

Mapping the Diasporic Self

Begin at the beginning. That was my plan when I first started drafting the structure of my memoir. State one's name, one's birth date and place, one's parents' names and so on. This narrative plan would provide forensic clarity as well as the illusion of truthfulness. However, it also simplifies the process of subjectivity formation and precludes the equally messy reality of one's memories and the representations of these memories on paper. If I should begin my memoir with my birth, or perhaps my parents' or even my grandparents' birth, followed by annual events, school, love affairs, marriage, professional achievements, and so on, I would have fallen into a pattern of inscribing subjectivity that privileges a male tradition of telling one's story, a tradition that promises a logical resolution to the puzzlement of existence, and an affirmation of Enlightenment ideals.¹ But this linear progression is a narrative that bears no resemblance to the constantly shifting perspectives that present themselves as one reviews one's life and tries to make sense of events, of commissions and omissions, of departures and arrivals. It does not reflect the perpetual conflict between the nature of representing/writing and the nature of remembering. Neither does this narrative pattern sufficiently articulate the cultural pressures a Chinese woman experiences, nor adequately address the contradictory lives of a "diasporic person in diaspora" (Chow 23).

Joanne Saul claims that the term "biotext" "captures the tension between the 'what' and the 'how' of the texts, between the 'bio' (with an emphasis on the 'life': including the family, relationships, and genealogy) and the 'text' (the site where these fragments are articulated in writing)" (4). In this paper

I examine the very tension quoted above, not through a term, but through the process with which I must engage in order to put words on paper. If the postmodern subject is multiple and decentred, then the diasporic subject is even more so. To articulate its existence and reality, the diasporic writer needs to contend not only with the disconnect between meaning and words, but also with the many historical and social trajectories that constitute a diasporic subjectivity.²

To recount my birth is not as straightforward as naming a place and a date. I was born a dual-colonial subject. I was born in Macau and my birth certificate named me a Portuguese citizen, an identity I have maintained, at least in bureaucratic forms. I grew up in Hong Kong and had established deep-seated affiliations with British culture and history. But I was also born a Han Chinese, an ethnic identity that reaches back several thousand years.³ My spoken mother tongue was vernacular Cantonese, a language not used in writing; my written language was classical Chinese; my father tongue, then, was English. My religious upbringing was strongly Catholic; the family had been Catholic for three generations on my mother's side, an indication of my family's familiarity with Western mores. My cultural and ethical upbringing was Confucianist. Already, before I could find my own life script, I was a product of dominant life scripts grounded in history, in class, in gender, and in race. As a result, an ethnic Chinese diasporic woman academic could find that, even when given a voice, her native experiences remain "untranslatable" (38), to gloss Rey Chow's term in *Writing Diaspora*. This untranslatability has to do with the narrative structure of "In the beginning I was born"—the masculinist *Bildungsroman* that assumes logical development, emotional maturity, and progressive enlightenment. As Helen Buss explains in *Mapping Our Selves*, women and their autobiographical efforts "enter . . . language from an already defaced position inside men's culture and language" (5). To find my own distinct voice, I have to use but also to resist "men's culture and language."

The Chinese Confucianist culture and the Chinese language is a tradition of male domination. This tradition inflicts various limitations on a Chinese woman writing her memoir. In the context of traditional Confucianism, I should come under the censure of my family as well as society at large. If I were to follow the path of a dutiful Chinese daughter brought up in the Confucianist tradition, I should not be writing about my family and its foibles and failings, nor should I be writing about myself, not being someone of historical or political importance, given that classical Chinese "is the perfect instrument for stating and restating the exemplary," and though

“virtuous maidens and chaste widows” are mentioned in county records, numbering in the tens of thousands, “these good women . . . remain faceless and in most cases nameless, only identifiable by the surnames of their fathers or husbands” (Wu 12). Not only am I positioning myself as a critic of the life that my parents have gifted me, I am writing my memoir in English instead of the language of my ancestors. (Yet, the formality and tradition of classical Chinese questions the legitimacy of a narrative that addresses not only an individual’s life, but a woman’s life.⁴) As I bear my father’s name, I would be expected to censor any details in my early life that reflect negatively on the Ng family, since “revealing one’s own sins [and other personal experiences] in public ran against the grain of a culture . . . which put so much emphasis upon propriety and discretion” (Wu 216). (But to present a whitewashed account would negate one of the presumed purposes of the genre of life writing.) If in the memoir I analyze and criticize my parents, it would be an act of filial impiety. (But literature bears many examples of critique of problematic familial relationships.) Thus, as a woman brought up by traditional Chinese parents, writing my memoir is an act of cultural defiance.

Even when I have overcome the patriarchal Confucianist tradition and refused to be silent and wise, writing about my family and my personal relationships in Hong Kong involves navigating the disconnect between the vernacular dialect my family speak (Cantonese), the classical written Chinese that I was schooled in, and the English I used at Maryknoll Sisters School. As Wu explains, “The Chinese writing system, consisting of characters rather than phonetic notations, had determined from the very beginning that in its written form the language was to be used to record facts . . . rather than to transcribe speech verbatim” (11). Classical or written Chinese is not a language that facilitates expressions of individual emotions and psychological conflicts; English is a more fluent language for me to express life. Yet, though I am writing my memoir in English, my memories are constructed of situations and conversations performed in Cantonese, and my knowledge of Chinese autobiographies is through formalized written Chinese. After I have translated my memories and knowledge into an English that is suitable for the genre and for publication, it becomes a life lived in three languages compressed into one.

Thus far, I have to decide to forgo Confucianist reticence and write about personal matters; I also have to overcome the innate linguistic confusion of remembering in Cantonese and classical Chinese, then translating memories into English. Most of all, I want to write in an English that is not an obvious translation of the Chinese and is different from the emotionalism in writings

by famous modern Chinese writers such as Bing Xin, Ding Ling, and even the woman soldier, Hsieh Ping-ying (Xie Bingying).⁵ I have to make a rhetorical choice. Traditional Chinese women's autobiographies in the May 4th era, a genre that I know well through leisure reading in Hong Kong and studying at the university, is a genre that "has often been viewed as representing insignificant life experience, transmitting self-indulgent voices, and lacking broad social scale and objectivity" (Wang 2). By implication, male writers write of significant life experience in an objective voice, thus providing the reading public with narratives of social relevance. However, even as I disagree with this patronizing view of modern Chinese women writing, and even as I have chosen to resist Confucianist patriarchal tradition, I remain under the influence, on the one hand, of Chinese prejudice against individual self-expressions and, on the other hand, of the analytical western tradition that privileges objectivity over subjectivity.

My western education has inculcated in me, from the very first class exercise in explication and the first analytical convent-school essay, the habit of looking at people and situations objectively, even if they might be one's relations and the situations are personal ones. Composition classes had demanded that I should propose a viable argument and then develop the argument by intellectual analysis. The rule not to use the personal singular pronoun in order to maintain the tone of objective inquiry has trained me to become suspicious of emotional writing. Thus, ironically, I react to Chinese women's autobiographies in the same way that is criticized by Wang in her book.

The convent education did more than teach me to control emotional indulgence in writing. Even as my mother was rigorous in educating me to become a good daughter and an eventual good wife, I found another set of female role models in the Catholic nuns at the Maryknoll school run by the American missionary order. At home, I had a strict, traditional Chinese mother against whom I rebelled. At school, I had educated, encouraging, forgiving mothers. How should I write about these various mother figures, on some of whom I developed adolescent crushes? How do I extricate the sense of sin and damnation and atonement a Catholic education inculcated from the sunny and happy memories I have of learning, of getting good marks, of being the teacher's pet? Accounts I have read of convent educations usually suggest a regime of disciplinary oppression, of western domination, of religious intolerance. Brian Tittle writes of the "sadistic nuns" (1) who ran the Good Shepherd Magdalen Asylum in the Irish Republic; the nuns maintained control through prayers, humiliation, and inflexible disciplining.

Karen Armstrong writes of her harrowing experience being trained as a postulant in 1962 “along the old lines of severe Victorian discipline” even as the Second Vatican Council was meeting in Rome (72). Eventually, her study of English literature liberated her from the prison house of the convent.

In contrast, my convent education liberated me from the prison house of Confucianist and traditional Chinese disciplines; it liberated me from thinking and values that I was already rebelling against. My convent upbringing gave me autonomy. In a recent UNICEF report, a child’s sense of educational well-being is rated as one of six categories essential in the child’s upbringing (Westcott). I rate my educational well-being very high, while I would be more critical of my family and peer relationships, another category listed in the report. It is true that the Maryknoll nuns had acculturated me to western art, western literature, and western values so thoroughly that I became a stranger in feelings and thoughts to my parents. But I didn’t and still don’t think of my convent education as a form of imperialistic domination. Otherwise, my many fellow students would also have rejected Chinese culture and become thoroughly acculturated in western aesthetics and values, which was certainly not the case. I have to find a “balanced” way to represent these formative years while writing against the grain. My ambivalent attitude towards the history of British colonialism in Hong Kong also makes me ask myself if I am still “working in anti-imperialist discourse,” as Rey Chow categorizes postcolonial critics in *Writing Diaspora* (53).

If I were writing this memoir in the 1970s, while I was still a teenager in Hong Kong, my experience of colonialism would have been very differently expressed. Certainly I remember racialized treatment and the social tension between the non-Chinese and the majority Chinese population in Hong Kong. But colonial relationships are mediated through class. The working class and the labourers in Hong Kong, who lived well away from the small and exclusive neighbourhoods of the expatriates, had very little knowledge of or contact with their colonizers, unless they were working as servants. Even the middle class, to which my family belonged, had very little to do with the western colonial presence. We had no western friends; we socialized only with Chinese by choice; and if our friends and relatives were oppressed, they were oppressed by their Chinese employers, by their greedy Chinese landlords and others in the social structure. One could say that the wealthy and the powerful Chinese were always friendly with the colonial authority; hence colonial oppression was maintained through the economic system. But, one could also say that some wealthy and powerful Chinese had very little regard

for the poor Chinese. In a city so motivated by commerce, the stock market, land development, and so on, race could at times be less important than one's bank account, the car one drives, the number of servants one can afford. As I was growing up, I was far more aware of which social class my family belonged to than what race.⁶ Thus, the first western friend I knew was rejected totally by my mother, not only because of race, but also because of class.⁷

However, now that I am making my living as an academic working in anti-imperialist discourse, my perspective has changed and my recounting of my life under colonial rule also requires a different narrative voice than the one I would have used regarding my convent education. Edward Said's *Out of Place* and Shirley Lim's *Among the White Moon Faces* offer two examples of autobiographies written by postcolonial critics. These accounts are worthy examples, both of the genre of autobiography and of the academic profession. *Simplified*, they are narratives of oppressed individuals who overcame economic, or political, or psychological obstacles within a specific historical context. Not only did these individuals refuse to succumb to the system; they become resistant fighters against the colonial system through their teaching and writing. These narratives are "victim" memoirs with a triumphant ending.

I admire these memoirs. But Said's colonized Cairo and Lim's colonized Malaysia are not the same political constructs as my colonized Hong Kong. As an individual, I was not victimized by the colonial system. If I were writing about Hong Kong and Chinese culture in general, I would resort to my postcolonial voice: the colonial system had suppressed Chinese autonomy; it had exploited Chinese labour and land; British colonialists, with their attitude of racial superiority, had treated Chinese with contempt. Exclusive enclaves, such as tennis and cricket clubs, had made Chinese presence unwelcome. There were never equal social interactions between the British and the Chinese. (Although not many Chinese of our social circles would want to have any interactions with the Brits either.) But if I were writing about myself, the obstacles I had to overcome were imposed by my own culture, which I consider anti-woman and anti-individual; and because my relatives and social circles eschewed contact with westerners, I consider them xenophobic. Yet I don't want to write a memoir of nostalgia for the good old days of colonialism. My personal narrative needs to be contextualized within the global phenomenon of postcolonial movements. I have to find the rhetorical space that intersects the personal specifics and the cultural/historical. Perhaps my representation of an experienced colonial culture is closer to Michael Ondaatje's in *Running in the Family*.

In her essay on *Running in the Family* in *Writing the Roaming Subject: The Biotext in Canadian Literature*, Joanne Saul attributes “the elegiac tone of much of the book” to the numerous ruptures and gaps in Ondaatje’s search for connection and belonging (53). I add uneasy nostalgia to the causes for Ondaatje’s elegy to a colonial culture. A colonized subject has to tread carefully when writing nostalgically of a colonized past—the voice of Frantz Fanon echoes as a warning bell. Like Ondaatje, I want to represent my and, by extension, my family’s experience of a colonial culture not as one of political opposition and struggle, but of acceptance, compliance even. More importantly, Hong Kong culture, as distinct from the colonial culture of Malaya and Ceylon, was a colonized culture that was forcefully mediated by the neighbouring presence of China. Furthermore, unlike the Malay Chinese, the Hong Kong Chinese constituted the majority. These Chinese practised with pride their culture and customs, with little intervention from the colonial power. As a matter of fact, to imply a strong political awareness of and hostility towards British colonialism in Hong Kong in the 1950s and 1960s would be inaccurate.

Yet, I am also aware of the fact that there are critics who believe that “‘responsible’ immigrant narratives should represent or be faithful to history; that they should engage with the structures of power; and that ‘visible’ minority writers should not only be ‘original’ but also ‘authentic’” (Saul 36). It is a critical position that I am familiar with in Postcolonial Studies; I myself have advocated an ethical representation in fiction that features ethnic minorities (see “Representing Chinatown”). However, while the theoretical position argues for a general policy towards ethnic representation, my own memoir has to do with an individual lived experience. This conflict between representation and the politics of reading argues for a contextual and nuanced culture of critical interpretation.

Similar to Ondaatje in *Running in the Family*, I want to evoke a landscape of tropical heat, lush landscape, blue sky merging with blue water, colonial architecture, and the multiple contact/non-contact zones between the west and the east. I want to write about the suddenness of monsoon rainstorms, the brilliant greenness of the palm fronds, the pervasive smell of frangipani in the summer, or the shapely silhouettes of women in cheongsams. My mother and I rode in a rickshaw when I was a child. I was eight and was on the same cross-harbour ferry when a scene from *The World of Susie Wong* was shot, a film that the family both enjoyed and laughed at. This was the culture I grew up in, the culture that nurtured me. Yet, this descriptive

approach could be critiqued as a “tendency to exoticize” (Saul 52). But if I were writing a realistic description of my childhood—not embellished with literary conceits, not conjured out of picture books or plagiarized from travel narratives; in other words, not an orientalist exercise—would it still be a form of exoticism, just because the Hong Kong weather is different from a Canadian winter or the cultural practices are different from those in Canadian suburbia?

In terms of identity profile, I share less with Ondaatje than I do with Shirley Lim. We are both women of Chinese ethnicity growing up in a British colony and educated by Catholic nuns. But, while colonial cultures are different, the colonized subjects also process experience as individuals, not as a generic group. Lim shared her childhood with siblings, while I grew up as an only child who wanted desperately to be in the company of other children. My only child status also made me into the sole object of parental discipline that I eventually found oppressive. However, a strict upbringing also taught me to become socially canny and, unlike Lim, I learned “the self-protective skill of silence” (Lim 71). This skill probably guarded me against the kind of harsh treatments from the teachers and nuns that Lim describes in her memoir with some bitterness. Not only did different family structures affect our social behaviours; different religious orders also meant that my Catholic nuns were, with a few exceptions, kind, intelligent, liberal-minded, and fun-loving.

The difference in our family backgrounds and structures also played a role in our differently perceived colonized selves. Lim’s father came from a merchant family, himself the owner of a shoe store while Shirley Lim was a young girl. The Lim family was part of the forty-five per cent of the Chinese population in British Malaya; Lim’s memoir gives the strong impression that the ethnic Chinese were not the dominant power (39-40). Although a colonized subject, Lim’s father was “trilingual” and comfortable with “British regulations and procedures” (52). In spite of his early affluence, he managed to get into financial troubles; his battered wife left him and the children, and his treatment of his children, according to Lim, veered between punishment and neglect.

In contrast, the Ng family were middle class folks in the banking business for at least three generations. My father didn’t depend on westerners for his livelihood and, overall, only tolerated the colonial culture in Hong Kong as a political reality. He was proudly confident of his Han ethnicity and considered the British mere barbaric interlopers. He was educated only in classical Chinese, but was considered by friends and colleagues as a scholar with a fine calligraphy. He was aloof, patriarchal, and uxorious. Like Lim, I

admired my father and resented my mother. However, this resentment was not a result of my mother's absence: she was *too* present. My father was the provider. My mother had the responsibility of nurturing me into a woman with social graces, with the ultimate goal that I should marry into economic stability. My own preference was never consulted.

Unlike the ethnic Chinese in colonial Malaya, the Chinese in Hong Kong constituted not only the shopkeepers and labourers but also the professionals and the elite.⁸ The non-Chinese in Hong Kong might feel racially superior; they also had to contend with the economic clout of the Chinese majority and treat them accordingly. The Hong Kong Chinese were proud of their Chinese heritage while wary of the Communist ideology of mainland China. According to Lim, as a Malay Chinese she felt that the mainland Chinese were "marked by an alien hieroglyphic script" and that they were "hostile to *peranakans*, whom they looked down on as degraded people, people who had lost their identity when they stopped speaking Chinese" (40). Thus, while both Hong Kong Chinese and Malay Chinese were diasporic subjects, the ninety-nine per cent Hong Kong Chinese who spoke Cantonese and wrote in Chinese were less marginalized than their counterparts in colonial Malaya. This might explain partly why the Maryknoll nuns were a much friendlier group of teachers.

The Maryknoll nuns didn't discriminate, as far as I can remember, based on class or race. They seemed to practise the idea of American democracy even within the school perimeters. Thus, I went to school happily, having said goodbye to my father who went off to the bank and to my mother who stayed home to plan the day's menu. It was an ordinary childhood without deprivation. I can theorize as a postcolonial critic, but not write as an oppressed colonial subject. Lim's experiences were different and provided her with an authentic and individual postcolonial voice. Hence, to presume that, because two Chinese women shared a similar profile in education and grew up in a superficially similar historical context, their perspectives would also be similar would be an act of critical erasure.

The more I write, the more apparent it becomes that no one particular narrative strategy would work for me, certainly not "the kind of coming-to-voice narrative that relies on a unified concept of the ethnic subject and a developmental narrative of assimilation or belonging" (Saul 37). My memoir project is intellectually facilitated by my identity as a Canadian ethnic woman academic and the academic culture in the 1990s that nurtured me. Shirley Neuman's contribution on life writing in *Literary History of Canada*

and other critics writing on autobiography as a “serious” literary genre (Saul 4-5); the inclusion of ethnic writers and their works within recognized area studies such as English; the distinctly different configuration of ethnic identities within the context of multiculturalism in Canada all form a productive backdrop for me, as well for other writers with ethnic backgrounds, to explore the ambiguities of belonging and of identity (Saul 6). Even as I write about a colonized past, my memories are informed by a postcolonial present. In *Writing Diaspora*, Rey Chow claims that “the goal of ‘writing diaspora’ is . . . to *unlearn* that submission to one’s ethnicity such as ‘Chineseness’ as the ultimate signified even as one continues to support movements for democracy and human rights in China, Hong Kong, and elsewhere” (25). Chow’s position is deeply connected to her identity as a Hong Kong Chinese growing up in the 1960s and 1970s, and to be a Chinese in Hong Kong during that period, when China was undergoing the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution and the United States the turmoil of the Vietnam War and the counterculture movements, was to be a Chinese caught in the matrix of conflicting and feuding cultural ideologies. Like Chow, I also nurture simultaneous affiliation with and resistance against both the centrism of Chineseness and the eurocentrism of the West.

But unlike critics who have critiqued the “diasporic” position, I suggest that it is enabling and empowering.⁹ As a matter of fact, I have no other viable position from which I can narrate. I am no longer a colonized subject. I am not in a postcolonial condition, having left Hong Kong and accepted Canadian citizenship. But, unlike Chinese Canadians whose ancestors settled in Canada in the nineteenth century, I am still affiliated to Hong Kong, although a Hong Kong that now belongs to China, whose official language of Putonghua I cannot speak and whose cultural ambassadors would have indexed me as a “Westernized Chinese woman from colonial Hong Kong, this cultural bastard” (Chow 26). Thus, I can say that I now suffer the same chauvinistic discrimination that Lim, as a Malay Chinese, writes about in her book. Yet, rather than feeling abashed as a serial non-belonger—not China-Chinese, not Hong Konger, not local-born Canadian, not Portuguese-speaking Macanese, I revel in this multiplicity of non-identities as the eventual norm of social identity of people around the world.

My narrative will have to reflect this multiplicity.¹⁰ The diasporic subject lives in a borderland existence while negotiating her colonial psychological repository and her postcolonial consciousness, anxiety-ridden as she confronts her past in order to reconstruct it for the present. The

autobiographical subject is not single and unified. As an ethnic Chinese woman academic writing her memoir, I work with my ethnic identity as a Chinese born in a Portuguese colony and raised in a British colony, as well as my professional identity as a woman working in a western field that still bears the traces of traditional patriarchal domination. This paper examines my various life scripts that are indexed to race, gender, and class, grounded in the Confucianist ethos that emphasizes discretion and restraint, and, paradoxically, also in the enlightenment ideal of individual self-expression. Similarly, writing the autobiographical subject requires a complex narrative strategy, so that the narrative reflects the ruptures and gaps in the subject's lived experiences. The challenge for the autobiographical subject in diaspora is to mediate between contesting identities and rhetorical strategies.

NOTES

- 1 Although I am in total agreement with the fact that women can write linear narratives just as men can write fragmented ones, there exists a literary tradition that privileges clarity, coherence, and logical development, a narrative structure that historically women writers could not adopt, due to lack of training or time, hampered and harried by domestic concerns, and that some contemporary women writers refuse to adopt as a strategy of protest.
- 2 The essay is intended as an analytical companion piece to my memoir, *Cultural Belongings*, which is in the final stage of writing. I am looking at my own life writing process the way a literary critic would: objectively and not confessionally.
- 3 I am aware that there are considerable discussions regarding the concept of Han ethnicity as a constructed identity and its political agenda. I am using the term as an indication that my parents were proud of our Chinese identity while living in British colonial Hong Kong, and that I was taught never to forget that to be Chinese was to be racially superior to the non-Chinese minority.
- 4 While Chinese women growing up in the 1980s and 1990s (post-Mao, postcolonial, post-structural) might find the voice to express such discontent, Chinese women brought up with more traditional values or of older generations would be tempted to take the conventional way to write (or not write) about childhood trauma, family, parents.
- 5 See Wang Lingzhen's *Personal Matters: Women's Autobiographical Practice in Twentieth-Century China*, which recuperates the value of emotionalism and excessive subjectivity in writings by Bing Xin and others from the May 4th era.
- 6 I do remember moments of racial conflict in public interactions in Hong Kong in my childhood. For instance, my father was chastised by the Brits in a theatre when he didn't stand up for the British national anthem. Or the humiliation one could feel when a westerner spoke to one condescendingly and one's English was not idiomatic enough to provide a retort. Or the automatic deference Chinese showed to the colonialists in western enclaves, such as Lane Crawford (an exclusive department store) or the Peninsula Hotel. But overall, in the 1960s and 1970s, the property-owning Chinese in Hong Kong were as much against Communist China as the British colonial government out of self-interest. Thus, the Brits were seen as a benign presence that would protect the Hong Kong Chinese, who desired above all else to continue maintaining a comfortable, or even better, an

- affluent lifestyle. I have to see a film such as Ken Loach's *The Wind that Shakes the Barley* (2006) to be reminded of historical British colonial atrocities.
- 7 My mother's outright rejection of interracial relationships and her willing embrace of the Catholic Church and its western representatives (nuns, priests, the Pope) is an example of the paradox inherent in the colonial culture of Hong Kong, and illustrates a kind of cultural pragmatism that most Hong Kong Chinese practised, consciously or subconsciously. A Westerner without money was not desirable; but powerful western religious institutions were acceptable, especially when they provided the children with a solid education.
 - 8 It should be mentioned that Lim was growing up in the 1940s and 1950s while I was experiencing British colonization in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. However, the different racial profiles of the populations in Malaya and Hong Kong certainly contributed to the formation of diasporic subjectivity.
 - 9 In a paper given at the University of British Columbia, which forms an extract of a forthcoming book, *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations Across the Pacific*, Shih Shu-mei objects to the concept of "the Chinese diaspora," which "stands as a universalizing category founded on a unified ethnicity, culture, language, as well as place of origin or homeland" ("Against Diaspora: The Sinophones as Places of Cultural Production"). The argument does not take into consideration the Chinese who have been emigrating from China but continue to maintain very strong cross-generational ties to the mainland; or the fact that many Chinese around the world, whatever category they say they belong to, continue to do business in China and it is to their advantage to maintain their Chinese ethnic identity. There is also the fact of ethnic embodiment. While a Chinese in Canada might be third-generation Canadian, she will still look Chinese to the non-Chinese communities.
 - 10 I should be outlining my narrative strategies at this point. However, the memoir is still a work in progress and it is being changed each time I review what I have written.

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