow.

“Ambivalent astronauts”: families who intend some members to settle permanently in the host country while other family members return permanently to the country of origin.

Figure n°33: *Typology of Astronaut families, from the article by Menene, 2000: 19.*

The case of overseas Hong Kong families fits with the first category of astronauts; reluctant astronauts. It is very difficult, even impossible, to concretely measure the rate of astronauts in Vancouver. However, the results of my sample reveal a tendency:

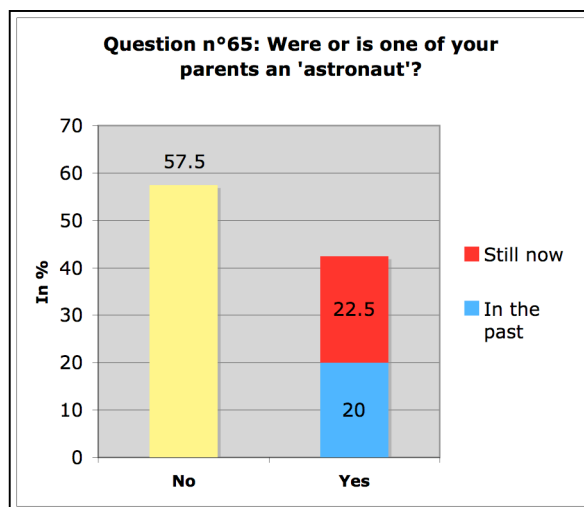


Figure n°34: *Graph of the number of astronaut parents in the sample of children (see appendix n°3)*

57.5% of the 40 students of my sample did not have astronaut parents for several reasons (the main ones were not to be shared by the family). 42.5% have been astronaut parents, the father in general, at least once in their life. Out of 42.5%, 20% are still astronauts now. In other terms, in a period between the 1980s-1990s until now, in 5-15 years, the astronaut phenomenon decreased to almost a half with 22.5% for the Hong Kong migrants of my survey who arrived in Canada in the 1980s-1990s. Today, the Hong Kong

astronaut families based in Vancouver reach 20%. Out of 100% of all astronaut families in the last twenty years, 47% would have gone on still now while 53% of them have stopped comings and goings and are living and working in Canada today. Comparatively, although the situation was different there because amongst other dissuasive means for astronauts families, scholars did the same kind of survey with Hong Kong families in New Zealand ten years ago and found similarities in the results with “reported astronaut families as 25 percent¹⁷, 30

percent¹⁸, 31 percent¹⁹ and 45 percent²⁰ of their samples respectively.” (Menene, 2000: 20). Wherever it happened, the children of astronaut parents grew up with a different perception of reality than other children who spent time with both of their parents their whole life. A. Ong explains that “[f]amilial regimes of dispersal and localization, then, discipline members to make do with very little emotional support; disrupted parental responsibility, strained marital relations, and abandoned children are such common circumstances that they have special terms. When the flexible imperative in family life and citizenship requires a form of isolation and disciplining of women and children that is both critiqued and resisted, claims that the “Confucian affective model” is at the heart of Chinese economic success are challenged. The logic of flexibility expresses the governmentality of transnational capitalism [...]” (1999: 128). The ‘satellite kids’ thus managed this situation with difficulties; besides the fact that for some, “The dissolution of the parent’s marriage just adds more stress to the already pressured lives of “satellite” kids.” (Debby Leung & Allan Cho, Newspaper Perspectives, Jan 2008: 3-4) and that their conception of ‘parents’ is often changed because, if it is not themselves, they only have one person as a reference. Sometimes they also take advantages of this situation, arguing that distance may also improve family relationships and can bring them more proximity to Canadian society. Besides seeing their husband or dad once or twice a year, telecommunication means are the only way to keep regular contact with the family; “For all of the women, the telephone provided a crucial means by which ties between the husband’s life in Asia and the life of the family in Vancouver were maintained.” (Ong, 2003: 225).

As we might observe in section 3.4.2, a big majority of my sample (82.5%) went back to Hong Kong at least once to visit their relatives or for holidays and, as A. Ong points out, “All of the participants had made at least one trip back to Asia with their children since the astronaut arrangement was initiated, and most made several trips throughout the year.” (2003: 225). Their permanent place being Vancouver, “In many ways, “satellite” children can be seen as “cultural bridges” that blend the best of both Chinese and Western culture.” (Debby Leung & Allan Cho, Newspaper Perspectives, Jan 2008: 4).

Ronald Skeldon (1994) refers to astronaut families as a ‘syndrome’ while A. Ong (2003) sees it as a calculated ‘strategy’, decided even before migration to Canada. In order to preserve economic capital in Hong Kong, gain social capital through citizenship and education in Canada and overseas, they were involved more or less directly in two societies which indicate several possible “[...] ethnic loyalties and considerations but which transcend the nation state.” (Menene, 2000: 23). It is also an indirect cause of globalization, since “[...]”

astronaut families could be seen as a recent manifestation of the historical pattern Chinese family dispersal.” (Ibid.: 25). As D. Leung and A. Cho underline it, “[t]he bicultural identity of “satellite” kids successfully reflects Canada’s goal of creating a multicultural society which not only preserves the distinctiveness of the individual, but also blends the best of all worlds into a truly unique cultural identity.” (2008: 4). In this sense, children do not have the same kind of values as their parents, when they migrated. A. Ong emphasizes the fact by saying that “[it] seems to be the case for several of these participants, the ‘satellite’ experience has involved a sense of personal transformation, perhaps related to a newly emerging sense of citizenship, although clearly divorced from the sense of strategy underpinning the initiation of these circumstances.” (2003: 229). Of course, the other part of my sample, which did not have astronaut parents, might have followed the same parallel evolution, although it may be more attached to the initial identity of their parents. The graph below shows a typical representation of an astronaut family:

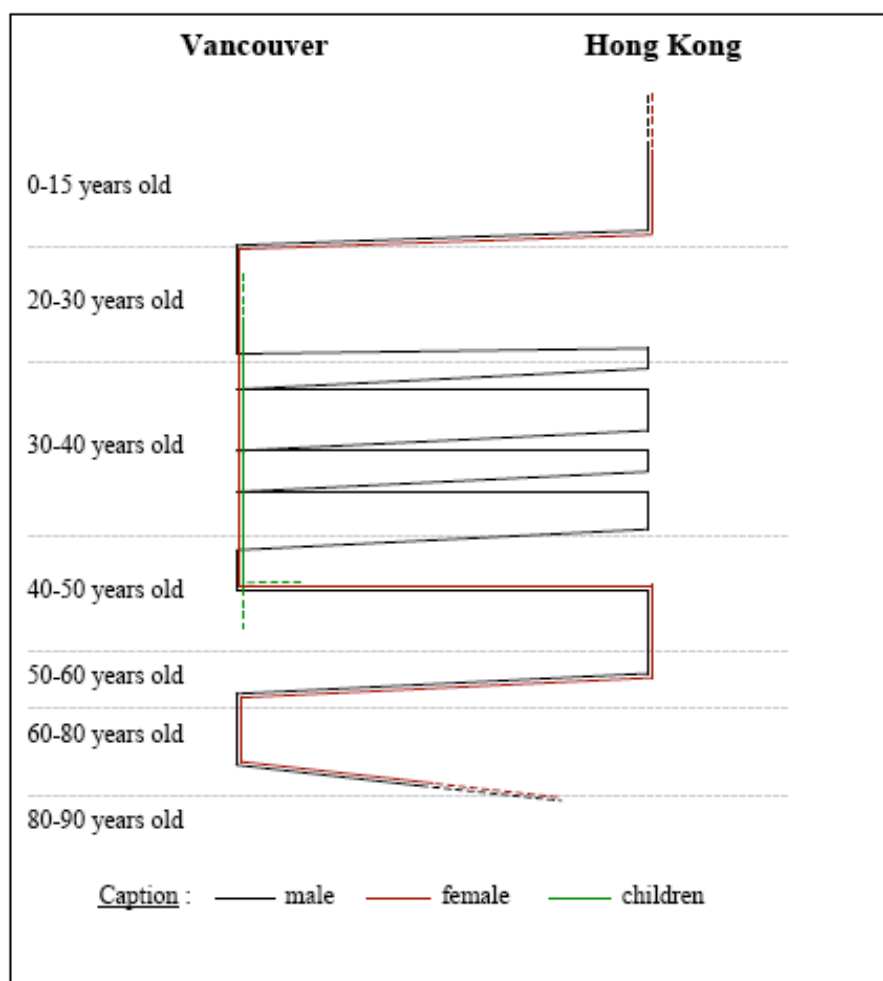


Figure n°35: *General Model of Life Cycle of Migrants Family from Hong Kong, made by the author and based on the article by Ley & Kobayashi ,2005.*

In general, astronaut families do not really have the choice and have to go back to Hong Kong to earn sufficient income. However, some interviewees of the non-astronaut families said that their father decided to stay in Vancouver and work in a less reputable job so as not to leave his family alone in Canada. Considering this kind of argument, to be an astronaut is more of a choice than a real necessity. The main factors deciding it are the problem of equivalence of skills, language, and investment opportunities. However, the consequences of such a choice are sometimes tragic because of affairs, divorces and because of the overbearing pressure of distance on the members of family, especially children.

3.5.2. Successes and defeats of Chinese ambitions in Canadian society

In 1990, a newly arrived immigrant decided to cut two sequoias in front of his property somewhere in Vancouver. After asking him to reconsider his decision without success, Anglo-Canadians started to protest violently against his intention. For them, one of the symbols of the English Empire was attacked. This event occurred like an earthquake in the awareness of cultural differences and revealed a second uneasiness expressed by the duality tradition - modernity. What was at the beginning private property rights became a public issue with collective worries about cultural heritage and its meaning in the future.

In 1921, 80% of the population of Vancouver was itself of British origin. 50 years later, this population was still 53% on average (Ley, 1995). At that time, immigrants started to live in the Vancouver Eastside as well, leaving the Westside architecturally intact with its English style. The representation of cultural objects, such as houses, retaining history was highly symbolic of “[...] old English values, the dreamworld of home.” (Ibid.: 187). Memories of the mother country - England - were indeed materially kept in Vancouver. In 1982, a neighbourhood plan was approved to preserve English features and traditions in the design of homes. Progressively, middle-class and upper-class immigrants became home-owners in the Westside of Vancouver including the areas of Shaughnessy, Kerrisdale and the municipality of Richmond (see appendix n°5). After the annoyance triggered by the building of what were called ‘monster houses’⁴⁷ or ‘mega homes’, the event of the trees caused a new outpouring of claims for the protection of sequoias, regarded as sacred by local people. Reflecting past values, history and a lot of deep meanings for its inhabitants, these trees represented the last

⁴⁷ The new big houses were called ‘monster houses’ by the protesters because of their uncommon building form and their bigger size than the standard local ones.

solid clues and witnesses of a deep-rooted identity of Anglo-Canadians. According to the words of a Scottish couple in Vancouver, “It is, from this standpoint, the end of trees, houses, neighbourhoods, a way of life, an individual - perhaps a national - identity.” (Ibid.: 203). These punctual events marked a shift in the consciousness of biculturalism in Vancouver. At the beginning of the 1990s, Vancouver was not represented by a main identity; multiculturalism became more and more concrete in everyday life, especially with the adoption of Canadian citizenship by newcomers. Asian immigrants flooded into Vancouver as “[...] a newly invented Canada, an alternative elite, a second diaspora of wealthy overseas Chinese [...]” (Ibid.: 189). Several layers of immigrants were and are living in Vancouver amongst a very culturally and socially heterogeneous population; from everywhere, refugees live beside middle-class Canadians, and middle-class and upper-class Chinese families (Gaulfield & Peake, 1996). Business immigrants from Hong Kong introduced these new big houses - in spite of the protection of the neighbourhood plan of 1982 - demonstrating wealth, success and a wished-for modern identity. D. Ley precisely indicates that “[a]t this time there was no consistent ethnic identity associated with new large houses [...]” (1995: 194). Instead, it was a sign of modernity for people coming from a new financial power. This tension⁴⁸ touched especially the concerned district of Shaughnessy and Kerrisdale in Vancouver where an attempt was made at rezoning the area to satisfy protesters of the ‘monster houses’. Besides the fight for the preservation of patrimony, against the rise of real estate prices or “[...] their children [...] raising the standard of education so that others cannot compete” (Bourne & Ley, 1993: 142-143), the other argument was that most of the time, these ‘monster houses’ were empty, bought just as a guarantee of investment, but not really occupied. The debates around houses and trees moved from the initial problem to other broader issues with questions of cultures and citizenship rights. As D. Ley points out, “[...] the nostalgic myth of nurturing English tradition, transposed to a Vancouver of leafy streetscapes and Tudor mansions, is disrupted by a ‘hybrid national narrative’ which presents the double of Anglophilia, its *own other* history of economic liberalism, the chainsaw, and dispossession.” (1995: 204). This case perfectly showed how it is possible join together various ideas, ideas which sometimes do not seemingly have a relation to the initial topic. A local issue may be easily combined with outside questions and causes regardless of a place; and this could be confusing. There are also splits in Canadian society amongst ‘Caucasians’ on this issue depending on various factors such as life experience, cultural origins, social class and gender

⁴⁸ This conflict opposed the neighbourhood organization ‘SHPOA’ of the Anglo-Canadian elite to the South Shaughnessy Property Owners’ Right Committee.

or political opinions (Ley, 1995). These very punctual events concerned more the first generation of Hong Kong migrants than their children and these ‘monster homes’ represented the first stages of a certain “loss of control” (Gaulfield & Peake, 1996: 43) reflected by the strong economic changes in Hong Kong. Question n°33 of the section 3.4.2 revealed, however, that 45%, almost the half of my sample of students, had an experience of discrimination in Vancouver. This percentage is not insignificant, especially when we know that these children grew up in Canada and have a Canadian passport.

Besides some cultural tensions such as those described above, the language barrier is also one of the biggest brakes to integration. As we already saw, the children often play the role of a ‘buffer’ between their parents and their outside home responsibilities.

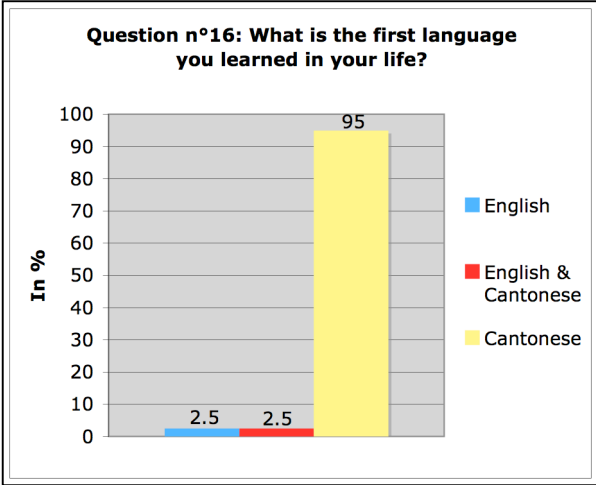


Figure n°36: Graph of the first language learned at school by the children (see appendix n°3)

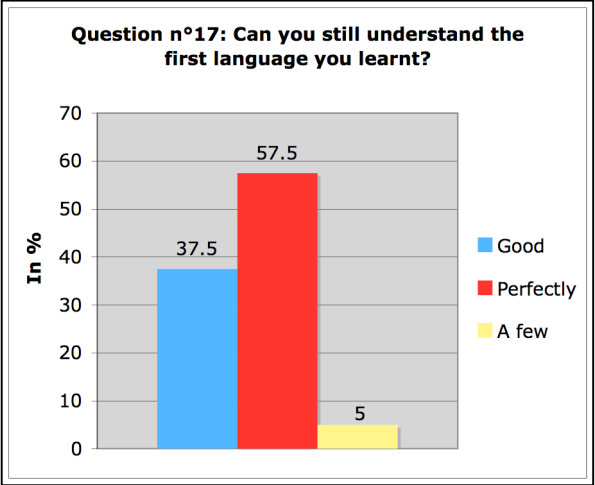


Figure n°37: Graph of the first understood language (see appendix n°3)

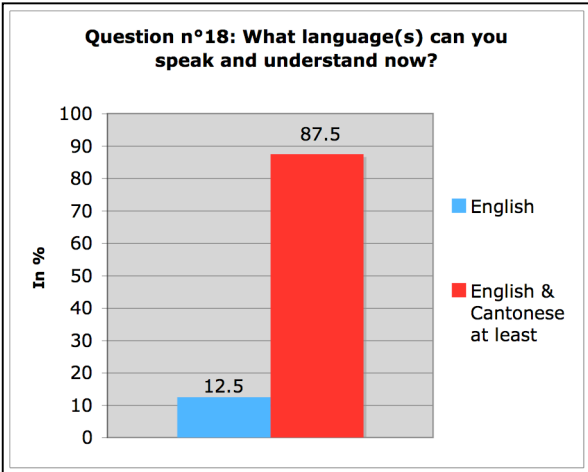


Figure n°38: Graph of the present understood language by the children (see appendix n°3)

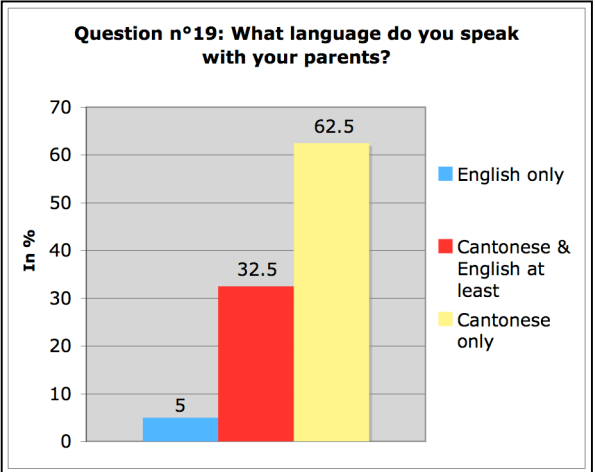


Figure n°39: Graph of the spoken language of the children with their parents (see appendix n°3)

Question n°16 shows that almost the entire sample learned the language of their parents - Cantonese - at first. About 20 years later, 57.5% can still understand it perfectly and 37.5% understand it well. According to the interviews, when they were younger, most of the children had to go to Chinese language school and apparently they did not like it.

According to question n°18, a vast majority of students can speak and understand English and Cantonese equally (even though they were raised in Canada). Question n°19 revealed that 62.5% of students speak only Cantonese with their parents, while 32.5% speak both languages - English and Cantonese - with their parents. However, the dominant language at home is Cantonese. Question n°60 of my sample revealed that for 80% of the students it is important that their parents learn to speak English. We should of course distinguish what belong to geographical scale and what may belongs to generalization scale.

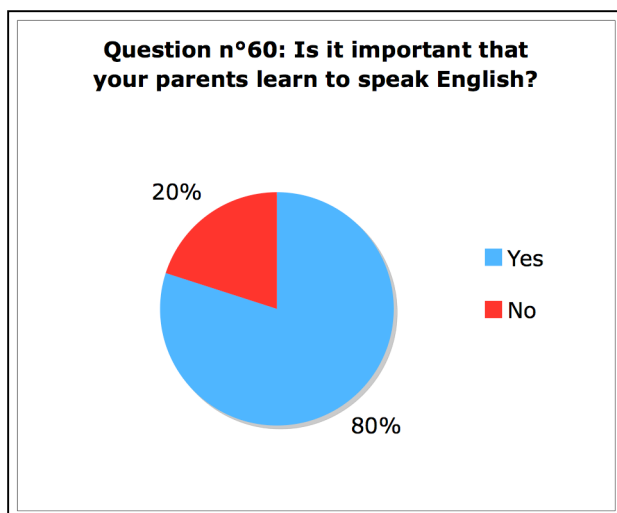


Figure n°40: Graph of the importance the children carry to the learning of English language for their parents (see appendix n°3)

Social reproduction, for the second generation of children, is not a traditional intergenerational one; instead it is a mix between improved social reproduction from their parents and an acculturation to basic ‘Anglo-conformity’ of the host country or, as it were, the country of these children of the second generation of migrants. This bicultural reproduction has several impacts on social reproduction. While “[...] under specific conditions, the cultural capital of a foreign university degree can be converted

into both economic capital (wealth) and social capital (prestige and eligibility for legal citizenship).” (Ong, 1999: 90), is an interchangeable identity possible? The results of the questionnaire seem to suggest an affirmative answer, especially through the similarities or differences of behaviours inside and outside the home. Besides the sometimes hard implications of astronaut families’ life we saw in the previous chapter, the second generation of migrants have the double challenge to manage inside and outside the family. Numerous aspects have to be taken into account sometimes revealing a desire to take it easy but also showing big and deep sufferings inside families.

In the relationship between the parents and the children, it is interesting how children see themselves and see their parents through the followings graphs:

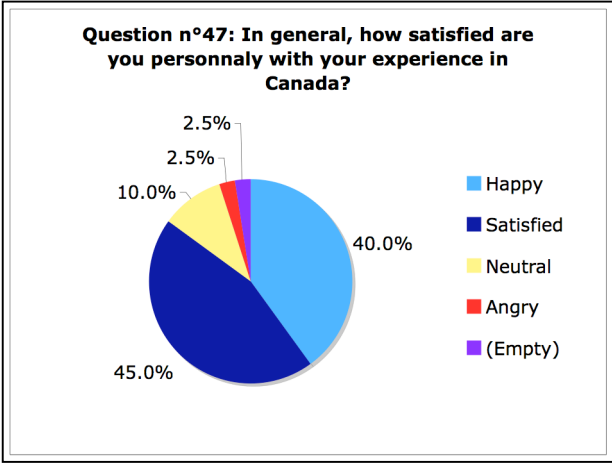


Figure n°41: Graph of the degree of satisfaction of the children in Canada (see appendix n°3)

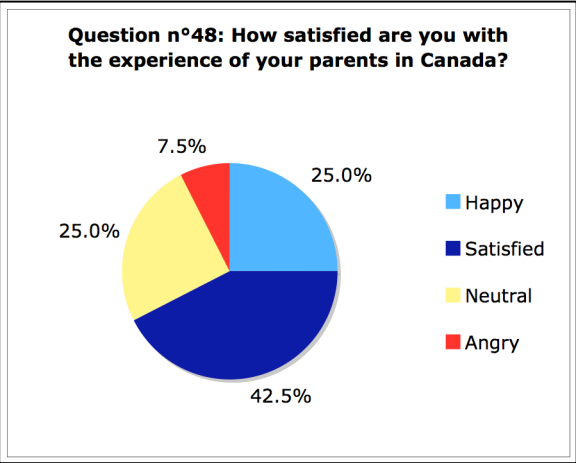


Figure n°42: Graph of the degree of satisfaction of the parents to be in Canada viewed according to their children (see appendix n°3)

Question n°47 shows that 45% of the children are happy with their experience in Canada, and 40% are satisfied. So, on the whole, 85% had a positive experience. Question n°48 asked the children about their parents’ experiences in Canada and revealed the following perceptions: 42.5% of the children are satisfied, and 25% are happy. So, 67.5% have a positive view of the experiences of their parents in Canada. 25% stayed neutral with this question.

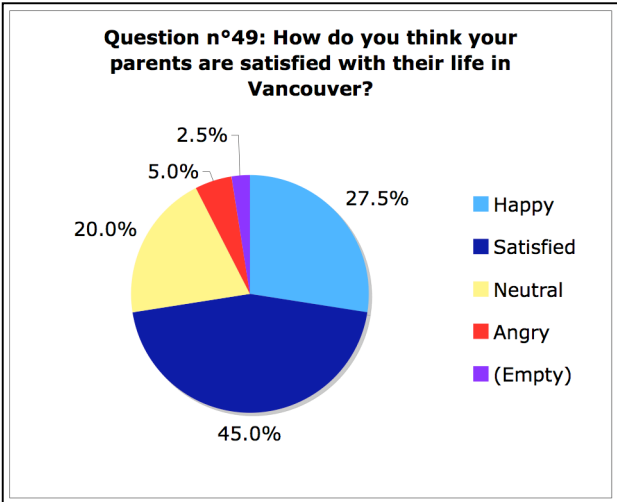


Figure n°43: Graph of the degree of satisfaction of the parents life in Vancouver, viewed according to their children (see appendix n°3)

Question n°49 concerns the perception the children have on their parents and their life in Vancouver: 45% think their parents are satisfied, and 27.5% that they are happy. So together, 72.5% have a positive impression of their parents’ life in Vancouver. 20% stayed neutral and 7.5% of my sample are dissatisfied.

Question n°59 revealed that 60% of the children consider it important that their parents are fully accepted as Canadians. The remaining 40% do not find it an important point.

The sample demonstrated also that 100% of the interviewees agree to say that it is important to accept a wide variety of cultures in Canada (question n°51).

In addition to this previous idea, question n°50 showed that a vast majority, 82.5% of children, think that is it the job of

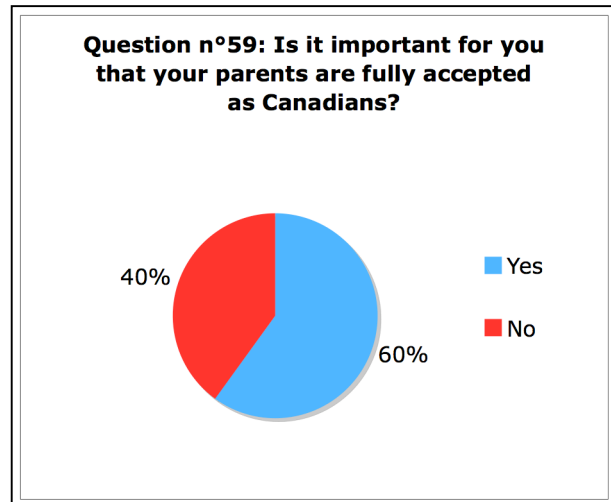


Figure n°44: Graph of the degree of importance the children carry to the acceptance of their parents as Canadians (see appendix n°3)

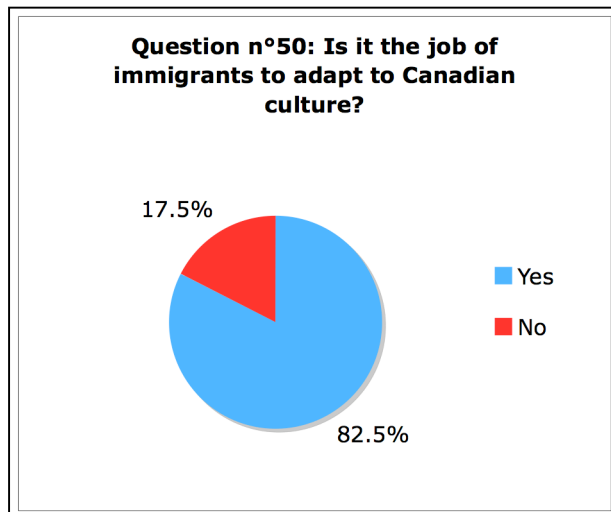


Figure n°45: Graph of the degree acceptance about the adaptation of immigrants to Canadian culture (see appendix n°3)

immigrants to adapt to Canadian culture and 17.5% did not agree with this question.

As we saw, the relationships between parents and children are quite complex. The first and the second generation of Hong Kong immigrants are generally satisfied with their life in Vancouver. When parents have difficulties to adapt because of the language or the mentality, a snowball effect blocks contacts with Caucasians, while the children have more facility lease, because they have mastered the language and the

differences in cultural manners. However, they have cultural reflexes we should not ignore; a vast majority of their friends are the second generation of Hong Kong immigrant families too. Most often, they have contact with people who lived the same situation and mix their communication with them in Cantonese and English. This ‘in-between’ represents a new hybrid identity, a third world including Chinese Anglo-Canadians aspects in one highly mobile entity, that is bilingual and with all-round ‘chameleon’ features such as mimetism.

One of the last questions I asked was about returning to Hong Kong. Question n°61 exposed that almost three quarters of my sample, 70% exactly, would like to go back there. Surprisingly, almost the same proportion of the same questioned people answered in question n°62 that they would like to stay in Vancouver. Of course, we should mention that question

n°61 might be interpreted as a temporary visit more than as permanent residency, which could explain the seeming contradiction in question n°62.

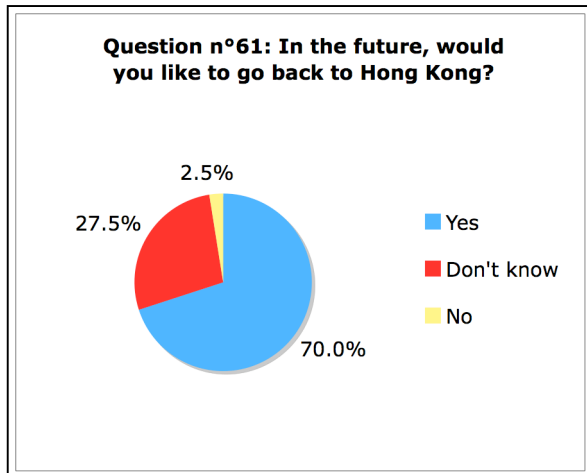


Figure n°46: Graph of the eventual going back to Hong Kong (see appendix n°3)

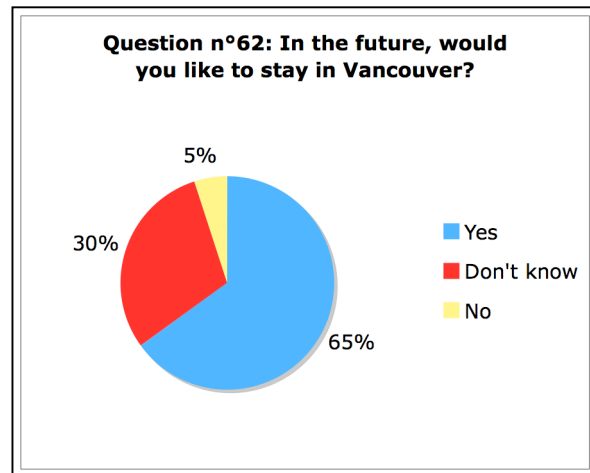


Figure n°47: Graph of the eventual permanent stay in Vancouver (see appendix n°3)

According to theoretical research, many Hong Kong immigrants of the 1980s would like, after an ‘astronaut’ lifestyle or a temporary return to Hong Kong for work, to live in Canada for retirement. According to the scheme of astronaut life cycle depicted in the section 3.5.1, these immigrants would also like to spend the rest of their life in Vancouver, but die in Hong Kong. What about the children of these immigrants? The interviews showed that some would like to work in Hong Kong to earn more money and to have a more exciting life, and some would like to stay in Canada after their studies, and spend certainly their retirement in Canada. The main argument to return to Asia, in other words, would be for work and financial advantages. Staying in Canada would allow them to enjoy the quality of life and other stable features of the country.

In conclusion, the analysis of this chapter was composed of five sections. Firstly, the presentation of the case study including the method employed for the survey. Secondly, historical aspects of transnationalism in a specific context were presented to better frame the topic and its surrounding components. Thirdly, our interest carried on transnational factors as reasons to start with transnationalism. Fourthly, strategies of this process of transnationalism and its management were analyzed, to complete fifthly it with the consequences of post-transnationalism and its implications on Hong Kong families. This analysis provides many various elements to open a discussion and to assess the results of the case study.

4. Discussion & Assessment

4.1. Main Findings on the Children's Side

4.1.1. Managing the third space: a duplicate hybridity?

4.1.2. The challenge of integration: sacrifices and compromises

4.2. From National Identities to Universalism

4.2.1. Hybrid identity as a result of an economic dimension of culture?

4.2.2. Transnationalism as the end of national identities?

4.3. Improvements & Readjustments

4. DISCUSSION & ASSESSMENT

The fourth chapter ‘Discussion & Assessment’ is composed of three main parts; firstly, the findings on the children’s side will be interpreted through different technical aspects about hybrid identity and through the results of the previous chapter about the analysis of the case study, taking into account lateral relations. Secondly, the theoretical part of chapter 2 will be matched with chapter 3 to open a fundamental discussion on hybridity and the role of culture, the very expression of identity. Thirdly, improvements and readjustments of this research will be proposed, especially concerning the case study and the methods used to analyze it.

4.1. Main Findings on the Children’s Side

According to my sample and other surveys and articles on the same topic, some key aspects may be found. Main historical aspects and an inventory of fixtures enable us to focus on fundamental features of the post-transnationalism process and the impacts on the second generation of Hong Kongers in Vancouver whose identity has multiplied.

4.1.1. Managing the third space: a duplicate hybridity?

I would like to reuse the notion of ‘third space’ employed by H. K. Bhabha (1994) and J. Rutherford (1990) on the question of hybridity and readjust it to fit our case study in order to define the hybridity of the children in my sample. In his theory of cultural differences, H. K. Bhabha explains that the ‘third space’ is changing, mutable, in an in-between of two cultures. For him, hybridity is a process based on the relation dominant - dominated, especially in a context of postcolonialism. Indeed, H. K. Bhabha locates hybridity separately from the other related cultures in an undefined place including historical, hierarchical and cultural aspects, structures and practices (Bhabha 1994; Bhabha 1996). However, the idea that “all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity” (Rutherford, 1990: 211) should be integrated showing that all identities are not static and should be interpreted in relation to each other. The idea of a third space comes from the idea of an ‘inbetweenness’ given by the notion of hybridity. Moreover, J. Rutherford adds that “[...] the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity [...] is the ‘third space’, which enables other positions to emerge.” (Id.). In other words, it means that a double sense of belonging, whose specific features are linked to one culture or another, leads

to the creation of another kind of identity which would be defined more as a new state of mind detached from a direct referred tie to nations.

I would like to define the second generation of Hong Kong migrants of 1980s-1990s according to this point of view because, as we saw in the survey, although this group is more or less linked to the Chinese culture as the ones of the host country, it has its own specificities and should be firstly included in what H. K. Bhabha called 'third space'. The latter demonstrates a certain number of features such as a large flexibility of movement and of adaptation (historical aspects playing a very important role as well) and illustrates polyvalence where cultural meanings and representations move according to circumstances and situations. As H. K. Bhabha (1994) points out, this third hybrid space has no inherent unity or established definition, except that, according to our observations, it appeared from national identities and includes components of universalism as well. As Robert Young shows, "[t]here is no single, or correct, concept of hybridity: it changes as it repeats, but it also repeats as it changes." (1995: 27) Nevertheless, hybridity is something constructive, innovative and comes on top of sets of identity today, because it has definitely emerged by and for practical or materialistic purposes. As K. Mitchell mentions, the third space is a special basis "[...] in literal motion inbetween nations or outside of proscribed, static cultural locations become vaunted as the potential locus of cultural understandings that resist hegemonic norms of both race and nation." (Mitchell, 1997). As for the social capital identified by R. Putnam, where networks act as cement between people, this third space represents technically a 'buffer' and a bridge between cultures and becomes an entity in itself. The latter allows mediating and coordinating cultural differences as an immaterial area of adjustments, where cultural features of people are reduced to a common denominator often based on an occidental pattern way of thinking.

The third space has, in fact, a lot of different kinds of hybridity, insert initial aspects have been revealed by the specific case study. Following the idea of Quentin Lee, K. Mitchell emphasizes that Hong Kong - the perfect hybrid subject according to Lee because of its history and his colonial past - should manage a double situation: "Translation and mimicry produce a new hybridized subjectivity and culture which are precisely those of Hong Kong people. The role of Hong Kong intellectuals is to represent such a subjectivity and culture, and their ambivalence, in order to deconstruct the illusion of cultural purity that many Hong Kong people still cling to: either the dead tradition of Great China, or the blind worship of

Western civilization (1994: 19)". By this announcement, Q. Lee affirms that even before their migration to Canada, Hong Kongers were already 'hybrid' because of this specificity of Hong Kong that was discussed previously. The migrants of the 1980s-1990s seemed to keep their Chinese identity more apparent than the British one, even though they knew British colonialism in Hong Kong and that Canada kept large aspects of 'Britishness'. Their children felt, unconsciously or not, in a new kind of colonialism, a reverse one, being born, or arriving at an early age in an Anglophone country, also subjected to the British Empire until its entry to the Canadian Confederation in 1871. However, migrating to Canada, they did not find many aspects they knew before in Hong Kong because under the British Empire, which was only a political fact, daily life and mentality was more 'Chinese' than 'British' and it did not change before and after 1997 according to our interviews. The only changes - except at a political level - seemed because of economic growth. Clearly, this economic modernity tends to go necessarily with 'Western' culture. This perception, known by the parents and more or less unknown by their children according to their temporary travels there and their education, gave a particular tone to this case of trans-pacific transnationalism.

They were hybrid subjects because of the economic migration of their parents from Hong Kong to Canada. Q. Lee depicts Hong Kong as '*inbetween*' China and the West, without a real cultural identity as the other countries. Furthermore, according to Q. Lee (1994), capital accumulation is undoubtedly favoured by the situation of this "third space" in Hong Kong. Finally, this first kind of hybridity, which is mostly theoretical because most Hong Kongers cultivate more their 'Chineseness' than an English culture (according to one of the interviews with young man whose parents are Hong Kongers) should be interpreted together with another cultural difference ('post-migratorily' speaking) the Canadian one, which is a part of the background I talked about before. Resisting the changes and the potential influence of Anglophilia on the parents who lived in Hong Kong, their children, whose parents kept their 'Chineseness', encountered in fact an new almost similar situation and recreated another binary situation with their own hybridity from the 'Chineseness' of their parents with a multicultural 'Canadianness' where Chinese existed before. Finally, national identities would partially allow the development of hybridity towards universal identity.

Hybridity is also built by accumulation of all forms of capital through life experiences. Portes three functions of social capital - "(a) as a source of social control; (b) as a source of family support; (c) as a source of benefits through extrafamilial networks" (Portes, 1998: 9)

fit appropriately with the situation of the children, as was seen in the analysis of chapter 3. These factors combined with the three concepts of identity, perception and social capital, provide a clearer context and make it easier to answer the main questions of this study.

As Mitchell points out, “[a]cculturation was promoted through a series of lecture, videos, and pamphlets that emphasized the essential character of Canadianness and the necessity for immigrants to understand and assimilate that character” (2004: 111), but the reality was not as simple and, because of the questions of perception, I partially agree with the fact that “[t]he message of assimilating the cultural values of the host society was fairly straightforward; it was possible [...] to be both Canadian and Chinese through a strategic manipulation of cultural citizenship and the meanings of multiculturalism.” (Ibid.: 116). This duplicate sense of belonging “[...] based on degree of assimilation” (Ibid.: 196) exists, but this ‘biculturality’ is not equal in time and place; it depends on personal experiences, on past and present situations, which begin identity formation and are continually present as it develops. However, as question n°53 showed, 87.5% of children feel they belong to Canada. This ‘biculturality’ progressively changed to a hybrid identity with its own features.

The influence of the parents on the identity of their children has to be taken into account because it is an ideal breeding ground to locate premises, which will importantly shape identity. So, as described in the chapter 3, the phenomenon of hybridity is highly prevalent and always adapted according to situations such as outside or inside the home. In the present case study, children are imbued with the background and the migratory history of their parents, at least until their teenage years. Always keeping this aspect in mind and even though a majority of children stay at their parents’ house until their marriage, the children, at the end of their adolescence, gain the upper hand on their parents, not only because of the age relation but also culturally. Their complete mixed culture, their own culture is established step by step and finally dominates the scene at home because it is more flexible between the two initial cultures - Asian and Western - than the fragmented one of the parents. The relative management of cultures is then better carried out by and through the children, bathed in it and always balanced between the two. An element to underscore is that these children are not disaffiliated like other cultural models of migrant families. On the contrary, as A. Portes sustains a continuous affiliation beyond borders, where family supports relatives from the initial country and from the host country. Furthermore, extra-familial networks involving not

only biological family but also close friends - the most often migrants in the same situation - help children with housing and education.

4.1.2. The challenge of integration: sacrifices and compromises

In our case study, several key ideas may be drawn: first of all, the idea of space of living is based on interactions between different levels; spaceness integrates the notion of movements with identity constantly in flux. The notion of movement in space and territorial identity is obvious in the variety of the results of question n°63, even if more than half of the sample, 60%, clearly identifies with the North American continent. As a result, Hong Kong is perceived as a place for passing through, for visiting family or for short-term tourism. This was seen in the results of question n°61. Does this geographical identification tally with affective and mental components of identity? The reason behind the previous statement is related to a second phenomenon.

This second important line is that the sample of children revealed a personal wish to commit to and take part in Canadian life and interests, realized through associations, language and education, and social and cultural activities. All these components are used as tools for integration. The game of representations is carried through “[...] la sémiosphère canadienne [...]” (Racine, 1992: 250) and as an “[...] espace habité non seulement par le corps mais par l’esprit” (Id.). The hetero- and auto- types of representation, as well as other extrinsic factors prevented them from feeling a real mental sense of belonging. The phenomenon of biculturalism is rapidly changing and evolving: it clearly seems that the second generation of Hong Kong migrants would like to belong to the Western world of ways of life. To go further, I would say even that they would like to be Western and to belong to what dominates the international and economic scene - to be recognized and take part of the first power of the world. At the same time, this feeling of not belonging to a certain Western elite is also modified by criticism: their frustrations or objectivity lead them to say that they are also proud of their initial identity, especially today with the Asian world experiencing an economic boom. Can we really speak about sacrifices or compromises? What we can certainly say is that although unquestionably influenced by extrinsic factors, their way of thinking is ultimately a product of individual choice. R. Boudon (1997) supports this notion with his theory of action and his concept of intentionality. Whatever the reasons behind choices, a large majority of children are happy (40%) or satisfied (45%) with their personal Canadian life (question n°47). This suggests that transnationalism would then be determined by the

sociology of individual actions more than by the sociology of a collective dynamic where sacrifices and compromises are mixed in connection with various private situations. This leads to the questions: what about the impacts of administrative and social life?

The third integrative aspect has frequently appeared in question n°15 of the survey, where more than three quarters, 85% of the sample, possess Canadian citizenship at least (37.5% Canadian only; 47.5% Canadian and HK). These results would mean that formal identity is recognized, on one hand, as a guarantee of life and, on the other hand, as an official way for direct formal integration and as a way for progressive informal integration. The previous observation leads to a fundamental question: does this formal sense of belonging square with cultural behaviours in daily life and then with informal identity? The answer to the previous question will depend on the final idea of identity given by a comparison between behaviours - real facts or objective observation, and sense of belonging - including representation and subjective feelings.

First of all, concerning behaviours, question n°26 proves that 37.5% of children said they have Western/Canadian behaviours 'sometimes', 45% of them have them 'often' and 15% 'all the time'. The results of questions n°43 and n°44 are too random to give a clear tendency which will allow taking it into account in the comparison. As viewed in chapter 3, three quarters of the children are living with their parents (question n°9). Apropos to the cultural behaviours of the children at home and outside the home, question n°23 revealed that a big majority of students, 30 out of 40 (three quarters of the whole sample) take both (Asian/Western) cultural behaviours into account. The children mix their identity at home between the Canadian and the Asian ones and their parents balance it to keep key aspects of their cultural roots. The study case has clearly shown that 72.5% of the sample feel bicultural, Western and Asian together. Furthermore, question n°53 emphasizes the sense of belonging to Canada with 87.5%.

The entirety of the data may be used to demonstrate the relevancy of the results between each other; globally, the sense of belonging fits with behaviours in the construction of a personal cultural identity. The latter is emphasized in children who convey the dynamic of transnationalism through a 'settling' hybridity compared to the 'survival' hybridity of their parents. The hybrid identity of the children shows the nature of hybridity itself and its flexibility and adaptability features. Questions n°28, n°50, n°59 and n°60 prove also that a majority of children wish that their parents would switch from this 'survival' hybrid identity to a 'settling' one. Moreover, accumulation and combination of all forms of capital may help

them for integration through the features of this evolving identity, interconnected and combined with various strategies, bringing a spiral of synergies carried by embeddedness.

As a puzzle in continual rearrangement, hybrid identities are a progressive phenomenon. This was apparent in the families of astronauts with their satellite kids (section 3.5.1). The survey demonstrated that after a period of comings and goings of family men, more than a half of them, 53%, tended to choose Vancouver as permanent work place, staying with their family in the same location. Multicultural society in Canada seems to be successful due to the component of modernity, which does not stem from the classical view of culture based on historical facts and traditions. Above all, it is based on multicultural society and its future. This phenomenon, noticed through the answers of the questionnaires, showed that the three types of social capital of A. Portes, dual concepts of representations, basic concept of identity as continuously changing and plural according to geographical and mental aspects, are big extrinsic and material keys to help making a decision, which finally will be done with the other sphere of thinking represented by intrinsic and essential notions of individualism founded on the deepest nature of individuals. In fact, “[...] le sociologue s’interroge sur les actions (ou réactions) des individus (c’est-à-dire des personnes ou groupes dotés d’institutions de décisions collectives) appartenant au système d’interaction qu’il s’est donné pour objet.” (Boudon, 1997: 82). In other words, all decisions are made by individuals but included in a large collective whole through the complex embeddedness of all previous strategies: cultural logics, social networks and assimilation capital, which ultimately give order and meaning to identities and especially hybrid ones.

As we described in section 2.1.1, factors such as intentions, social networks and skills are fundamental for integration. J.-B. Racine underlined the importance that “[...] the participation of individuals in a multitude of networks that defines the intensity and the form of social ties” (Schnell & Ostendorf, 2002: 73) play in the acceptance of difference, synonymous of mutual adaptations going sometimes through assimilations involving compromises and even sacrifices. However, we cannot generalize this process of acceptance because almost the totality of students I questioned very often adopts a sort of ghettoization in daily life. As I described in sections 3.2.1 and 2.5.2, these students were frequently accused of raising the level of academic success at university and making it difficult for other students difficult to compete with them. This seemed to gather people in the same past situation; as was observed and confirmed through the interviews. A large majority of students have spent most of their time with Asian friends, whose parents came also from Hong Kong to Vancouver in the 1980s-1990s. This configuration can then be regarded as a contrasting

combination, in which this form of academic ghettoization is conjugated with academic success, a symbol of the construction of a hybrid social space. But how does the language play a part in this social specific space?

People speak Cantonese most of the time in Canada, but on the academic or professional level, English is a means of material success. Q. Lee (1994) speaks about 'Chinglish' and points out the importance of the language not only as a means of communication, but also as a factor of impregnation of the culture corresponding to its language. In the situation of the migration of Hong Kongers to Canada, the language had in general a less significant influence on the first generation of migrants. However, it is generally the second generation who started to speak English at a very young age, and who also assimilated the culture behind the words. Question n°18 revealed that a great majority of students, 87.5%, are bilingual in English and Cantonese.

According to the interviews, a number of parents sent their children to Chinese school when they were younger to preserve the Cantonese language, since the children already spoke English at public school. The language is a vehicle of choice to integrate into another culture. In other words, it is a tool for capital accumulation and the building of social capital as well. However, it should be noted that there is a double challenge for the children: keeping their initial identity by the wish of their parents and of themselves through the Cantonese language and other forms of cultural specificities (such as the food habits), and also to be involved in the culture of the host country (host for the parents but own country for their children) to be integrated and find a job through the knowledge of English language and with all its aspects. It is interesting to notice that children also have wishes for their parents to be better integrated in terms of the English language, as seen in question n°60 (section 3.5.2). All these observations show us how important language is as a means for social interaction and integration.

4.2. From National Identities to Universalism

The second part of the discussion consists of getting to the root of the 'problem'. What is really happening to identities through this phenomenon of transnationalism? Is hybridity necessarily a simple mix between two different cultures? The following sections serve to remind and give an overview of the situation. Various questions about the impacts of identity and international migration will be discussed in relation to the case study. The very nature of hybridity, moreover, will be looked at through the lens of current day culture.

4.2.1. Hybrid identity as a result of an economic dimension of culture?

The notion of ‘in-betweenness’ is in the core of this research. Not regarded as a duality at all, hybridity may be linked to the notion of interstices of A. Piette quoted by J.-B. Racine & M. Marengo, as we saw in the conceptual framework of chapter 2. Three types of interstices are concerned: the ‘full’ one admitting in an own place the Other to a certain distance, the ‘empty’ one represented by a neutral space featuring no collective communication, or the ‘transparent’ interstice which allows the coexistence of heterogeneous components to develop it as an essential resource of the place. In our case, the transparent interstice gives the right to anyone to belong to the place s/he is living and to integrate a multi- and intercultural society. According to J.-B. Racine, quoting A. Piette, this “place of full translation and transposition between different cultural codes, makes us of the coexistence of these heterogeneous elements that one is striving to promote so that they become the essential resource of the area” (Schnell & Ostendorf, 2002: 74). Here interculturality goes beyond the notion of pluriculturality because of interactions it generates. Is this theoretical wish lived and perceived? As J.-B. Racine and M. Marengo pointed out, the “marquage spatial” (1998: 44) (spatial marking) constitutes a central element in the cohabitation of people (social space). It is also a stake for social links and for integration in various places. The place, eventually hybrid, and the surrounding environment, are then significant to a definition of identity. The latter may be flexible and its spatial marking continuous, keeping its features in transparency with the most recent embodied identity. A multicultural area or hybrid place such as Vancouver, represents a huge potential for creating social links beyond cultural aspects. The culture of cosmopolitanism, however, does not cancel out a strong sense of belonging. Cosmopolitanism is a background component of identities but does not dominate the individual identity scene. Cosmopolitanism is more a tool of communication, interaction and integration by way of occidental simplification of cultural codes and standards used especially for direct or indirect economic interests. For children, this sort of ‘cultural Esperanto’, led by Anglo-conformity and helped by various strategies described in section 3.4 (cultural logics, social networks, assimilation capital and embeddedness), is accumulated via public schooling. The characteristics of Asian culture, on the other hand, would have been acquired at home as a result of upbringing.

The question now is the role of culture in the concept of identity today. Cultural identity is given an increasingly ‘rough ride’ at a global scale at the same time as new kinds of identities, ‘hybrid’, are appearing, formatted by and for economic needs. Culture is becoming a luxury at a time when people have to fight for their life priorities such as creating good social networks, having a job and fighting for integration. Well-off people may maintain culture at specific and punctual occasions such as Chinese New Year. The previous tendency contributes to deep changes in societies and their meanings in time and in space. This is why scholars’ theories and attempts to describe and analyze culture no longer fit with the current state of globalization and its role on migration.

Migration is an accelerator of the economy, as was seen in section 2.1.4, and favors the free market. As J.-B. Racine points out, “[...] this presupposition of the contribution of heterogeneity to a homogeneous society, unfortunately the basis of different models and concepts proposed by researchers in the social sciences, does not correspond with reality.” (Schnell & Ostendorf, 2002: 71). According to N. Bissoondath, “[c]ulture is a complex entity shaped in ways small and large” (1994: 81) including in other words, the local and the global scales. Furthermore, “[n]othing is inconsequential. Culture must be measured in its minutiae. The very breath of a people must be appreciated, or else that people and their history are trivialized, reduced to the most common of denominators: stereotype.” (Id.). Simplifying culture is synonymous to its lack of understanding, as N. Bissoondath explains, accusing impacts of multiculturalism and “[...] the peculiar notion of culture as commodity: a thing that can be displayed, performed, admired, bought, sold or forgotten. It represents a devaluation of culture, its reduction to bauble and kitsch.” (Ibid.: 83). The principle is well-intentioned, but the application of it is complex and sometimes surprising as the survey revealed. In these various conditions, an universal identity cannot exist. It is too complex to work and it is useless to give the illusion that everybody can live together and adopt easily a manner, which could pass for anyone at the same time. Yet, at the same time, I think it is not true that “[c]ulture, manipulated into social and political usefulness, becomes folklore [...] lightened and simplified, stripped of the weight of the past.” (Ibid.: 88). People need points of reference in life and appeal to culture. J.-B. Racine underlines that “[e]ntre la simple superposition de cultures ou de disciplines (le *pluri* et le *multi*) et la découverte d’axiomes communs (conditions du *trans*) et l’authentique interaction propre à l’interdisciplinarité, il y a un monde de différences.” (Huriot, 1998: 189). These differences are found into cultures and in their mode of interactions such as language. However, S. H. Olson and A. L. Kobayashi

highlight that “[...] the security of our ethnic identity is threatened and challenged in constant contact with otherness.” (Bourne & Ley, 1993: 149). Does this statement signify the end of nationalities?

As I made clear at the beginning of this research, international migration supports the world economic system. In the process of post-transnationalism, two cultures are ‘mixed’ together with aspects of adjustments. However, this stage of adaptation will soon give birth to a new kind of identity, a ‘hybrid’ one created by the basic needs to communicate, to negotiate, to work and ultimately to live. The third space defined by the appearance of this new hybrid identity is a part of cosmopolitanism and is at the same time a natural and artificial creation; natural by force of circumstances and the unavoidable consequences of the experience of migration, and an invention because of the pressure of the market, favouring the needs of the free market, especially exchanges, not only financial but human as well; negotiations, interactions and communication, more and more homogenized at the expense of cultural specificities of people. However, in opposition to this view, some people see culture treated as a commodity and Mónica Lacarrieu notices a “« fièvre de culture » et de son expression la plus concrète, l’identité. Cette fièvre serait la conséquence de sociétés en déclin, empêtrées dans la vacuité de la globalisation et d’identités diffuses dont aucune ne s’avère centrale, comme l’identité nationale.” (as cited in Bonnet & Négrier, 2008: 36).

Pushing the notion of culture as a means to directly or indirectly serve economic interests, social integration or diplomatic negotiations (Bonnet & Négrier, 2008), as an infiltrated and manipulated ‘culturization’ in all forms of exchanges, the essence of culture itself is progressively disappearing, its primary previous function modified because embarrassing and regarded as useless for the needs of the market (except when it may be instrumentalized). This increasingly confirmed tendency comes from a shift that the Industrial Revolution hailed; a new global way of thinking brought by the system of capitalism and spread throughout the world. Many things are thought in terms of ‘practices’, ‘useful’, or ‘interests’, terms broadly used by Kant to reveal universality deprived of moral conditions (Le Monde, 25 avril 2008, ‘essais’: 6). It describes materialistic vision whose culture, if it was able to bring something to new standards, should have to hold the role. Politics surpass and are closely linked to the market, questions culture in a short-term vision, in its practices and in what it might potentially bring. The vision of culture is then predefined in its functions and in its ends whereas the role of culture should be first considered for itself, transcendental to

preserve the nature itself of human beings and of their identities. Cultural identities are composed of immaterial dimensions.

According to J.-B. Racine, “[l]a caractéristique essentielle de l’*homo sapiens* [...] n’est-elle pas d’avoir pris conscience de l’existence du sacré, donc de percevoir plusieurs niveaux de réalité ?” (1993: 31). In other words, referring to intrinsic culture as the expression itself of identity, what seems to be useless may also be useful... Unfortunately, this perception is regarded as another strata of representation than the usual standards in current society. The vicious circle of the diktat of financial markets or economic consensus, which is becoming apparent and which is destined to remain, seem to kill, little by little, all initial forms of culture, “[...] un statut particulier à la culture, défendue pour, puis par elle-même” (Bonnet & Négrier, 2008: 190), in other words, an own expression of national identities. Free trade neutralized cultural exchanges: the standards of the first one are based on practices as finalities instead of taking them as tools for analyzing society and its socio-cultural features. This gap reveals the hiatus in the question of temporality. It would belong to the political institutions to use strategies to anticipate or to solve such ambiguities: “[...] le libre-échange tue l’échange. Elle rejoint la diversité en donnant la capacité aux interventions publiques de lutter contre la standardisation marchande.” (Ibid.: 195). International migration indirectly encourages this homogenization of cultures into a ‘hybrid’ one. Rather than a mix between two cultures it is more strategically employed according to the current economic trend and its countless tentacles. Does this then mean that the identity in transnationalism may lead to an end of nationalities?

4.2.2. Transnationalism as the end of national identities?

As previously viewed, the essay of ‘diversity’, in the name of going and meeting the Other, has been biased by the ‘priorities’ of the current standards. However, good intentions of “[...] une défense de la culture sans autre fin que sa propre existence” (Ibid.: 191) do not exceed intrinsic value. Nevertheless, making use of culture unavoidably expresses the making use of identities that is especially built according to extrinsic factors. Are extrinsic factors neutralizing national identities? In my opinion, we cannot speak about an end of national identities because the identity frame of reference is always on a local level, albeit included in a global cosmopolitanism.

Transnationalism allows going beyond cultural national identities, transcended by the notion of universal hospitality (Gotman, 2001) defined through cosmopolitanism. This vision avoids the construction of exclusions and ruptures between different and various national identities. Without discounting their existence and essence, new values emerge from this phenomenon of transnationalism. These values provide a strong current model, and the occurrence of solidarity in society, which might be a symbol of universal ethical values. The previous attempt of social development thus represents the purpose of national institutions, which tend to rebuild and to lay the moral foundations of society short of frames of references from the local to the global.

Transnationalism should not have to be regarded as a tool but as a process of mobility to help manage cultural diversity. The ambivalence of transnationalism legitimizes, on one hand, the choice to follow the standards of globalization as a model of living and, on the other hand, it gives means to express eventual oppositions against universalism reduced especially to all forms of economic globalization and its impacts on identities. As Bonnet & Négrier concluded, “[...] la diversité culturelle est le moteur d’une recomposition de cette notion d’identité nationale dans le sens de la pluralité.” (2008: 195). Transnationalism promotes national identities because of its inherent flexibility, its ability to allow everyone to move, to establish and to live elsewhere beyond nations. It allows individuals to choose and to evolve in different ways and to integrate a model of collective belonging without losing personal cultural identities. Such could be the constructive dynamic of transnationalism as a key of action for politics and other decisive institutions.

Globally, questionnaires and interviews showed the value of individual experiences of life and transnationalism as a ‘third space’ area, in which the process brings readjustments of cultures features to serve identity construction and its evolution. As a second key idea, hybridity includes various forms and levels, of which all aspects may partially lead to cosmopolitanism and even universalism as finalities.

4.3. Improvements & Readjustments

In my opinion, improvements and/or readjustments could have been focused on the optimization and quality of the results of the empirical part of this research. Three important points coming from the theory of measurement should be discussed in this regard: the

question of representativeness of the number of people in the sample, the reliability of the selection and its criteria, and the stability of the results considering the relatively quick development and change of society (Miles & Huberman, 2003). My qualitative survey was composed of a sample of 40 students (the second generation of Hong Kong families arrived in Vancouver in the 1980s-1990s). The selection of these students was based on basic predefined criteria that were described in section 3.1.2, where reliability should match the measurement and its concept were used in coherence with the topic. However, the representativeness of the sample was more difficult to measure and to choose to ensure the optimal number of people to allow for a representative set of results.

Increasing a sample in number of people would not necessarily guarantee more efficiency and better results. It would allow the confirmation of a certain sketch of tendencies and would perhaps bring more information for absolute clarity, however, it should also be said that the level of optimization of the results changes from question to question and that it is very difficult to give an average tendency to show from how many people a sample may be refined before that the number of people becomes too big to optimize or maximize the efficiency of the results. Although the set of criteria was well predefined and gave a framework to our survey, the reliability of the choice of questioned people was partially random because of these predefined criteria. This might have biased our results, and limited them to a specific social and educative stratum. In other words, whatever the meticulousness of a qualitative survey, “[...] le problème de la qualité, de la véracité et de l’authenticité des résultats demeure.” (Miles and Huberman, 2003: 502).

Besides representativeness and reliability, stability also represented a crucial point because of the parallel changes of society compared to those of these students in the line-up. Perpetual mutations affect not only a sample, but also the human environment of the sample and vice versa. This tends to bring more or less intensity of influences and nuances even in the short term that is spent on a survey. Based on previous statements, it would be interesting to know whether a quantitative survey would have demonstrated ‘better’ results - depending on the type of questions.

The second fundamental aspect concerns the thoroughness of the knowledge obtained, especially about the way of thinking and the mentality of both cultures. Our sample and its context were not chosen to study the roots of cultural specificities in ways of thinking. However beyond the social and cultural geographical system of reference, the topic could be analyzed more deeply according to other disciplines such as ethnology, anthropology, history,

social psychology, or through specialized fields such as Asian studies or Sinology. Besides the variety of the systems of references, the use of other methods would have improved the results. From this point of view, one of these methods would have consisted of going to Hong Kong, to live Pacific transnationalism by myself with a micro group of migrants. In such a case, it would be interesting to observe if these children would have had the same behaviours if they were living in Asia. Checking this aspect would have required a comparative survey taking into account a similar sample but with children living in Hong Kong. However, the problems of the theory of measure would have been the same. After all, the optimal solution would have been to diversify these different empirical methods of analysis and to combine them. However, the outline of this research was clearly defined and bound by limitations of time and scope. Furthermore, the empirical data of my survey and also by other ones sustained by theoretical researches, laid both solid foundations, counterbalancing each other to give substantial contribution to this master's thesis.

This chapter of discussion and assessment allowed reframing such notions as the 'third space', the challenge of integration and the question of national identities regarding tendencies to universalism. This chapter leads to answer our hypotheses and to open the debate about cultural diversity and its management.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Validation or Disproof of Initial Hypotheses

5.2. Open Questions

5. CONCLUSION

The previous chapters allow me to conclude by the validation or not of my three original hypotheses (section 1.3). The fundamental concepts of the research with the case study may draw main notions used and rephrased in the discussion part, leading to the following conclusions.

5.1. Validation or Disproof of Initial Hypotheses

The first hypothesis; *the concept of transnationalism includes more than one identity frame of reference for Hong Kong overseas families*, is validated according to the previous observations, especially to those in section 2.1.2, in which identity is constantly changing, plural and inclined to be surrounded by cultures, even immersed in them through the simple fact of moving from one place to another. Transnationalism is a process by which identity is enriched with various elements coming from other ways of thinking as a deep expression of their initial culture. Identity construction is a continual progressive process whose goals serve to add, to combine and to coordinate these various exotic components into a new store of general cultural knowledge of Otherness. As the case study showed, it thus means that more than one identity frame of reference is involved in international migration and its impacts.

This first response leads to an answer to the second hypothesis: The definition and the location of this new identity frame of reference differ strongly between the two generations that I have focused on (i.e. ‘parents’ who arrived in Vancouver during the mid-80s and their ‘children’). The previous hypothesis is valid because our case study clearly demonstrated how identity construction is a process. The first generation of migrants roughly lived transnationalism as a choice for the future of the whole family. The second generation of migrants, children, did not choose to migrate but may decide how they choose to live post-transnationalism. The parents tend towards cumulative forms of capital close to behaviours of assimilation, while their children mix assimilative and multicultural behaviours - through ‘Anglo-conformity’ and principles of multiculturalism - according to social situations and for integration. The previous statement described hybrid identity and differs strongly with the definition of identity of the parents. Different configurations took part in parallel with both generations. However, this second hypothesis is partially valid because of the inalienable link between generations, gathered by family and similar cultural roots.

Finally, the third hypothesis, the most awkward one, that *a new identity exists, based on transnationalism, bringing a progressive disappearance of national identities and leading toward a new kind of universalism through a phenomenon of cosmopolitanism*, brings number of nuances. This last hypothesis is partially valid in the first part of the statement because a new identity exists, which is the ‘hybrid’ one, based and built through the phenomenon of transnationalism in the ‘third space’ as a specific area of cultural adjustments. But, it does not bring a progressive disappearance of national identities as was explained in the discussion part of this thesis. The fact that national identities are kept does not mean that universalism is nonexistent. Cosmopolitanism is a means to help communication and cultural interaction and represents the strata of individual ‘inter-relational’ place instead of a state ‘international’ place. Universalism is thus existent, going beyond nations but conciliated with national identities whose importance, scope and relevance depend on the scales; global or local, according to situations and contexts. It seems that national identities are muted in the context of universalism, going closer to the ‘local’ scale in its deepest essence, while the same national identities seem to go towards universalism, beyond nations, referring then to the ‘global’ scale.

5.2. Open Questions

As R. Boudon (1997) points out, individuals are the logic atoms of analysis, the primary element of all social phenomenon. Identity is definitely defined by Otherness, but at the end of the day, decisions, which influence and are influenced in identity construction, are dominated by individual choices. May we preserve hybridity as a new identity in the long term? Or will this new definition of identity be the beginning of a new era through creeping universalism?

My research questions the management of cultural diversity and its future as the management of cultural mortality. The previous idea would then mean the ability of individuals to leave aside all cultural systems of references towards universalism. But is this universalism sustainable for individuals in constant search of logics, rationality and sense of life? Individuals need to hang on to and to identify with models they unconsciously reproduce because they have to be regarded as essential components of the world. In other words, individuals need to feel responsible and to choose their system of reference as far as possible and as a key for freedom.

Will multiculturalism continued to be celebrated in the future? Migration is obviously not the only factor responsible for gathering people from everywhere in society and for molding identity, but global mobility represents a very important world dynamic to serve economic competitions. In this previous context, new social and cultural problems might be generated by misunderstandings, which could lead directly to the opening of a Pandora's box if the control of cultural diversity is badly managed or even lost by politics. The way political institutions take up the challenge of managing the previous dynamic would be the topic of a new research project. Politics have indeed a big responsibility to preserve society as a unity in diversity. Are cosmopolitanism or cosmopolite cities sustainable in the long term? May we keep going with the belief in 'living together', equal or different? For D. Latouche, multiculturalism represents 'selling illusions' because there is no unity in the difference, but instead, a difference in unity (as referred in Eveno, 1998). Furthermore, he adds that "[a]u cœur du cosmopolitisme, il y a la notion de désordre et de dérangement causé par la juxtaposition de différences qu'il importe d'englober dans un « Grand Tout » réconfortant" (Ibid.: 192). The previous skeptical vision of D. Latouche confirms the idea promoted here that transnationalism cannot exist without changing cultural identities. It keeps them in the reassuring frame of national identities, faced with a universalism, which seems to get closer and even to become irreversible. That is the reason, according to S. H. Olson and A. L. Kobayashi, "[i]f indeed 'money dissolves culture,' the determination of all Canadians to preserve their several identities is a defence of values deeper than the dollar." (as cited in Bourne & Ley, 1993: 152).

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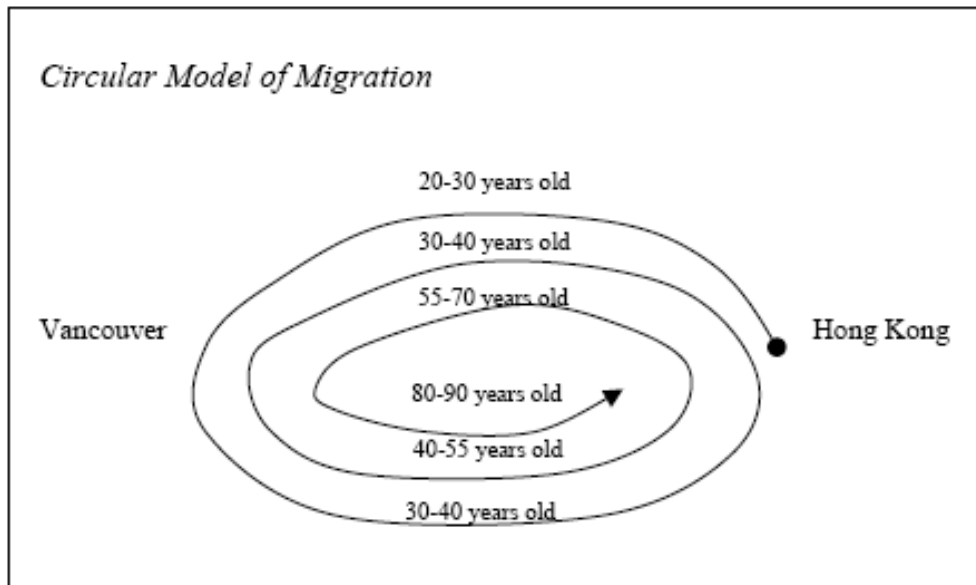
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Appendix n°1: Circular Model of Migration (section 2.1.1), schematized by the author and based on Ley & Kobayashi, 2005: 123



Appendix n°2: U.S. foreign investments in China: 1994-2001 (section 2.1.4)

TABLE 1. U.S. foreign direct investment in China: 1994-2001

Year	Direct investment position	Direct investment capital outflows	Gross product (value added)	R&D expenditures	R&D/GP ratio (percent)	Number of affiliates
Billions of current U.S. dollars						
1994	2.557	1.232	0.678	0.007	1.0	172
1995	2.765	0.261	1.092	0.013	1.2	183
1996	3.848	0.933	2.073	0.025	1.2	223
1997	5.150	1.250	3.194	0.035	1.1	274
1998	6.350	1.497	3.004	0.052	1.7	330
1999	7.951	1.947	3.945	0.319	8.1	456
2000	9.861	1.817	5.516	0.506	9.2	454
2001	10.526	1.225	NA	NA	NA	NA

NA = Not available.
GP = Gross product.

NOTES: Data for 2000 and 2001 are preliminary. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) defines direct investment as ownership or control of 10 percent or more of the voting securities of a business in another country. Direct investment capital outflows consist of net equity capital outflows, reinvested earnings, and intercompany debt outflows from U.S. parent companies to their foreign affiliates. Direct investment position is a cumulative measure of the financing provided by U.S. parents to their foreign affiliates in the form of equity and debt, recorded at historical cost (net book value). Data for gross product, R&D expenditures, and number of affiliates are for majority-owned affiliates of U.S. parent companies. Majority-owned affiliates of U.S. parent companies are those affiliates in which the combined ownership of all U.S. parents is more than 50 percent.

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Survey of U.S. Direct Investment Abroad, Washington, DC, annual series. Available at www.bea.gov/bea/di/di1usdop.htm.

Appendix n°3: Questionnaire used in the survey (section 3.1.1)

University of Lausanne (Switzerland) - Academic Survey about Impacts of Transnationalism on Hongkongese Families in Vancouver

For the children (18-25 years old)

Identifying information

1. What is your birth year?
2. Are you: male female
3. Are you a student at UBC? Yes No
4. What is your marital status? Married Single Divorced Other
5. How many children do you have? 0 1 2 3 4
6. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?
7. What is the highest level of education you would like to reach?
8. What is your living's area in Vancouver? On Campus Somewhere else → where?
9. Are you living at home: to your parents in a flat-sharing with roommates
 with your partner alone

Immigration status and history

10. Are you born: in Vancouver in Hongkong Somewhere else → where?.....
11. If you are not born in Vancouver, when did you arrive in Canada (MM/YYYY)?
12. Did you go back to Hong Kong? Yes No
13. If yes, how many times?
14. If yes, for how long each time?
15. In what country(ies) are you a citizen?

Language

16. What is the first language you learned in your life?
17. Can you still understand it? Perfectly Good A few Not at all
18. What language(s) can you speak and understand now?
19. What language do you speak with your parents?

20. What language do you speak most often at home?

21. Do you speak this language at home: 100 % 75 % 50 %

22. If you speak this language 75 % or 50 %, what is the second language you speak at home?

.....

Family life

23. What cultural behaviors do **you** have at home? If 'Both', how much percent would you put on it?

Western/Canadian Asian/Hongkongese Both → % Can. and % Ho

24. What kind of cultural behaviors **your parents** have at home? If 'Both', how much percent?

Western/Canadian Asian/Hongkongese Both → % Can. and % Hong.

25. According to your previous answer, give 2-3 examples of these cultural behaviors:

.....
.....
.....

26. Do **you** have Western/Canadian attitudes or behaviors in general?

All the time Often Sometimes Rarely Not at all

27. Do **your parents** have Western/Canadian attitudes or behaviors in general?

All the time Often Sometimes Rarely Not at all

28. Do you mind if your parents have **Western/Canadian** behaviors?

Totally Partially Not at all

29. If your answer is 'Totally' or 'Partially', explain why:

.....
.....
.....

30. Do you mind if your parents have **Asian/Hongkongese** behaviors at home?

Totally Partially Not at all

31. If you answer Totally or Partially, explain why:

.....
.....
.....

32. Do you remember a situation with tension with your parents because of a difference of mentality between Asian and Canadian culture? Can you explain it briefly?

.....
.....
.....

Discrimination

33. Did you already have an experience of discrimination in Vancouver? Yes No

34. If yes, in which context? Can you explain it briefly?

.....
.....
.....

Labour market

35. Are you working besides studies? Yes No

36. If yes, what kind of job are you doing?

37. What language(s) do you use in your job?.....

38. What language(s) do your co-workers speak at work?.....

39. Are you happy in your job? Yes Neutral No

Transnationalism

40. Do you have family members or friends in the country you lived in before coming to Canada?

.....

41. Do you keep in touch with them? How often?

42. Did you keep your Asian mentality in Canada? Totally Partially Not at all

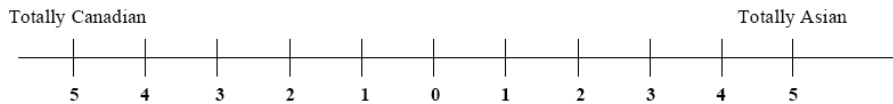
43. On a scale from 0 (absent) to 10 (very strong), where would you locate your **Asian/Hongkongese** mentality or behaviors in your daily life in Vancouver (outside from home)? (Put a cross):



44. On a scale from 0 (absent) to 10 (very strong), where would you locate your **Canadian/ Western** mentality/behaviors in daily life in Vancouver (outside from home)? (Put a cross):



45. On the following scale, where would you locate your daily behaviors according to the **Western/Canadian** context and to your **Asian/Hongkongese** original culture? (Put a cross):



46. Do you consider you as:

- Canadian
 Chinese
 Hongkongese
 Canadian and Chinese
 Canadian and Hongkongese
 World citizen
 None of them
 Other → what?

Satisfaction with immigration experience

47. In general, how satisfied are you personally with your experience in Canada?

- Very satisfied/Happy
 Satisfied
 Neutral
 Upset/Disappointed
 Very Disappointed/Angry

48. How satisfied are you with the experience of your parents in Canada?

- Very satisfied/Happy
 Satisfied
 Neutral
 Upset/Disappointed
 Very Disappointed/Angry

49. How you think your parents are satisfied with their life in Vancouver?

- Very satisfied/Happy
 Satisfied
 Neutral
 Upset/Disappointed
 Very Disappointed/Angry

Perceptions of multiculturalism and Sense of belonging

50. Is it the job of immigrants to adapt to Canadian culture? Yes No
51. It is important to accept a wide variety of cultures in Canada Yes No
52. In general, do Canadians accept your culture? Yes No
53. Do you feel you belong in Canada? Yes No
54. Do you believe your parents feel they belong in Canada? Yes No
55. Do you continue practicing your group's culture? Yes No
56. Are you involved in a community in Vancouver? Yes No

57. If yes, which one(s)?

Cultural Religious Social Parental Political Other → what?

58. Canada's ethnic or cultural diversity is something worth celebrating Yes No

59. It is important for you that your parents are fully accepted as Canadians Yes No

60. Is it important that your parents learn to speak English? Yes No

61. In the future, would you like to go back to Hong Kong? Yes No Don't know

62. In the future, would you like to stay in Vancouver? Yes No Don't know

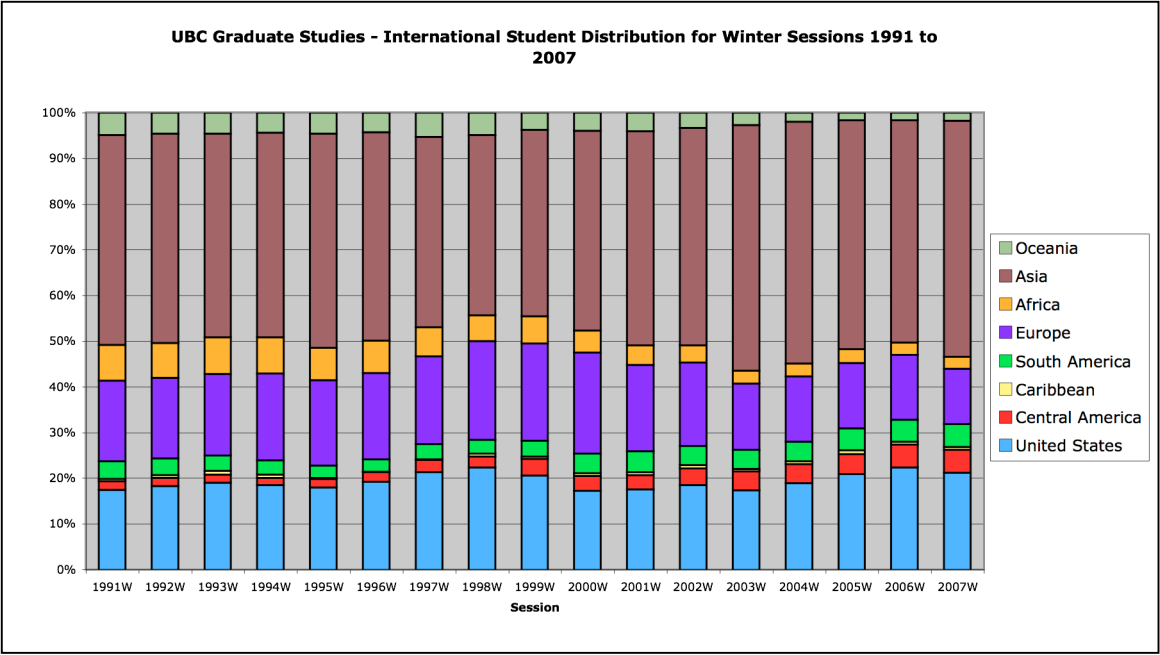
63. On this World map, where would you locate your identity?



64. Comments/Additional information:

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Appendix n°4: International Student Distribution of the University of British Columbia, from 1991 to 2007, taken from the UBC website (section 3.4.2)



Appendix n°5: Map of Vancouver local areas, taken from Mitchell, 2004: 77 (section3.5.2)

