

**Recreating a Taste of Home in Canada: A Radical Interpretive Inquiry into
Toronto's Intergenerational Chinese Food Sharing Networks**

by

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

ABSTRACT

In multicultural Toronto, there is a large and increasing Chinese population. However, only very limited recent sociological research has been conducted on the lived experiences of Chinese immigrants and the children of Chinese immigrants. For many Chinese, one way to cope with the problem of displacement and a sense of homelessness, said to be endemic to the modern life-world, is to recreate the appearance of the order of home in their food sharing activities. My dissertation explores the meanings of “home” from the lived experiences of intergenerational Chinese in Toronto, focusing on Chinese food as an important cultural heritage and everyday practice. By adopting the radical interpretive perspective, which requires the intertwining of theory and methods, I use the theoretical framework combining a relational theoretical perspective (given the cultural significance of *guanxi*, meaning relationship, for the Chinese), the sociology of the meal, and social construction of reality, as well as a multi-method approach consisting of a unique combination of social network analysis, phenomenology, and reflexive analysis. Through social network analysis, I explore the composition, content, and structure of Chinese food sharing networks across different ages and generations, and through phenomenology and reflexive analysis, I study what these patterns mean both for the participants and for the meaning of culture. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected from in-depth interviews with 21 participants in Toronto, who provided information on 209 people. These interviews were conducted in the participants’ first languages, Chinese and English.

The research findings show that younger first generation immigrants and second generation immigrants (children of immigrants) have more culturally diverse Chinese food sharing networks than older immigrants, although they all included family and friends in their networks, a lot of whom provided emotional support (87.31%) and practical information

(81.73%) but less financial support (25.38%). By exploring the life-worlds of participants, I found that the problem of the first generation immigrants is the loss of home since their taken-for-granted cultural patterns from their countries of origin are often seen as inadequate in the host country. The older immigrants may be able to hold on to their “home world” more by interacting mostly with family, but the younger immigrants are more eager to integrate with Canadian society. In comparison, the problem of the second generation is the divided home because they frequently suffer from negotiating between different and sometimes conflicting cultural patterns. Born and raised in Canada, they take the pluralization of life-worlds for granted and thus come across as more cosmopolitan. For both generations, the meaning of home is essentially a feeling of comfort. There are several interrelated themes under the overall theme of comfort, representing different relations to Chinese food, including nostalgia, familiarity, habit, affective support, and being yourself. I also discuss other possible meanings of home beyond comfort, specifically, celebration and hosting. By critically inquiring into the assumptions of knowledge, I formulate the deep structure of motive to reveal possibilities such as double enjoyment and reversing the host-guest relationship based on participants’ confidence in Chinese food as an intangible cultural heritage containing a taste that reflects values such as artistry, health, variety, authenticity, and playfulness. Overall, radical interpretive inquiry works with and within language to reveal findings about the experience that resonate with more universal themes and possibilities implicated in the relation of home to food, as seen through the prism of Chinese in Canada. The knowledge and insights created by this research not only give voices to the Chinese research participants but also serve as a first step in starting a conversation among recent and long-time immigrants, native-born Canadians, interdisciplinary researchers, policy makers and service providers to improve cross-cultural understanding in our diverse Canadian society.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandfather.

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INTRODUCTION

TELLING THE STORIES OF HOME AND CHINESE FOOD IN CANADA

On February 24th, 2019, the film *Bao* won an Oscar for the Best Animated Short. The story begins with a lonely Chinese immigrant woman who makes baos (steamed buns) at home in Toronto. One day, a bao suddenly comes to life and turns into a crying baby. At first, the woman is shocked. But the baby bao looks adorable, so she carefully picks it up and holds it close her face with a contented smile. From then on, the woman becomes very protective of baby Bao, and takes good care of Bao as if he were her son. They go shopping in Chinatown, practice Tai Chi in the park, and ride buses around Toronto. Gradually, Bao grows up to have his own friends. One evening, Bao brings home a Caucasian girlfriend with blonde hair. The woman can't believe it. When Bao packs his suitcases and leaves to move out with the girl, the woman gets so upset that she ends up eating Bao and then begins crying. One night, when the woman cries in her room, her human son comes back. His shadow reflected on the wall looks just like Bao. They do not talk much but sit close to each other and share some food. The film ends with the whole family, the woman, her usually absent husband, her son, and her son's blonde girlfriend sitting around the table and making baos together (Shi 2018).

Bao is a story of love, food, and family. The writer and director of *Bao*, Domee Shi, is a Chinese Canadian who was born in Sichuan, China and moved to Canada when she was two years old (Allen 2019). The story was inspired by her memories of growing up in Canada with her mother, a first generation Chinese immigrant who likes to make baos, especially during the holidays (Brown 2018). Bao is a widely popular traditional Chinese food. In Chinese culture, people, including family members, usually cultivate relationships and show love for one another

through food. However, the Chinese ways of expressing love may differ from Western ways. The film contains mostly action and non-verbal communication, since the Chinese tend to use action instead of words to show their affection. For instance, the woman cooks a whole table full of delicious dishes for Bao but never says anything to him. Although Shi stays true to her own authentic and specific experiences with her Chinese family, the film generates mixed reactions among audiences. For instance, some emotional moments for Chinese viewers become moments of laughter for viewers from other cultures (Raduovic 2018).

As a first generation Chinese immigrant and researcher living in Toronto, this film deeply resonated with me. The story of *Bao* is for me not only about a Chinese mother suffering from empty nest syndrome and making a steamed bun that comes to life, as is commonly understood (Brown 2018); it also points to the loneliness and alienation experienced by Chinese immigrants in Canada and their efforts to preserve a sense of “home” through food sharing practices. Food is an important cultural heritage and everyday practice rooted in Chinese culture, with rich cultural meanings and values that are not well understood by people in mainstream Canadian society. In this dissertation, I explore the meanings of “home” in Chinese food sharing networks in Toronto from the perspectives of “first generation” Chinese immigrants and the children of Chinese immigrants. According to Statistics Canada, “first generation refers to people who were born outside Canada” and “second generation includes individuals who were born in Canada and had at least one parent born outside Canada” (Statistics Canada 2018). In this research, I use “second generation immigrants,” “second generation Chinese immigrants,” or “Chinese Canadians” to refer to the offspring of first generation Chinese immigrants. These offspring can be considered first generation Canadians.

The core research problem addressed by my dissertation is the subjective homelessness/displacement of Chinese immigrants in Canada. The condition of homelessness is theorized to be endemic to the modern life-world (Berger et al. 1973). This problem manifests differently in different generations of Chinese immigrants. For first generation Chinese immigrants, the problem is *loss of home*, since they have moved to a new country from their countries of origin. For second generation Chinese immigrants, growing up in Canada with their Chinese families, their problem is the *divided home*, since they often struggle between different and sometimes contradictory Chinese and Canadian ways of life. As mentioned before, food plays an important role in Chinese immigrants' lives. Anyone who is familiar with Toronto knows that there are a great number of Chinese restaurants, and Chinese immigrants also make and share Chinese food at home. For Chinese immigrants, one way to cope with the problem of displacement and a sense of homelessness is to assemble an appearance of the order of home through food sharing activities with people in their networks.

Thus, the main research question is: do Chinese immigrants preserve a taste of "home" in their communities in Toronto? Rather than treating this question as one with a yes or no answer, I do not automatically assume that Chinese immigrants have a sense of "home" that they establish and preserve when they share Chinese food in their communities in Toronto. In order to explore this question, I also ask a number of sub-questions: What does "home" mean for Chinese immigrants in Canada? What are their lived experiences of food sharing in Toronto? What do their food sharing networks look like: for example, who do they share Chinese food with? What are the similarities and differences between first and second generation Chinese immigrants?

To address these questions and to get a more complete understanding of what is shared (created, preserved, or recreated) in Chinese immigrant communities, my research adopts a

radical interpretive inquiry (RII) perspective, which takes into account history, culture, and community, and can deal with both quantitative and qualitative data beyond the empirical level. The central principle of RII concerns “the inextricable intertwining of theoretical, ethical, and practical matters, [and] flies in the face of the dominant understanding that social inquiry can and should be neutral and factual in a quantitative way” (Bonner 1997:7-8). To use this perspective is to resist seeing the research objects as detached, neutral, and factual objects as positivists would. For a radical interpretivist, the research needs to go beyond empirically measurable facts to understand the subjective meanings that people attach to objects. Moreover, the theory and methods used in the research need to be integrated to address the research problem in a deep and reflexive way. In addition, it is also crucial to discuss the ethical and practical implications of the research. My research exploring the meanings of “home” in Toronto’s Chinese immigrant communities strives not only to address an important question and thus generate valuable cultural understandings; I also hope that it may have a profound impact on the well-being of Chinese immigrants in their day-to-day encounters with people from different cultural backgrounds in a modern Canadian city like Toronto.

I collected primary data by conducting interviews with Chinese immigrants living in Toronto, both first and second generations, in their native languages to obtain meanings from their perspectives. The interviews were conducted in Mandarin for first generation Chinese immigrants and in English for second generation ones. Data were collected from 20 semi-structured interviews with 21 Chinese immigrants who provided information on 197 individuals in their food sharing networks. To study the research question and follow the principle of RII, I needed the theoretical and methodological approaches to work well together and so provide a

more holistic understanding of Chinese immigrants' lived experiences and shared meanings constructed in their social relationships when they share food.

My innovative multi-method approach includes social network analysis (SNA), phenomenology, and reflexive analysis. These research methods are complementary and can provide a more complete picture by looking at both quantitative and qualitative data. Note that this multi-method approach is different from the conventional mixed-method approach in sociology because it generates knowledge at the empirical level and beyond to explore and understand the cultural meanings and values constructed in the social relationships of Chinese immigrants. First, the quantitative data obtained from the survey part of interviews are used for mapping the structure of the food sharing networks of Chinese immigrants, which I call "Chinese-food-nets," defined as the personal network that includes a set of people with whom a Chinese immigrant shares food. Next, the qualitative data collected from the responses to in-depth interview questions are for understanding the lived experiences and sharing meanings within these Chinese-food-nets, especially the meanings of "home." Through SNA, the dissertation explores the network structures of first and second generation Chinese-food-nets, and through phenomenology and reflexive analysis it examines what these network structures mean, both for the research participants and the meaning of culture. Furthermore, RII works with and within language to reveal experiences that resonate with more universal themes implicated in the relation of home to food, as seen through the prism of Chinese immigrants in Canada. Last but not least, going beyond empirical findings based on the data collected from the interviews, reflexive analysis critically inquires into the assumptions of knowledge to reconstruct the deep structure that the surface meanings rest on and address bigger questions regarding the ways of life revealed through Chinese food culture.

It is worth stating that conducting research from a radical interpretive perspective requires courage because it needs the researcher to reflexively examine taken-for-granted ways of life, for example, calling into question the existing meanings of home from the perspectives of Chinese immigrants and discussing the ethical implications of the meanings to challenge conventional understanding. According to Heidegger (1977:116), “Reflection is the courage to make the truth of our own presuppositions and the realm of our own goals into the things that most deserve to be called into question.” Furthermore, radical interpretivists critically reflect on the research approaches to address their own assumptions. Radical interpretivists are committed to being principled actors (Blum and McHugh 1984) who combine morally oriented theorizing with practicing in research and everyday life, rather than mechanically following what is expected. Therefore, applying the radical interpretive approach means to be reflexive, be open for both theoretical understanding and practice in life, and be ready to raise new and deeper questions, such as what are the possibilities for the meanings of “home” for Chinese immigrants in modern Canadian society?

Canada is an immigrant country, with its founding history, current development, and future sustainability intimately linked to immigration. In multicultural Toronto, there is a large and increasing Chinese immigrant population. However, only very limited recent sociological research has been conducted on the lived experience of these immigrants. Moreover, little research has studied the meanings of “home” preserved by Chinese immigrants when they share food together in their communities. Most existing studies on the meanings of home in the theoretical and empirical literatures across various disciplines are conducted in a Western context for Western people (Mallett 2004). My research creates knowledge of the meanings of “home” from the perspectives of first and second generation Chinese immigrants in Toronto, as well as

the meanings of “preserving or recreating a taste of home” in their Chinese-food-nets. The research findings will increase our understanding of the life-world and the struggles faced by Chinese immigrants in today’s Canada. In addition, by applying RII, this research seeks to exemplify a form of social inquiry that intertwines theoretical, ethical, and practical issues: this methodology is innovative and unique, as it employs a multi-method approach that combines both SNA and interpretive methods. Overall, the research findings give voice to Chinese immigrants, and challenge dominant Western narratives. The research findings are intended to serve as the first step in starting a conversation among recent and long-time immigrants, native-born Canadians, and interdisciplinary researchers to increase cross-cultural understanding. The research findings can also inform policy makers and service organizations so that they can provide better services to improve the well-being of not just Chinese immigrants, but all immigrants in our diverse society.

Following the process of RII, going from the research problem to theory and methods and then to data analysis using different approaches with increasing levels of reflexivity, the chapters of my dissertation are organized as follows:

In Chapter One, I present the research problem of displacement/homelessness, after establishing the historical and cultural context of Chinese immigrants in Canada, with a particular focus on Chinese immigrants in multicultural Toronto. I also critically review the relevant literature on home, food, and community to show the very limited nature of research on the lived experience of Chinese immigrants in Toronto, especially on the meanings of “home” in relation to food sharing in their networks.

In Chapter Two, I present the theoretical framework and methodological approach of my research, following the principle that theory and methods are intertwined. I provide an overview

of the theoretical framework such as the relational theoretical perspective, the sociology of the meal, and social construction of reality. Next, I give a brief overview of the multiple methods used in this research, including social network analysis and interpretive methods such as phenomenological analysis and reflexive analysis. I also address the epistemological debate between knowledge obtained by discovery versus by interpretation. Lastly, I describe the process of collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, from sample recruitment to interviews to data preparation for analysis.

Chapter Three is the first of three data analysis chapters. In this chapter, by focusing on the quantitative data collected by survey, I use SNA to explore the composition, content, and structure of the food sharing networks of first and second generation Chinese immigrants in Toronto. I present the main findings of my quantitative data analysis of food sharing networks for composition, content (including intangible and tangible content), and structure. I create the network diagrams for Chinese immigrants and compare the network structures across different generations and ages.

Chapter Four is the second chapter of data analysis. Instead of quantitative data, in this chapter, I focus on analyzing qualitative data collected from the open-ended interview questions. I conduct phenomenological analysis to study the lived experiences and shared meanings of home for first and second generation Chinese immigrants that are not addressed in SNA. The phenomenological analysis reveals the essence of the heart of food sharing experiences. First, I describe the life-world of Chinese immigrants in Toronto to set up the context for data analysis. Then I present the meanings of home as essentially a feeling of comfort with different themes.

In Chapter Five, I go beyond the more prevalent meanings of home as comfort to critically analyze the meaning of home that is more particular within the Chinese food culture

life-world, for example, celebration and hosting in the food sharing networks of Chinese immigrants. Moreover, drawing on Blum and McHugh's (1971) analysis of motive talk, I reflexively inquire into the assumptions of knowledge by reconstructing the deep structure that the surface meanings rest on and present the intangible cultural values in Chinese food.

CHAPTER ONE

MISSING HOME: THE PROBLEM OF DISPLACEMENT

1.1 Context

Canada as we know it today is a country established by immigrants on what indigenous people call Turtle Island, their term for the continent of North America. Canada's founding, history, and development are linked not only to colonization, but are also intimately linked to immigration, with its existing population made up of the descendants of earlier and current immigrants (Li 2003:36). The early immigrants came from Europe, mainly England and France, and founded the country, even if on land expropriated from the indigenous peoples. English and French became the official languages of Canada (Martel 2019). Over time, the composition of immigrants in Canada has shifted from mostly white European descendants to more visible minorities, defined as "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour" (Statistics Canada 2019), with Asia as the largest source of immigrants between 2011 and 2016. Moreover, it is projected that the immigrant population in Canada will keep increasing until 2038 (Statistics Canada 2015). In the most recent 2016 Census conducted by Statistics Canada, people were asked to identify their ethnic origins. As a result, Chinese (population 1,769,195) is the largest visible minority group and the seventh largest group after people who identified as Canadian (11,135,965), English (6,320,085), Scottish (4,799,010), French (4,670,595), Irish (4,627,000), and German (3,322,405) (Statistics Canada 2017). The majority of Chinese immigrants choose to settle in big metropolitan areas to be with communities that share a similar culture. Since most Chinese immigrants have more knowledge of English rather than French, the largest groups of Chinese immigrants are in Vancouver and

Toronto (Statistics Canada 2017). My research explores the lived experiences of Chinese immigrants in Toronto.

Toronto is Canada's largest and the world's most multicultural city (BBC 2016). Its own development has mirrored that of Canada itself. The city's changing demographic has transformed it from a "British and Scottish outpost" to an "urban, cosmopolitan, and multicultural" place (Levine 2014:5-6). Since the first European settlers arrived in the 17th century, they contributed significantly to the city's establishment in 1834 and its development over time, such as initiating the construction of the first railway from Ontario to the outside world in 1851, and fostering the economic expansion with the founding of the Toronto Stock Exchange in 1852. They also built University College in 1859, Massey Hall in 1894, etc., in which to hold various leisure and self-improvement events including concerts, lectures, and sporting events (City of Toronto 2019). With the increasing number of immigrants who were not ethnically British after 1951, naturally, the City of Toronto has transformed profoundly, including "physically, politically, economically, socially, and culturally" (City of Toronto 2019). The move toward multiculturalism has been an ongoing struggle in such a large and complex urban centre. The growth of personal freedom and rising standards of living has been accompanied with increasing tolerance and acceptance of others (City of Toronto 2019). Fast forward to the present day, Toronto is now home to more than 230 different nationalities, and about 51.5 percent of its residents were born outside of Canada (foreigners or first generation immigrants). Although over 50% of Torontonians are still of white European extraction, Chinese is now the largest ethnic group (population 684,395), not just among the "visible minorities," but among any ethnic group in Toronto, including English (605,385), Scottish (452,050), Irish (456,650), German (229,980), and French (212,840). Moreover, at present, Chinese languages,

including Mandarin and Cantonese, are the second most spoken languages at home in Toronto, after English (Statistics Canada 2017).

However, the history of Chinese immigrants in Toronto is not well documented. For example, “The History of Toronto: An 11,000 Year Journey,” a virtual exhibit created this year by the City of Toronto, does not record when the Chinese immigrants first came to the city or the establishment of Chinatown, which is one of the most vibrant neighbourhoods in downtown Toronto. Chinese immigrants were only mentioned three times out of hundreds of entries: first, in 1937, “William C. Wong Builds the Largest Chinese Newspaper in North America”; second, in 1957, “Toronto restaurateur and community activist Jean Lumb successfully lobbies for the removal of discriminatory immigration regulations in Canada”; and third, in 1961 “The Hong Luck Kung Fu Club opens in Toronto” (City of Toronto 2019). These events are important but more so from the perspectives of Westerners. Chinese Canadian history is largely unknown to the majority of Canadians: for example, it was not taught in schools. Furthermore, this history of Chinese Canadians is unfamiliar to recent Chinese immigrants, mostly first generation immigrants. It took me some effort to locate the history of Chinese people in Canada, and particularly in Toronto.

Looking back to one of the oldest surviving civilizations on earth, with the largest population in the world (over 1.4 billion today), the Chinese were not exposed to other countries for the most part of their history, let alone likely to move to foreign lands. The name of the country “Zhongguo” means Middle Kingdom. The Chinese believed that China was the centre of the civilized world (Chan 2013:8) until the mid-19th century, when China was attacked by the British during the Opium Wars and a larger number of Chinese began to move to other parts of the world, including Canada (Chan 2013:14).

The history of Chinese Canadians is largely remembered as a history of discrimination. A prominent Chinese Canadian sociologist, Peter Li, wrote about Chinese Canadian history as a “quest for equality.” According to Li, although there have been Chinese immigrants in Canada for generations, since 1858, Chinese Canadians still remain a foreign “other” in Canada in two senses: first, a large proportion of Chinese immigrants were born outside of Canada, even recently. Second, for the general public of Canada, “Canadians are usually equated with Caucasians, while Chinese Canadians and other non-white Canadians are seen as foreigners” (Li 1992:264). According to Li, the history of the Chinese in Canada can be viewed as three periods corresponding to the major shifts in legislation toward the Chinese.

The first period is “development of institutional racism (1858-1923).” During the first period, Chinese people came to Canada as a result of the discovery of gold in 1858 in the Fraser River of British Columbia. Some of the Chinese came from California, where the gold rush was coming to an end, looking for new opportunities. The larger wave of Chinese immigrants came between 1881 and 1885 during the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The Chinese immigrants were not perceived as permanent settlers or desirable citizens (Li 1992:266). Furthermore, they were paid lower wages for the same amount of work, despite having a good reputation as capable and reliable labourers (Chan 2013:19). For every dollar the Chinese were paid, the white men were paid \$1.50 to \$2.50. Moreover, the Chinese were assigned more dangerous tasks, such as using the explosives in tunnels, and they were not offered food or equipment that the white men had. Many Chinese labourers died in accidents, from malnutrition, or from harsh cold weather (Hui 2019:26). When the railway construction was completed in 1885, the first federal legislation against the Chinese came, in the form of a “head tax.” Every Chinese person entering the country had to pay a \$50 head tax. As Prime Minister John A.

Macdonald stated in the House of Commons near the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1883: “It will be all very well to exclude Chinese labour, when we can replace it with white labour, but until that is done, it is better to have Chinese labour than no labour at all” (Li 1992:266-267). The head tax was later raised to \$100 in 1900 and to \$500 in 1903, enough to buy two houses at the time (Chan 2013:29). In their first forty years in Canada, the Chinese labourers worked in “mining, railroad construction, land clearing, public works, market gardening, lumbering, salmon canning and domestic service” (Li 1992:267). The head tax created a severe gender imbalance because many Chinese labourers could not afford to bring their family to Canada. The tax implied that the Chinese were not welcome in Canada.

The first Chinese resident in Toronto, Sam Ching, was recorded in the city directory of 1878. He owned a laundry business at 9 Adelaide Street East, near the railway station. Since the Chinese were not welcomed elsewhere, and they wanted to stay close with others who shared the language and culture, they ended up living in the same area in a cluster of Chinese homes and workplaces, which later became known as “Chinatown” (Chan 2013:33-35). During the time when the head tax was imposed upon the Chinese, most Chinese male workers in Toronto were unable to have their families in Canada. The rare case of the arrival of Lock Quong’s wife on October 11th, 1909 was considered news by the *Toronto Daily Star* (Chan 2013:45). By 1921, the Chinese population in Toronto was 2,134, and they opened 358 laundries, 32 restaurants, and nine other businesses such as grocery stores (Chan 2013:43).

The second period is “exclusion and adaptation (1923-1947).” In 1923, the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed, which prohibited Chinese people from entering Canada, except for diplomats, children born in Canada, merchants, and students. In addition, every person of Chinese origin in Canada had to register with the Government of Canada within a year or pay up

to \$500 and risk imprisonment up to one year. Furthermore, every Chinese person in Canada had to give written notice if he intended to leave Canada temporarily and specify the places he planned to visit, the route he would take, and so on. The Chinese had been reduced to second-class citizens in Canada as a result of the exclusionary policies and discriminatory legislation. Moreover, the Chinese faced institutional racism in economic and political institutions: for example, they were denied the right to pursue a living in the core industrial sector. Consequently, more turned to marginal enterprises such as laundry and food services where there was less competition with white workers. The Chinese Canadian community continued to be a predominately male society, with the sex ratio of 124 men to 10 women in 1931. As a result, many Chinese men in Canada remained “married” bachelors, separated from their wives in China. The absence of family also delayed the growth of a second generation (Li 1992:268-270).

Around that time in Toronto, 80 percent of the 29,033 Chinese workers in Canada were married, but their wives remained in China. Thus, the Chinese community was known as “the bachelor community.” A Chinese man, Cheng Ying-wai, remembered, “The whole city of Toronto didn’t have a dozen Chinese women in 1946... We had no family to go home to [in Toronto]. I returned to China three times to see my family, but I couldn’t bring them back with me” (Chan 2013: 45-46). Feeling lonely without families, Chinese immigrants in Toronto established associations with people who had the same surname, not necessarily related by blood, as well as political associations, religious groups, and cultural groups such as the Beijing Opera and traditional Chinese medicine associations (Chan 2013:48-61).

The third period involved the “gaining of civil rights and Chinese family immigration (1947 onwards).” Since many Chinese had contributed significantly to Canada’s Second World War efforts and China had been an ally, the discriminatory policies toward the Chinese were

gradually lifted. In the United States, the Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed in 1943, and 105 Chinese were admitted annually. Also, the denial of Chinese Canadians' civil rights was recognized as contradicting the charter of the United Nations. In 1947, the Parliament of Canada also repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which had lasted for 24 years. The Chinese gained voting rights in 1947. However, the criteria for admitting Chinese immigrants were very strict compared to the relatively free migration from Europe and the United States (Li 1992:270-271). A major shift happened in 1967 when the point system was established, which eliminated national origin as the primary consideration in selecting immigrants and instead quantified the desirable immigrants for Canada based on educational level, work experience, language abilities, etc. (Li 2003: 34). Since then, there have been an increasing number of Chinese immigrants, mainly from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Southeast Asian countries. The Chinese immigrants were from a more diverse occupational background, with higher education levels than previously, and many came from urban cultures. As these Chinese immigrants were able to bring their families with them to Canada, the sex ratio became more balanced, and a second and even third generation of Chinese Canadians was born and grew up in Canada. Furthermore, a new middle class in the Chinese Canadian community emerged, made up of professional and technical workers. Moreover, some of the second generation Chinese Canadians were able to obtain managerial and professional occupations (Li 1992:271-272).

The increasing number of Chinese immigrants with professional credentials and the growth of second generation Chinese Canadians had raised the political consciousness of the Chinese immigrant community. In 1979, the Chinese Canadian National Council was established as a result of a protest against the television program W5 for airing a report on September 30th, 1979 on Chinese-looking "foreign" students taking precious university places from "real"

Canadian students. The incident reflected the prevalent stereotype that “Chinese” equals “foreigner” (Li 2008a:130; Li 1998:145). Most of my research participants were recruited through the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter.

More Chinese immigrants arrived in Canada during the 1990s, including many Cantonese speakers from Hong Kong just before 1997 when the People’s Republic of China seized sovereignty over Hong Kong from the United Kingdom. More-recent immigrants from Mainland China are Mandarin speakers. In Toronto, Chinese languages are the most common among those whose mother tongue is other than Canada’s two official languages, English and French, and Mandarin is spoken more often at home than Cantonese (Statistics Canada 2017).

The Chinese Canadians included in my research are people who identify themselves as “Chinese.” Statistics Canada defines Chinese Canadians as a subgroup of East Asian Canadians within the larger group of Asian Canadians, and it includes immigrants from Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macau as well as overseas Chinese who have immigrated from South East Asia and South America. Taiwanese Canadian is considered as a separate group (Statistics Canada 2017). My research participants include people from Mainland China and from Hong Kong, as well as overseas Chinese who had emigrated from South East Asia. There was also one participant from Taiwan because she considered herself to be “Chinese.” Most first generation Chinese immigrants identify themselves as “Han Chinese,” which is the world’s largest ethnic group, forming one fifth of the world’s population (Zhang et al. 2007). Over 90% of the population in Mainland China and more than 95% in Taiwan are Han Chinese (CIA 2019). The second generation Chinese immigrants identify themselves as “CBC,” Canadian Born Chinese, with at least one parent born outside of Canada. My second generation research participants all

have at least one parent born in Hong Kong, since they are the earlier Chinese immigrants to Canada.

The term “immigrants” in Canada is socially constructed and ambiguous. The official version of immigrants is based on the point evaluation system used for immigrant admission, and the folk version is based on how an individual’s physical appearance differs from the majority group’s (Li 2003:38-39). Canada’s own culture is still dominated by early immigrants, including the English, French, Scottish, Irish, and German. Chinese immigrants’ success in Canadian society is determined by benchmarks established by native-born Canadians (Li 2003:39). Consequently, new immigrants, especially members of the visible minority, for example, first generation Chinese immigrants, need to alter various aspects of their lives in order to achieve economic success and social status in Canada.

As stated above, Chinese immigrants in Canada have always faced various systematic barriers, such as the Exclusion Act and Head Tax of previous eras. Additionally, they also experience structural inequality in accessing employment due to cultural and language barriers (Hasmath 2012). These barriers became more subtle after the 21st century compared to when Chinese immigrants were discriminated against based on their different physical appearance. At present, Chinese and other immigrants are likely to experience the glass ceiling whereby they do not get promoted in a workplace dominated by Canadians with Western ancestry. In many cases, Chinese immigrants’ foreign credentials in work and education are not recognized. For example, research has shown that recent China-born immigrants with university degrees in many fields of study have been earning wages below the Canadian average, suggesting severe devaluation of the foreign credentials of Chinese immigrants in Canada, and the devaluation is actually more severe for Chinese men than women (Li and Li 2008). Moreover, foreign credentials actually

benefit majority member immigrants but have the opposite effect on visible minority immigrants (Li 2008b). As argued by Peter Li (2008b), the human capital brought by the Chinese immigrants into Canada's labour market in Canada is not utilized because the receiving country is unable, and at times even unwilling, to fully recognize its value.

Languages barriers exist for most first generation Chinese immigrants, since their native language is not one of the official languages of Canada, either English or French. They need to learn to speak a new language for their everyday life and work. This can be very difficult, especially if their native languages have very different phonological systems. The greater challenge lies in understanding a different set of cultural values that underlay the language and that are not teachable. The newcomers face challenges of being strangers in a new culture, and of attempting to interpret the cultural meanings of the dominant social group and to learn the new sets of rules in order to function intelligibly in everyday life. For instance, what appears to be common sense for people who were born in Canada, such as leaving tips in restaurants, can be strange for newcomers. They often experience "crisis" because the flows of their habits from their culture of origin are constantly interrupted and what they know of the cultural pattern no longer functions as a system of tested recipes. As Schutz points out, an immigrant is like a stranger who acts "[w]ithin the scheme of reference brought from his home group; however, he finds a ready-made idea of the pattern supposedly valid within the approached group—an idea which necessarily will soon prove inadequate" (Schutz 1944:502). Chinese immigrants, especially the newcomers, do not share the basic assumptions of the majority of Canadians in their day-to-day life practices, so they have to constantly question everything that is taken for granted by native-born Canadians (Schutz 1944). Additionally, second generation Chinese immigrants can experience contradictions in cultural practices that force them to make choices to

assimilate to “the Canadian way” or to remain in “the Chinese way,” with potential conflicts with others in the different groups.

Facing various barriers in Canada, Chinese immigrants often experience feelings of isolation and alienation (Li 1998:76). Consequently, they may use innovative means to cope with the difficult feelings and improve their reality, for instance, opening Chinese restaurants to provide more employment opportunities for community members. For Chinese immigrants, Chinese restaurants not only offer food and employment opportunities that satisfy their survival needs, they also provide cultural and social spaces for Chinese immigrants to socialize with each other in this new country. They are also spaces of comfort and nostalgia. Chinese food is familiar and tasty. It preserves a sense of home with traditional Chinese cultural values that have been passed on for thousands of years. Everywhere Chinese people go in the world, they open Chinese restaurants. Furthermore, Chinese food is often the first point of contact between the West and the East in countries such as Canada. It is well liked by Canadians from various cultural backgrounds. If you look around in a Chinese restaurant in Toronto, you can see a distinct variety of people eating there and enjoying the warm gathering with family and friends. Eating food is one way of reproducing home.

1.2 The Problem

The hearts of earlier Chinese immigrants carried and in some cases still carry a sense of being discriminated against as members of an inferior group. This feeling of inferiority has also influenced their children, the second and later generations of Chinese immigrants. In contrast, recent first generation Chinese immigrants are less affected by the history of the earlier Chinese Canadians, but they are still being discriminated against, although usually less overtly, and face

various structural and cultural barriers in their day-to-day life. While discrimination is an obvious problem experienced by Chinese immigrants in Canada as a result of various forms of social inequality, my research is going to focus on the problem of displacement/homelessness, which is experienced by both first and second generation Chinese immigrants in their everyday life in Canada, regardless of their native language, social class, and cultural backgrounds.

For Chinese immigrants, the meaning of home is enigmatic because immigrants are divided around the notion of what is their proper “place.” Immigrants who moved across national borders have to “destabilize a sense of home as a stable origin and unsettle the fixity and singularity of a place called home” (Blunt and Dowling 2006:198). This move from one familiar place may result in the problem of psychosocial integration, which “denotes interdependence between a person and a society” (Alexander 2008:58), with alternative names such as “belonging,” “community,” “wholeness,” “social cohesion,” and “culture.” Consequently, they seek out any currently available means to cope with the problem of psychosocial integration. For instance, Chinese immigrants consume delicious food with a familiar taste that reminds them of their place in the past. Immigrants are in between the memories of past homes and the hopes of future homes. Meanwhile, living an everyday life in a new and different culture is not easy. Within the familiar homeland, one has taken-for-granted knowledge of how to deal with things and people, but when one has to begin thinking more deeply, the comfort of homeland disappears and life becomes stressful (Young 2011:286). Therefore, for transnational immigrants, both material and imaginative geographies of homes are ambiguous because of attachments to more than one place. Home is shaped by both the memories from the past and life in the present (Blunt and Dowling 2006:202).

Furthermore, the notion of being modern makes immigrants' loyalty to place enigmatic. Peter Berger and his colleagues in *The Homeless Mind* (1973) argue that modern individuals suffer from an increasing condition of "homelessness" as a result of pluralization of life-worlds. They argue that modern consciousness is rooted in the idea of progress, mainly economic growth. Moreover, with the rise of the collective housekeeping social realm and the decline of the polis-like good life as theorized by Hannah Arendt (1998), modern individuals are losing their sense of home as a meaningful and sacred place and are becoming more practical and calculating, especially in large cities (Simmel 1971). Chinese immigrants living in modern cities such as Toronto need to adapt to and negotiate the new set of fields of modern consciousness. Berger et al. points out, "Although consciousness is a phenomenon of subjective experience, it can be objectively described because its socially significant elements are constantly being shared with others" (Berger et al. 1973:14). Chinese immigrants' subjective lived experiences in modern Canadian society can be studied through objectively describing their shared meanings in social relationships. Berger et al. (1973) also states that phenomenological analysis allows researchers to get at the "structures of modern consciousness," including the web of meanings that Chinese immigrants need to navigate their ways through everyday activities with others in present-day Canada.

There are a small number of existing studies on Chinese immigrants' adjustment in Canada and most of them use empirical quantitative methodologies (Chow 2012; Costigan et al. 2010; Costigan and Koryzma 2011; Kuo and Roysircar 2004). For example, Costigan and Koryzma (2011) state that relocating to a new country can represent a stressful period of change as immigrants adjust to the sociocultural differences of their new home. They examine acculturation and adjustment among 177 Chinese immigrant parents with adolescent children in

Canada by measuring their psychological adjustment through important determinants such as symptoms of depression, feelings of self-esteem, and life satisfaction as categorical variables. However, the variables still cannot capture the true underlying reasons for these determinants, such as symptoms of depression. Another study conducted by Chow (2012) on the well-being of Chinese immigrant seniors concludes that neighbourhood quality correlates with quality of life, based on the results of interviews with structured questionnaires for 127 elderly Chinese immigrants. Chow also points out that more detailed analysis of the elderly Chinese immigrants' social network would be a much needed next step, along with in-depth interviews that could allow the elders to share their lived experiences (Chow 2012:355). There is one exception in the research on Chinese immigrant adjustment in Canada that is not quantitative. Lori Mac and Kevin Alderson's (2009) phenomenological study explores the retrospective accounts of 11 Chinese immigrant adults and produced six categories and 31 themes from their analysis of the transcripts. For instance, the categories are: adjustment to a different culture, family, language, environment, friendships, and self and identity. They also conceptualize a bicultural identity developed by research participants in their process of attempting to adjust to Canada while still preserving their identity from their culture of origin (Mac and Alderson 2009). Nevertheless, the study did not reveal the deeper and contradictory cultural meanings and values of the Chinese immigrants that can better explain their bicultural conceptual model. Furthermore, none of these empirical studies capture the meanings of the new home from the perspectives of Chinese immigrants in Canada. My research has been designed to uncover the shared cultural meanings and values of Chinese immigrants in their social relationships using a combination of methods, including social network analysis and interpretive methods (phenomenology and analysis) to

explore and understand their lived experiences in Canada, with a particular focus on home, food, and community. Next I review the existing research on each of the topics.

1.3 Overview of Existing Research

1.3.1 Home

Existing research on home involves diverse and even contradictory meanings of the term, including home as a place, space, feeling, practice, and state of being within the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, psychology, human geography, history, architecture, and philosophy as shown in Shelley Mallett's (2004) comprehensive critical review of the meaning of home in the multidisciplinary theoretical and empirical literature. She states that most studies representing the dominant and recurring ideas about home are conducted in a Western context. She also points out a lack of cross-cultural perspectives on home (Mallett 2004). A recent collection on the sociology of home in the Canadian context by Gillian Anderson, Joseph Moore, and Laura Suski (2016) shows that although the experience of home has been studied (Mezei et al. 2016; O'Connor 2016), very little research has considered lived experience from Chinese Canadians' perspective. Exceptions include research on the lived experience of Chinese prostitutes and slave girls in the Chinese Rescue Home in Victoria, British Columbia from 1886 until 1942 (Ikebuchi 2016), and a more recent study on the work of home-making for Chinese immigrants in Vancouver, Canada (Lauster and Zhao 2017). Nevertheless, no recent research has looked at the meanings of home for Chinese immigrants in Toronto.

The term "home" in the English language derives from the Anglo-Saxon word "ham," which means "village, estate, or town" (Hollander 1991). According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the definition of home has multiple meanings:

Home n. The place where a person or animal dwells.

1. a. A collection of dwellings; a village, a town.
b. A landed property; an estate, a manor.
2. a. A dwelling place; a person's house or abode; the fixed residence of a family or household; the seat of domestic life and interests.
b. Without article or possessive. The place where one lives or was brought up, with reference to the feelings of belonging, comfort, etc., associated with it.
c. With *the*. The domestic setting.
d. The family or social unit occupying a house; a household.
e. The furniture or contents of a house.
3. With reference to the grave or one's state after death. Frequently with preceding adjective, esp. in long home.
4. A refuge, a sanctuary; a place or region to which one naturally belongs or where one feels at ease.
5. A person's own country or native land. Also: the country of one's ancestors.
6. The normal resting place or abode of an animal; *spec.* a nesting site or structure.
7. A residential institution providing care, rest, refuge, accommodation, or treatment. Also: a similar establishment for rescued animals; an animal shelter.
8. a. A place where something originates, flourishes, or is most typically found; the seat, centre, or birthplace of an activity.
b. The position or location of a material object, institution, etc., esp. when long-term or permanent.

(Oxford English Dictionary 2017).

In German, *Heimat*, translated as “homeland,” means what is “near” to us, according to Martin Heidegger. He thinks being in the *Heimat* is a state of mind that does not consist of being in any “fixed and stable spot” on earth; it is the experience of the “nearness,” “wonder,” “uncanniness” of being. In other words, homeland is a “poetic” and “holy” place that a person experiences anywhere in the world (Young 2011:290).

In Chinese, home is translated into 家 (*jia*), which is the same character as family (家). *Jia* also has many meanings, for example, home, family, household, domestic affairs, a person or family engaged in a certain trade (e.g. fisherman’s *jia*), a specialist in a certain field (e.g. scientist is translated as science *jia*), a school of thought (the Taoist School is Tao *Jia*), a member of same clan, and nationality (note that country in Chinese translates as country *jia*) (ICIBA 2017). The most common meaning of *jia* among the Chinese is “family,” because home and family are used interchangeably. According to the Confucian philosopher Liang Shuming, the ethical relations within a Chinese family include two aspects: sentiment (*qing*) and obligation (*yi*). Sentiments and obligations together create and maintain a harmonious structure that inspires cooperation and resists conflicts: moreover, individual interests are never placed above the collective interests. The ethical relation of familial sentiments and obligations are extended to communities in Chinese society and thus is an important characteristic of Chinese culture (Liang [1949] 1986 as cited in Bian 2001:276). Likewise, Joyce Ma et al. (2002:58-59) argue that the value of the family is central to Chinese culture. Chinese families’ values include loyalty, collectivism, family solidarity, hierarchical relationships, clearly defined roles, and the Confucian ethics of filial piety (Ho 1987; Ma 1987). But not much work has been done to understand the tensions underneath the apparent harmonious Chinese familial relationships. Daniel Shek (2006:275-276) points out that most existing research on family has been conducted in the West. Shek believes

the very small number of citations that come up using the research terms of “family” and “Chinese” suggest a strong need for more effort to conduct Chinese family research. However, there exists a large body of literature on family written in Chinese from the “insider” perspective that is unknown to Western scholars, for example, research conducted and disseminated in Chinese languages.

Although many researchers from the West have conducted research on associations between home and family (Jones 1995, 2000; Finch and Hayes 1994; Bowlby et al. 1997), the meanings of home and family, as well as the nature of the relationship between home and family, are not explored in great detail (Mallett 2004). Some researchers suggest that the terms of home and family are interchangeable (Oakley 1974; Bernardes 1987), and others argue that home is just a house without the family (Gilman 1980; Leonard 1980). But with the increasing number of nuclear families in contemporary Western societies (Saunders and Williams 1988), home and family nowadays can take on new meanings. For example, meanings based on purpose that contribute to group cohesion may replace the meanings based on geographic factors (Simmel 1955:129). This is not uniquely true for meaning construction for Westerners: Chinese immigrants in Canada with extended family members in China face the same situation of living with old and new meanings of home and family. The old and new meanings of home are not just objects in the world but also a way of thinking about these objects.

1.3.2 Food

Foods as natural products have been culturally constructed, transformed, and consumed according to particular conventional social practices. Besides utilitarian or technical considerations, food plays a crucial role in the social organization of human communities. While

research on food has multiple dimensions such as production, distribution, preparation, and consumption, research on food has generated a large number of interests for social and human science researchers including ethnologists, sociologists, anthropologists, geographers, historians, and psychologists. Since the 1970s, a “sociology of food and eating” has emerged from the work of many sociologists and anthropologists such as Ignor de Garine, Claude Fischler, Annie Hubert, Claude Grignon, Nicolas Herpin, Jean-Pierre Corbeau, Jean-Louis Lambert, and Jean-Pierre Poulain, as highlighted in *The Sociology of Food: Eating and the Place of Food in Society*, written by the French sociologist Jean-Pierre Poulain (2017). However, most research focusses on food from Western perspectives, and non-Western foods such as Chinese dishes are considered “exotic cuisine” (Poulain 2017:17). Although there are studies on Chinese food and its social functions, eating behaviour, and cultural meanings (Ma 2015), few researchers have looked at the relationship between food and the feelings of home for Chinese immigrants.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the definition of food has multiple meanings:

Food n. Nourishment.

1. a. Any nutritious substance that people or animals eat or drink in order to maintain life and growth; nourishment, provisions.
- b. Solid nourishment, as opposed to drink.
- c. Livelihood. Now only in *to earn one's (daily) food*: to earn a living.
- d. An item of food; a particular kind of food.
- e. *to be food for (also to) warms (also dogs, etc.)*: to be dead. *To be food for fishes*: to be drowned. *Food for powder*: soldiers, esp. low-ranking recruits, collectively regarded as expendable in war.

2. Figurative

- a. Something providing spiritual, emotional, or mental sustenance.
- b. Something warranting discussion or consideration, or serving as a creative stimulus.
Esp. in *food for thought*.

3. In extended uses.

- a. Material for keeping a fire burning.
- b. English regional (Yorkshire). Material consisting of the dirt, grease, and loose fibres washed out of sheep's fleeces during processing, used as a fertilizer in agriculture.
- c. A substance applied to the skin or hair to maintain or improve its condition.

4. The act of eating. *In food*: while eating or feeding. Obsolete.

5. The substances necessary for plant growth which are absorbed by a plant from the earth and air (or from host or symbiotic organism), or are synthesized by the plant itself; nutrients.

6. A child regarded as one who is fed or nurtured. Also in wider sense: a person, a creature.

Obsolete.

(Oxford English Dictionary 2019b).

A number of researchers, including Jack Goody (1982), Anne Murcott (1988), and Alan Beardsworth and Teresa Keil (1997), have assessed the recent status of the sociology of food from various perspectives. For example, Jack Goody identified three principal movements: functionalism, culturalism, and structuralism. The functionalists built on Durkheim's work and studied people's eating practices across different economic classes. The culturalists focused more on the eating practices themselves and the process of forming eating habits and tastes. And the

structuralists were concerned with how eating practices existed among various relationships, such as kinships, and the content of exchanges among the relationships (Poulain 2017:114-127).

The sociology of taste began with theories put forward by Pierre Bourdieu, particularly his theory of “habitus”: “a structure that organizes perceptions, beneath which lie the objectively classifiable, material conditions of existence.” And he asserts, “What I like, and find to my taste, is what I normally consume, that is to say the food eaten by my own social class” (Poulain 2017:146). This way, tastes become something that distinguishes elite groups from the working classes. Even the eating practices differ. For example, food for the working class people would involve budgets and pay-slips (Poulain 2017:146-147). While for the elite groups, food can be more expensive, for instance, eating at luxurious places with rare food items. I argue that for Chinese immigrants, there is not much difference between the kinds of food consumed among different social classes. For instance, in the parking lot of the T&T (Chinese) supermarket, one can observe regular-priced cars as well as luxury cars such as Porsches. Thus, Bourdieu’s notion of taste does not apply here. By focusing on the differences in taste on the level of social class analysis, he is being reductive with regard to taste and loses the phenomenon. A deeper understanding of the essence using phenomenological analysis is needed in order to capture taste, in this case, the taste valued by Chinese immigrants.

Anne Murcott writes about the relationship between food and home. In her book *Introducing the Sociology of Food and Eating* (2019), she points out that the family meal is dying out: “For many families, the weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year are about the only time they get together for meals. The rest of the year, eating is largely a matter of self-service” (Murcott 2019:29). A number of sociological studies state the importance of “eating together as a family,” that it is an ideal many people are strongly committed to. For instance, it is

a place to teach children table manners (Warde 2016), also a way of recreating childhood memories for the middle aged, and an occasion for cultivating family cohesion and sociality among rural dwellers in Australia (Lupton 2000). Actually, people around the world cherish the family gathering at the table to eat and engage in conversation, as demonstrated in the research findings including DeVault (1991) in the US, Charles and Kerr (1988) in the UK, and Coveney (2000) in Australia (as cited in Murcott 2019:33).

Murcott also recorded the history of sociological research on family meals. From the 1970s to the 2000s, social scientists uncritically reproduced research asserting that people did not eat together anymore (Murcott 2012). Researchers had looked for existing statistics to test whether family meals were disappearing in Western nations (Mestdag and Vandeweyer 2005) as well as cross-nationally (Warde et al. 2007). However, I argue that simply relying on statistics cannot address whether family meals are really disappearing because the perspectives from the people who actually have family meals together are missing from the research findings. Moreover, most research studies in the sociology of food have been conducted in Western contexts. Chinese food is considered as “exotic” by Western researchers. Although there has been research on “the taste for exotic cuisines and culinary intermixing,” very little research and knowledge produced about Chinese food from the perspective of Chinese people has made it into the mainstream of the sociology of food (Poulain 2017:16-17).

1.3.3 Community

Much contemporary research on “community” has been developed from the classic model of the dichotomy and opposing *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society/association) put forward by Ferdinand Tönnies in 1888. Contemporary researchers have

followed this model and have shown that many communities do not strictly fit the category of one or the other. People, including immigrants, tend to reproduce communities (Gemeinschaft) within cities, for example, working-class in London; Italian Americans in Boston, African Americans in Washington, and African Americans in the Midwest (Young and Willmott 1957; Gans 1962; Liebow 1967; Stack 1974)). Among these studies, one of the most notable, East York Studies, was conducted by Barry Wellman (1979) in Toronto in 1968, with follow-up studies in 1977-1978, using the method of personal network. However, there is overall very limited research on the personal networks in immigrant communities, and there is no research on the food networks of Chinese immigrants in Toronto.

First, for Tönnies, Gemeinschaft means a “social order bounded together by a unity of wills. Family and social institutions naturally created cooperation in a Gemeinschaft prior to its members’ voluntary choice” (Liebersohn 1988:7 as cited in Bonner 1997:20). People cooperate with each other within the communities preordained for them by birth, socioeconomic background, gender, etc. (Bonner 1997:20).

Second, Gesellschaft is a social order “constituted by commodity exchange” (Bonner 1997:21). Rather than having roots in family bonds like Gemeinschaft, relationships in Gesellschaft are based on “the conventional order of trade” (Bonner 1997:21). People are regulated by contracts and are free to come and go in their associations.

Georg Simmel also wrote about the city way of life in his classic essay *The Metropolis and Mental Life* (1971). As humans develop their individuality and freedom, they become more calculating and instrumentally-minded (Bonner 1997:27). Simmel points out that “the calculating exactness of practical life which has resulted from a money economy corresponds to the ideal of natural science” (1971:13). As a result, people in the city become “blasé,” adopting an attitude of

indifference toward distinctive things (Simmel 1971:14). People lose their particularity as human beings and are treated as numbers in the gigantic capitalism system where money-making and technological advancement are at the centre of society. The emotional bonds maintained and enjoyed among small-town folks are often replaced by cold and unpleasant associations among people with a mutual strangeness and repulsion in the city (Simmel 1971:15). People who live in the city are no longer just groups that you are familiar with: there are various groups with very different norms and customs.

That observation speaks to people who were not originally from the city, so it makes sense that they have weaker emotional bonds with others in the city. But in the case of Chinese immigrants, the first generation of immigrants who moved here from their country of origin seek relationships with people who share similar backgrounds to their own, so bonds can be formed and they are not completely strangers. For the second generation immigrants, they were born in the city, so they had families and grew up in communities.

Although *Gemeinschaft* is closely associated with a rural setting in the literature, whereas *Gesellschaft* is used for describing relations in the city (Bonner 1997:20-21), they do not necessarily describe the case in contemporary Western societies.

The communities of Chinese immigrants have the characteristics of *Gemeinschaft* since their personal networks include family members as well as friends who also come from similar Chinese cultural backgrounds: such communities are not formed by choice. I argue that some Chinese friends replace the roles of the extended family in Canada, especially for the first generation Chinese immigrants, because many of their relatives who could have been in their personal networks remain in China.

Food sharing among Chinese immigrants in their communities tends to have the features of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* because both emotional and familial bonds are being established and practical/instrumental information is being exchanged. However, I argue that Chinese Canadian communities in general resemble *Gemeinschaft* more than *Gesellschaft* because the bonds are based more on emotion, and instrumental information exchange is optional at the dinner gatherings. The spaces shared by Chinese immigrants when they have meals together, especially when they eat at restaurants, are similar to the “third place” described by Bonner, “the place between work and home,” an “informal public realm.” Cafés, coffee shops, bookstores, hair salons, and pubs (this last is particularly important for the Irish) often form the heart of a community, where people hang out and engage in conversations (Bonner 2011:56).

A more recent study on personal communities was conducted by Vincent Chua, Julia Madej, and Barry Wellman (2011). Personal communities are “social networks defined as an individual set of ties” (Chua et al. 2011:101). Personal community researchers treat communities as “personal networks” and view networks “from the standpoint of a focal individual (*ego*) actively managing his or her ties with *alters*” (Chua et al. 2011:103). The common approach for generating a personal community is to ask the individuals (*egos*) to list people (*alters*) in their networks. Actually, the personal community is one type of ego-net that has been researched widely in the field of social network analysis in recent years, and ego-nets may include individual people, organizations, etc. (Crossley et al. 2015). This approach may not fit the Chinese collective culture, where individuals do not usually view themselves as the centre in their relationships with others. However, as a methodological approach, I have found it useful to ask my research participants to list people in their communities. My work shows that Chinese immigrants are connected by the activities of food sharing. In order to get a better understanding

of collective culture in the communities of Chinese immigrants, I also need to conduct interpretive analysis such as phenomenological analysis to capture shared meanings.

Chua et al. (2011:101) also pointed out that there has been a shift in perception from spatially-defined communities to relationally-defined communities, especially with the increasing usage of the internet including email, Facebook, MySpace, and Hi5. Nevertheless, research has shown that the internet is not really a separate second life in itself, but is integrated with personal communities (Veenhof et al. 2008; Quan-Hasse et al. 2002). The internet allows people to cultivate newly formed ties as well as strengthen existing ties. Apparently the addition of internet to the more traditional face-to-face contact means more overall communication between friends and families now than before. Although some researchers fear that online communication may replace what should be face-to-face interactions among people, this fear is unfounded according to the existing research (Chua et al. 2011:105). The internet is supplementing face-to-face interactions between family and friends, especially for those that live far apart from each other. My research focuses on face-to-face interactions among Chinese immigrants and people with whom they share Chinese food. Thus, their food network may not include important friends and relatives in a different country, but I argue that the main relationships can still be captured, as some research participants list significant others with whom they once shared food but who are now far away.

1.4 Conclusion and Discussion

From the first Chinese immigrants in the late 19th century to the present day, Chinese immigrants went through different stages in Canada, and their population is still growing. Efforts have been made in recent years to recover and introduce Chinese Canadian culture and history to

mainstream Canadians: for example, May is now Asian Heritage Month. There are various events happening in Toronto such as talks about Chinese Canadian history, and book launches by Chinese Canadian authors. More Canadians let their children study Mandarin. However, these activities only scratch the surface of Chinese Canadian culture. There is still a huge gap in the cross-cultural communication between Chinese immigrants and Canadians who are not from a Chinese cultural background. There is very little knowledge available on the deeper cultural meanings and values held dear by Chinese immigrants. As I see it, translating the language is only the first step: it is more important to capture the essence of the meanings and even values embedded in the translation, as they can easily be misunderstood. My research aims to explain these meanings from the perspectives of Chinese immigrants, making them comprehensible to people who do not speak Chinese. Furthermore, the experiences and voices of Chinese immigrants need to be heard, as they are making up an increasingly larger percentage of the population in Canada. I argue that simply interpreting their experiences from mainstream Western perspectives cannot achieve a true understanding of Chinese cultural meanings.

In this chapter, I discussed various barriers faced by Chinese immigrants as strangers in Canada, for example, language and cultural barriers. These barriers are not uniquely true for Chinese immigrants. Any newcomer in Canadian society may have similar experiences of being a stranger. Although my research focuses on Chinese immigrants in particular, I hope that my findings on coping with being a stranger can be applied universally. Various scholars have studied “strangers” with different emphases, including Schutz (1944) and Simmel (1950). While Schutz focuses on describing the stranger’s struggle in understanding the taken-for-granted nature of the dominant culture, Simmel points to the position of “the trader” that allows the stranger to contribute to the culture in addition to being a subject for cultural assimilation. In the

following chapters, I explore how Chinese immigrants deal with being strangers and preserve a sense of home in a new country by studying their food sharing practices in their communities, using an innovative multi-method approach. I discuss the theory and methods in more detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

CONSTRUCTING THE MEANINGS OF HOME IN CHINESE FOOD SHARING RELATIONSHIPS

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the research problem of displacement experienced by Chinese immigrants in Toronto. The problem is actually *loss of home* for first generation immigrants and *divided home* for second generation ones. Understanding the meanings of home is essential for this research in which I study how Chinese immigrants preserve a sense of home in their food networks (Chinese-food-net) in Toronto. In this chapter, I present the theoretical framework and multi-method approach I use to address this problem.

As the theoretical framework, I focus on the relational perspective of various social theorists, as well as the sociology of the meal put forward by Georg Simmel, and the social construction of reality by Peter Berger et al. I argue that the meanings of home are co-constructed through conversations among the individuals who share Chinese food in social relationships within their food networks.

The multi-method approach used for this research consists of a unique combination of social network analysis (SNA) and interpretive methods for analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data¹. This approach differs from the “conventional” quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods approaches in mainstream sociological research because it goes beyond empirical findings and provides a more in-depth interpretation of the collected data. SNA

¹ Note that this multi-method approach in my research is not the same as other types of multi-method approach consisting of several methods for analyzing multiple types of quantitative or qualitative data used in the social sciences. For example, in Psychology, there is the “the multitrait-multimethod matrix” developed by Donald Campbell at Northwestern University and Donald Fiske at University of Chicago for measuring at least two traits by at least two methods (Campbell and Fiske 1959).

provides useful empirical descriptions of the structure and meanings in the Chinese-food-nets that can then be used in the interpretive methods. Conversely, the interpretive methods can make implicit meanings and values explicit to help explain the structure obtained by SNA.

For this research, I follow the principle of intertwining theory and methods, which can be traced back to ancient Greek traditions. According to Alan Blum (1978:2), Socrates exemplified a way of inquiry that brings life and theory together to pursue the “good,” defined as that by “which we ought to understand every art, action, and pursuit as aiming, including the art of inquiring, into this good.” It is well known that Aristotle takes a different methodological approach to Socrates, but they both intertwine theory and methods to pursue the “good.” In the *Ethics*, Aristotle says, “Every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and pursuit, is thought to aim at some good; and for this reason the good has been rightly declared to be that at which all things aim” (as cited in Blum 1978:1). The “good” can be different for different people. In the case of my research, I needed to explore the meanings of home constructed in the social relationships of Chinese immigrants in Toronto, so it is appropriate to apply both SNA to study the structure of the relationships, and interpretive methods to understand the shared meanings within the relationships. SNA and interpretive methods use different lenses and sometimes pose as opposed ways of conducting research (Roth and Mehta 2002:136), but in my case, they are actually complementary because they inform different aspects of the research and also each other. Next I discuss the theoretical framework and methodological approaches in detail.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Relational Theoretical Perspective

Although social relationships appear as external tangible structures that are fixed over a certain period of time, what is being shared within the relationships is fluid, constantly changing, intangible, and only partly knowable. According to Simmel (1971:261), “a person is never merely a collective being, just as he is never merely an individual being.” We all need relationships because we are neither isolated self-sufficient individuals nor collective beings without idiosyncrasies. Furthermore, we are shaped by our social relationships. In addition to Simmel, relational thinking is evident among classical sociologists, including Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber. Marx (1978:247) argues, “society does not consist of individuals, but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand” (as cited in Emirbayer 1997:288). Likewise, Durkheim (1995:211) recognizes that “the force of the collectivity is not wholly external... Society can exist only in and by means of individual minds” (as cited in Emirbayer 1997:288).

Moreover, “the Weberian perspective on society as a network of meanings” has influenced research by contemporary sociologists such as Berger and Kellner (1964:2) on marriage as a social relationship where shared meanings are always being constructed, which I will discuss in more detail later in the chapter. A more recent development on relational sociology was in the 1990s by Harrison White and his colleagues and students, who were working on two previously discrete but growing subfields in sociology: cultural sociology and SNA (Mische 2011:80-81). Among them, Mustafa Emirbayer, in his paper titled “Manifesto for a Relational Sociology,” argues that even the idea of agency can be reconceptualized from a relational perspective in which agency is “inseparable from the unfolding dynamics of situations,

especially from the problematic features of those situations” (1997:294). He also thinks that agency is a “dialogic process” that is something like an ongoing conversation of actors’ internal lived experiences engaging with others in external concrete transitions within relational contexts, including cultural, social structural, and social psychological contexts. Basically, he argues against the conventional substantialist perspective, which treats substances (for example, things, beings, essence) as the fundamental units of inquiry and uses more traditional statistical models, which consider variables as separate entities. I think, however, that relations are important, but so are substances: in particular, the quality of the relationships is crucial. There is no empty relationship. To study relationships as structures without knowing what is being shared is meaningless. Emirbayer (1997:310) also mentions that one of the weaknesses of relational sociology is “its relative neglect of normative concerns, despite the profound interpretation (in true transactionalist fashion) of all questions of ‘is’ and ‘ought’ in social-scientific analysis.” This limitation can be improved by engaging with the kinds of interpretive methods that get at implicit ethical values, which I discuss in more detail later under research methods.

Relationships (*guanxi*) are an essential feature of Chinese culture. In Liang’s book *The Essential Meanings of Chinese Culture* (1949), he argues that the social order in China is neither society-based (*shehui benwei*), or individual-based (*geren benwei*), but relationship-based (*guanxi benwei*). Furthermore, even with the geographical and social dislocation, and the decline of the traditional Chinese social order happening in the 20th century, Liang still thinks “relationships” are the feature that are the most characteristic of Chinese culture. Liang writes:

Our closest and dearest feelings go toward those who are naturally related to us through bone and flesh, and then extends out to all those we associate with. Depending on the relative

depth and length of the association, there develops a corresponding amount of affect (qingfen) (as cited in Yang 1994:295).

Yanjia Bian, an established Chinese social network researcher in the United States, defines guanxi as “interpersonal connections that facilitate favor exchanges” (Bian 2001:275). In his paper, “Guanxi Capital and Social Eating: Theoretical Models and Empirical Analyses,” Bian presents three models of guanxi for social eating in China. For Model I, guanxi means “webs of extended familial obligations.” Family and pseudo-family connections are invited to meals as a means of fulfilling moral obligations based on sentiment and closeness. For Model II, guanxi means “exchange networks of particular instrumental ties.” People with diverse resources, including from family, the community, and work are involved in keeping promises of providing and returning favours based on mutual trust and loyalty. For Model III, guanxi means “social exchange networks of asymmetric transaction.” Anyone can be invited to this, serving as network bridges and resourceful ties based on repeated asymmetric transactions (Bian 2001:280). Nonetheless, Bian’s research informed by these models has been limited to empirical findings, and has overlooked deeper cultural meanings and values.

Guanxi is often compared to social capital, defined as “the capacity of individuals to command scarce means by virtue of their membership in networks or broader social structures” (Portes 1995:12 as cited in Bian 2001:291). Social capital is a concept developed out of a family of capital theories, most notably Marx’s conceptualization of capital as part of the surplus value captured by the bourgeoisie, and also as an investment circulated back in the production of commodities (Lin 2001:5). Nan Lin (2001:6) states that “the premise behind the notion of social capital is rather simple and straightforward: investment in social relations with expected returns,” implying that social capital is instrumental rather than expressive in nature. In my research, I

expect to find some instrumental relationships between people who eat Chinese food together, for instance, asking for help to find a job during the meal.

In contrast, Xiaochun Xu (2017:8) argues that *guanxi* is different from social capital because *guanxi* is embedded with Chinese cultural characteristics, rooted in the Confucian ethical system that involves “feelings of affection, warmth, and safety.” Moreover, *guanxi* exists in all kinds of relationships in Chinese culture, including business relationships, marriage, and of course, social eating (Xu 2017; Bian 2001).

Guanxi in Chinese social eating can also be explored and understood from various theoretical perspectives developed in the West, for instance, the mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity put forward by Durkheim (1984). Inspired by his theories, I can ask questions such as: do Chinese immigrants in the Chinese-food-nets share many similarities with each other, for example, do they have the same ethnicity, religious beliefs, and circle of friends like in a traditional society (mechanical solidarity)? Or are they different in interdependent relationships? For instance, do they have different jobs, so that when they have Chinese food together, they can share diverse information about the job market (organic solidarity)? Furthermore, I would expect the first generation and second generation of Chinese immigrants to display different kinds of solidarity, but I would also expect to find the unexpected. For example, in a recent article in the *Toronto Star*, Colin Li, a second generation Chinese immigrant, graduated from the University of Waterloo and decided to work in his parents’ restaurant Hong Shing on Dundas Street West that had opened 20 years ago when his parents moved to Canada from China. This choice was contrary to the more familiar option for second generation Chinese Canadians: taking a job in finance (Liu 2017).

Since a Chinese immigrant's food network usually consists of more than one person, it can get quite complicated in today's pluralized society. The ego has a social status that involves an array of roles, such as Chinese, immigrant, husband, doctor, each with particular culturally constructed expectations about relationships that make up a social structure. Robert Merton defines role-set as the "complement of the role-relationships in which persons are involved by virtue of occupying a particular social status" (Merton 1957:110), and he thinks the problem with conflict in the role-set exists in all societies. But he argues, "there is always a potential for differing and sometimes conflicting expectations of the conduct appropriate to a status-occupant among those in the role-set" (1957:112). I am interested in exploring how Chinese immigrants who occupy diverse positions in Canada deal with conflicts through the composition of their food-nets. Conflicts, according to Simmel, exist in sociation (*Vergesellschaftungsform*) and result in change because sociation "cannot possibly be carried on by one individual alone...Conflict is thus designed to resolve divergent dualisms; it is a way of achieving some kind of unity, even if it be through the annihilation of one of the conflicting parties" (Simmel 1955:13). Additionally, conflicts exist not only within groups, but also between groups. The Chinese Exclusion Act mentioned earlier is an example of conflicts between groups in which all immigrants with Chinese ethnicity were seen as "the other." Although this binary classification based on Chinese ethnicity (Chinese or not Chinese) was later changed to the point system that values competence over physical appearance, there are still issues of cultural barriers. Furthermore, there can be multiple group affiliations within a single group. For instance, a person considered as a member of the Chinese immigrant community can be at the same time affiliated with his work group, family, etc. Interestingly, Chinese food practices are preserved throughout the many different kinds of conflict faced by Chinese immigrants, so I am curious to

find out what about Chinese food practices unites people. But let's not forget that Chinese food is only one factor that connects these actually very diverse people together in Chinese-food-nets. Suppose person A's Chinese-food-net shows mechanical solidarity like in a traditional community: there would be more clearly defined cultural expectations and fewer potential conflicts compared to person B, whose network looks organic, with different group affiliations. At the same time, person A would have fewer possibilities for new and better meanings to emerge other than the existing taken-for-granted meanings that are commonly understood and practiced within the traditional community of person A. Thus, in addition to the research questions mentioned before, I am also interested in addressing the following questions: How are shared meanings affected by the network structure? What intangible values do individuals share in their Chinese-food-nets? Are they different or the same, and in what ways? What meanings do people include and exclude when they talk about Chinese food?

2.2.2 The Sociology of the Meal

Simmel's essay "The Sociology of the Meal" first appeared in a newspaper in 1910 and was translated into English by Michael Symons in 1994. Simmel points out an inescapable irony about eating: although we often think of eating together as a shared experience, for Simmel, it is supremely individual. Simmel states, "what the individual eats, no one else can eat under any circumstances" (1994:346 as cited in Murcott 2019:20). Moreover, Simmel places eating at the centre of social relationships. He discusses the rules governing behaviour at meals, for example, rules about who is considered a suitable group member are intimately associated with rules about who may eat with whom. Simmel focuses his analysis on prohibitions. If some people are included in enjoying meals together, then others are excluded. For example, one of his examples

is that “the Cambridge Guild of the eleventh century decrees a severe penalty for anyone who eats and drinks with the murderer of a fellow member” (Symons 1994:346 as cited in Murcott 2019:21).

Simmel also addresses another aspect of eating, which is scarcity or lack of food. So the meaning of eating does not always entail pleasure because there might not be sufficient food for everyone (Murcott 2019:24). Food sharing can thus be enjoyable but sometimes is more about survival. For my research, I am also interested in exploring who is included in a Chinese immigrant’s food network and considered as a suitable group member. Furthermore, I explore what they are sharing during meals. Is the experience enjoyable? Sometimes even when there is enough food, due to various structural and cultural barriers faced by Chinese immigrants in Canada, who they can include in their networks is limited. In addition, typical Chinese cultural practice is to share meals with a relatively small number of people at the same time. In many Chinese restaurants, a big round table can seat 10 people, which is considered a good size. Even at very big dinner gatherings, people can chat with around 10 people at the same time. Moreover, Chinese immigrants select with whom they eat meals. In my research, I asked participants to think of up to 12 people that come to their minds first with whom they share Chinese food. I believe these people are also who they feel “close” to, as measured by their answers to the question of whether they consider the listed people as “intimates.”

2.2.3 Social Construction of Reality

According to Berger et al. (1973), we live in a socially constructed reality with plurality as an intrinsic feature of modern societies. Compared to modern societies, most early societies in human history had a higher degree of integration: “Whether with his family or at work or

engaged in political process or participating in festivity and ceremonial, the individual was always in the same ‘world’” (Berger et al. 1973:64). In contrast, modern life is segmented to a high degree (pluralization), with a fundamental dichotomy between the private (e.g. home) and public (e.g. work) spheres (Berger et al. 1973:64-65). As a result of this pluralization, individuals have suffered from a modern condition of “homelessness” (Berger et al. 1973:82). However, establishing a “home world” in the midst of this pluralization is difficult but possible in modern societies (Berger et al. 1973:235). Next, I present Berger and his colleague’s discussion on how a home world can be constructed through conversation.

In their paper, “Marriage and the Construction of Reality,” Peter Berger and Hansfried Kellner (1964) point out that producing a world in which we feel at home is a human need. To do this, people re-construct their reality through ongoing conversations. Individuals are constantly being validated in these specific “worlds” that they and their significant others are co-constructing. The presence of the significant others helps sustain their feelings of being at home and influence their feelings of anomie (Berger and Kellner 1964:4). Similarly to a social relationship like marriage, when people share food together, reality and meanings are constructed, and these social relationships serve as a protection against anomie and a nomos-building instrumentality. People know their relations with whom they share food—family, friends, co-workers, etc.—and how to behave around them in a commonsense way. Sociologically, a researcher needs to understand: first, how these relationships are objectively structured and distributed; second, how they are subjectively perceived and experienced. In the case of my research, I need to study the observable structure of the Chinese food networks, as well as the lived experience and shared meanings when Chinese immigrants eat together.

Marriage, as usually the smallest social unit that involves two people, is an example of a close social relationship with a significant other. When social relationships extend from marriage to a community with many relationships, the relationships should still share some similar features in people's personal community. The personal community is defined as people to whom the ego feels "close." Given the cultural and social significance of food sharing for Chinese immigrants, whoever they include in their Chinese food network would be similar to people they would list in their personal community, with the exceptions of co-workers, friends of friends, etc., who just happen to be at the meal at the same time but are not necessarily intimates. Berger and Kellner state that each person in a marriage is with a "biographically accumulated and available stock of experience," and in their marriage, the two individuals internalize a readiness to redefine themselves and to modify their stock of experiences in order to construct a world with the same general definitions and expectations of the marriage relationship. Moreover, marriage initiates a new and nomic process and over time results in the experience of a transformation with an unintended and unarticulated development. Thus marriage creates a new dialectical reality, with both partners co-defining the new reality through the ongoing shared experience (Berger and Kellner 1973:9-14). Similarly, Chinese immigrants who share food together would have some knowledge of other people's pasts, and through the process of social interactions, they are redefining what they know about one another. Furthermore, they are co-constructing the new reality that they share with each other during meals. For example, someone could say something about how to use chopsticks in a new way, forever changing their shared reality with this expanded knowledge of chopsticks.

In addition, what is particular about marriage is that it is the main social area for an individual's self-realization. Marriage exists in the private sphere as a place apart from alien

public economic and political institutions. Family, similar to marriage, is an example of a social relationship that occupies a central position of the private sphere where people are necessary members and can externalize themselves in reality to feel at “home” (Berger and Kellner 1973:6-8). I argue that Chinese food networks share some of the features of marriage and family in that they provide a space for individuals to be themselves with significant others without too much consideration of public requirements. For example, first generation Chinese immigrants can communicate in their native languages such as Mandarin instead of speaking the English that is the official language used in public offices. Especially for those whose English is not proficient, communicating in English can be a struggle and can generate feelings of alienation and frustration. However, when they share food with people who speak the same language, it is relaxing and comfortable. Although it is doubtful whether Chinese immigrants can completely be themselves at meal gatherings, it would be less stressful than being in a public place for some. If the food sharing is at someone’s home, it happens in a private space. Even if food sharing is in restaurants, it is still in between the public and private realms, similar to a “third place,” a place between private home and public work discussed by Bonner (2011:56), where enjoyable socialization takes place. Eating Chinese food together is a playful experience where people can be themselves and feel at home.

Berger et al. (1973) state that social reality needs to be experienced as both subjectively meaningful and objectively real. Berger and Kellner (1964) also mention that the public world is experienced as objectively real but not as subjectively meaningful, as the private world consists of relationships such as marriage. In my research, when Chinese immigrants share food in their relationships, they share food in the private world with their family and close friends at home, or in the public world with acquaintances or colleagues at work. Although their food networks can

be mapped objectively, the network structure cannot reveal the various subjective shared meanings within different types of relationships.

To explore the complex dynamics of meanings of home in the Chinese-food-nets, in the next section, I present different methods that appear to be in conflict but together can provide a stronger and more holistic understanding of the meanings of home in Toronto's Chinese immigrant community.

2.3 Methods

The methods in my research are a version of “radical interpretive inquiry” (RII) developed by Bonner (1997:74), a methodological and theoretical perspective that is a configuration of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and (reflexive) analysis (McHugh et al. 1974), building upon the theoretical perspectives of a number of social thinkers including Arendt (1998), Blum (1974), Blum and McHugh (1984), Gadamer (1976), Garfinkel (1967), McHugh et al. (1974), and Schutz (1967). Briefly, phenomenology allows lived experience to be described; hermeneutics is the art of understanding, in this case from the perspectives of Chinese immigrants; and analysis identifies provocative elements and addresses fundamental assumptions to expose principles. RII can be applied to inquire into both quantitative and qualitative data. In my research, quantitative data are first analyzed using social network analysis (SNA), and qualitative data are analyzed using interpretive methods such as phenomenology and reflexive analysis. In the following sections, I present each method in detail.

2.3.1 Social Network Analysis

First, SNA is a kind of structural thinking with origins in the 1930s. It describes patterns of social relations with deep roots in the sociological traditions of Simmel and others who “emphasized the formal properties of social relations and the investigation of the configurations of social relations that result from the interweaving of actions in social encounters” (Carrington and Scott 2011:1). SNA was initially studied in a relatively non-technical form from the “structural concerns” raised by anthropologist Radcliffe-Brown. Then, the development of the techniques of SNA started in the 1970s, driven by the increasing importance of “networking” in practical management guides and the growing popularity of “social networking” websites such as Facebook and Twitter. Although a large body of technical literature on SNA has been produced by many numerate specialists with a strong mathematical background, researchers with substantive interests but without good mathematical competence found them difficult to understand (Scott 2013:1).

In the case of my research, the Chinese-food-net is developed from the “conventional” ego-net, defined as “the network which forms around a particular social actor, be that a human actor or a corporate actor, such as an economic firm or national government” (Crossley et al. 2015:1). Instead of asking the ego to identify a number of people that he or she “feels close to,” like in a personal community, in this research, a list of people who enjoy Chinese food together will be studied as parts of an ego’s Chinese-food-net to study the empirical structure of the network, for example, whether the relations are homogenous, shown through similar attributes such as ethnicity (Chua et al. 2011:109).

I apply SNA to produce empirical and verifiable structural properties, such as density and centrality, of the Chinese-food-nets. But in my research, the sample size is too small for the

results to be representative of the Chinese immigrant population. Nonetheless, network properties are informative for understanding the network structure of the particular participants in this research, which is helpful for the interpretation of shared meanings. In fact, it is not uncommon for researchers with a relational perspective to implement a multi-methods approach with SNA as one of the approaches. For example, John Scott (2013:3) states that when SNA combines with various forms of discourse analysis, it creates “the most fruitful approach” for understanding meanings by combining the strengths and minimizing the weaknesses of each part, but this is “in need of further development.” Next, I introduce the interpretive methods as another part of my multi-method approach.

2.3.2 Interpretive Methods

First among the interpretive methods, phenomenology provides a way for me to understand the life-worlds of the Chinese immigrants in a modern society such as Toronto. The phenomenological approach allows me to reveal the modern assumptions hidden within the modern scientific paradigm, including the SNA approach, as well as modern everyday understandings, such as the commonsense understandings obtained by the Chinese immigrants in order to function intelligibly in the everyday reality shared with other Torontonians. In particular, my research aims to recover the presuppositions that we as modern people bring to the meanings of “home” for Chinese immigrants, which are structured by the horizon of the modern life-world (Bonner 1997:59).

Berger, Berger, and Kellner (1973:63-64) in *The Homeless Mind: Modernization and Consciousness* provided a clear description of the social life-world:

To be human means to live in a world— that is, to live in a reality that is ordered and that gives sense to the business of living. It is this fundamental characteristic of human

existence that the term “life-world” is intended to convey. This life-world is social in its origins and in its ongoing maintenance: the meaningful order it provides has been established collectively and is kept going by collective consent...In order to understand fully the everyday reality of any human group, it is not enough to understand the particular symbols or interaction patterns of individual situations. One must also understand the overall structure of meaning within which these particular patterns and symbols are located and from which they derive their collectively shared significance. In other words an understanding of the social life-world is very important for the sociological analysis of concrete situations.

Basically, Berger et al. argue that understanding the “interaction patterns” and “particular symbols” are not enough, one must also understand the “overall structure of meaning” that give patterns and symbols their “collectively shared significance.” The overall structure of meaning is the “social life-world,” as mentioned in Berger et al. (1973:12-13):

Any particular social life-world is constructed by the meanings of those who “inhabit” it. We call these meanings reality definitions. Whatever people experience as real in a given situation is the result of such definitions. They are of different types (some, for instance, are cognitive and refer to what is; others are normative and refer to what ought to be) and have different degrees of theoretical elaboration (as between the consciousness of the man in the man in the street and that of the esteemed philosopher). What they all have in common, insofar as they are relevant to the sociology of knowledge, is that they are collectively adhered to.

Berger et al. (1973) also discuss the plurality of life-worlds in modern society. People, including Chinese immigrants in Toronto, experience the pluralization of life-worlds: that is, we

all live in different worlds with different meanings in our everyday reality in a taken-for-granted way. Berger et al. state that modern life is segmented in terms of observable social constructs and levels of consciousness. They also assume that life can be divided into different parts (worlds) (Bonner 1997:63). For example, when Chinese immigrants spend time with their families, say at a Lunar New Year celebration, they share the meanings and significance of this holiday and behave in a certain way. But when Chinese immigrants are at work with a diverse group of co-workers from different cultural backgrounds, which is becoming common in Canadian workplaces nowadays, they share another set of meanings about how to perform well at work. These two different life-worlds of Chinese holiday celebration and Canadian workplace co-exist in their lives with different sets of meanings and observable behaviours, and would require different levels of consciousness. For example, one would be more alert at work but more relaxed at holiday gatherings. Living in a modern society in Canada, it is now unavoidable for Chinese immigrants to experience pluralization of their life-worlds.

Max Van Manen, in *Researching Lived Experience* (1998), also provides a comprehensive description of what phenomenology is. He states, “phenomenology is the study of the life-world—the world as we immediately experience it pre-reflectively rather than as we conceptualize, categorize, or reflect on it” (1998:9). Phenomenology aims to gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of people’s everyday lived experiences, such as food sharing. Phenomenological research is also a study of essences. It attempts to describe the deeper internal meaning structures of lived experience beyond observable texts (1998:10).

In addition to phenomenology, another important part of the radical interpretive methods is the method of analysis. McHugh, Blum, and their colleagues Daniel Foss and Stanley Raffel

introduced the method of analysis in their book *On the Beginning of Social Inquiry*. They define analysis here:

Analysis, for us, is generative. It is not finding something in the world, or making sense of some puzzling datum, or answering an interesting question, or locating a phenomenon worthy of study, resolving a long standing disagreement or any other essentially empirical procedure. To analyse is, instead, to address the possibility of any finding, puzzle, sense, resolution, answer, interest, location, phenomenon, etcetera, etcetera (McHugh et al. 1974:2).

Analysis is fundamentally different from the scientific methods implemented by social science researchers because analysts are not interested in obtaining technical findings: they are interested in addressing the grounds and possibilities. One way to conduct analysis is through the method of collaboration (McHugh et al. 1974:4). The first person (ego, the research respondent/Chinese immigrant), answers the interview questions. The second person (alter, here, the researcher/analyst) conducts (discourse) analysis to formulate the grounds of the first person's answers. The method of analysis will be addressed in more detail in Chapter Five.

Knowledge by interpretation, for example, gained through the phenomenological approach, can be considered "subjective." According to Bonner (1997:71), for the interpretive scholar, reality is not independent of the human mind: anything known always requires a knower. Furthermore, knowledge is produced from a transaction between a knower and something known. Consequently, different observers would assign meanings differently and conceptualize the same event differently, coloured by their own perspectives. For Bonner, to know is to understand the perspective that made the knowledge possible, as well as to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of each perspective. So, knowledge cannot be simply "discovered"

by observing, and the idea of “objectivity” is limited. Although the interview texts can be checked by participants for accuracy, interpretation of the texts is always going to be subjective and provides only one possibility of the infinite possibilities of interpreting the same texts. Producing knowledge by interpretation is a process of mutual learning that creates intersubjective meanings between researcher, participants, and readers. In contrast, knowledge by discovery, such as findings generated by SNA, can be replicated by anyone and reflects external reality as it is commonly understood. Such knowledge by discovery includes structure and patterns. In the case of my research, I use SNA to map the food networks of Chinese immigrants and explore the correlations existing between variables such as age and emotional support. Nevertheless, findings resulting from SNA cannot provide the rich meanings of home revealed by the interpretive methods, which is the central concern of this research.

On one hand, positive scientists tend to think research findings generated by the interpretive methods have weak structures and are “subjective.” However, they fail to recognize interpretivists’ commitment to formulating the unobservable deep structure of texts. Moreover, interpretivists, some of whom see themselves as human scientists (rather than natural scientists), aim to be as objective as humanly possible in order to reveal the “truth” embedded in the text from the perspectives of research respondents. As stated by Bonner (1997:78), both knowledge by discovery (positivism) and interpretation share “a deep commitment to establishing knowledge of the true and the real.” On the other hand, some interpretivists think positivists are not “really objective” because positivists always conduct research with a fixed set of assumptions from the scientific perspectives. Moreover, positivists are not “reflexive” because they don’t examine or question their own assumptions.

Reflexivity (Bonner 2001) discussed here is different from the conventional understanding of reflexivity in conventional qualitative research (addressed later in data collection), and is similar to the “radical reflexivity” mentioned by Melvin Pollner (1991:370) as the analyst displaces “the discourse and practices that ground and constitute his/her endeavors in order to explore the very work of grounding and constituting.” In my research, there are three levels of reflexivity. The first level is the knowledge of network structure and meanings obtained through SNA. The second level is the truth and essence of meanings concealed in the language of interview participants, for example, descriptions obtained by the phenomenological approach that are free from any ethical values. Nevertheless, Bonner (1997) points out the danger of phenomenology in that it does not account for its own grounds and fails to generate knowledge about the influence of history, culture, and community. The third level goes beyond observable language to consider ethical and aesthetic relations. This level of reflexivity requires “analytic nerve,” as mentioned by Pollner (1991:372). The higher levels of reflexivity (second and third) do not just repeat the previous level exactly, like images in mirrors, but reveal a deeper truth that is not directly observable.

2.4 Data Collection

2.4.1 Sample Recruitment

Most of the interview participants were recruited through the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter (CCNCTO). The CCNCTO is an organization of Chinese Canadians in the City of Toronto established in 1980 to promote “equity, social justice, inclusive civic participation, and respect [for] diversity” (CCNCTO 2019). Its vision includes promoting

understanding between Chinese Canadians and all other ethnic groups in Canada, as well as encouraging a desire to know and respect Chinese cultural heritage.

The public research recruitment announcements, one in English and one in Chinese, were first included in the CCNCTO's May 2018 e-newsletter circulated through their members' email list. The newsletter was also posted on their Facebook and Twitter pages. Again, in early June, the research recruitment information was circulated through their members' email list and Facebook and Twitter pages. People who were interested in participating in the research contacted me by email. Later, some participants also asked their friends who met the research criteria to participate. The convenience, snowball, and purposive sampling strategies were applied to select participants from among those who expressed interest in participating in the interviews. Participation in this study was voluntary.

This study was designed to target people who self-identify as Chinese living in Toronto, and are first generation immigrants (born outside of Canada and speak Mandarin as a native language) or second generation immigrants (born in Canada or moved to Canada at a very young age, with at least one parent born outside of Canada, and who speak English as a first language). Both first and second generation immigrants for the study needed to be 18 years old or above, and have had experience with eating Chinese food, either at home or in restaurants. If people were interested, they would be asked to participate in a face-to-face interview at a convenient location, for example, coffee shops, library study rooms, organization meeting rooms, food courts, restaurants, and participants' homes.

2.4.2 Interviews

During the interview, the participants would first be asked to fill out a survey in three parts. Part One asked about their demographic information (e.g. age, gender, occupation, income range, etc.). Part Two asked them to provide information about people in their Chinese-food-net, that is, a list of people with whom they eat Chinese food. They might list up to 12 people but they could stop at any time. Basic demographic information about the people they listed would be asked, for example, gender, age, ethnicity, and occupation. They would also be asked about their relation to the participant, the location where they shared Chinese food, the type of food, and what they shared during meals, for instance, emotional support such as talking about personal issues, and practical information such as information about the job market. Part Three asked them to fill out a table to indicate whether the people they listed know each other, which would be used to describe the structure of their network. Next, they would be asked to answer open-ended questions about their experience with Chinese food in Canada. These questions would focus on their lived experience as Chinese immigrants in Canada, such as what it is like to share Chinese food with family and friends, and how having Chinese food is related to feeling at home. The interview usually took approximately 90 minutes, and the interviewee received a \$15 gift card for Tim Hortons in appreciation for their time. Interviewees' participation in this study is considered confidential. This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance from, a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE #22959, renewed application #31736).

2.4.3 Participants

From June to September 2018, 20 interviews were conducted for 21 research participants in total, providing information for 209 people in Chinese-food-nets. Most interviews were one-on-one, except for one couple who participated in the interview together. There were 13 first generation Chinese immigrants and eight second generation Chinese immigrants². Among the interviewees, 14 were female and seven were male. Initially more females expressed interest in participating in the research, but additional males were selected toward the end of the interview recruitment process in order to obtain a more balanced sample with which to study gender differences. The age range was from 26 years old to 84 years old, with an average age of 48. Participants' income ranges were from 0 (no income) to more than 100,000 Canadian dollars. They lived in various places within Toronto's Census Metropolitan Area, for example, Downtown, Scarborough, Vaughan, North York, Oakville, Thornhill, Midtown, and Richmond Hill. Their birthplaces included Mainland China (East, West, South, North), Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Toronto, and they had diverse cultural backgrounds such as Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, India, and Canada. Furthermore, the people they listed in their Chinese-food-nets came from all over the world. Besides the above mentioned ethnic backgrounds, they were from the Philippines, Vietnam, Korea, Iran, America, Scotland, England, the Netherlands, France, Poland, Russia, Jamaica, and a country in Africa (the participant did not specify which country).

² Two participants were born in Hong Kong but moved to Canada at a very young age, so they are also categorized as "second generation."

2.4.4 Data Preparation for Analysis

The data collected from the interviews were de-identified, transcribed, and safely stored according to the principles of ethical research. Each research participant was assigned a numeric subject ID code as well as a pseudonym to ensure anonymity. The people (alters) listed by the research participants in their Chinese-food-nets were also assigned ID codes to protect their identity. For example, the alters of research participant 100 were coded as 101, 102, 103 and so on. Data with personal identifiers are securely stored in a locked area and a password-protected computer. During the transcribing process, all identifying information of participants was either changed or removed from transcripts. The data were transcribed using NVivo and Trint machine service first, and then I checked and edited the transcripts by replaying the audio recording to ensure accuracy. I also translated into English the Chinese texts recorded during interviews with first generation Chinese immigrants.

2.4.5 Reflexivity

It is important to be reflexive and recognize that as a researcher my understanding is coloured by my own perspective. I am a first generation Chinese immigrant from Mainland China who now lives in Toronto and enjoys sharing delicious food with family and friends. Throughout the interview process, I realized that I shared a similar cultural background with some of the participants. Meanwhile, I underestimated the differences between myself and some participants from diverse Chinese regions. Thus, I anticipate that some issues may arise, for instance, some taken-for-granted cultural meanings in Mandarin may need to be explained in the later writing in English. I am also aware that an interview is a process of mutual meaning-construction that can lead to new understandings for both the interviewee and myself.

2.5 Conclusion

Looking at the interview data through an interpretive lens, what is at issue here is not displacement but issues of identity and belonging, with the deeper truth that, for first generation Chinese immigrants, the problem is the loss of “home” from the past. Once they move to Canada from China, they are separated from family in China, and thus from a more traditional life-world. For the second generation Chinese immigrants, they experience the “divided home” and so need to negotiate multiple, sometimes conflicting, notions of “home”—for example, a Canadian home and a Chinese home—as a result of living in different life-worlds in modern Canadian society. In this chapter, I have presented the theoretical framework, including the relational perspective, the sociology of the meal and social construction of reality, as well as a multi-method approach consisting of social network analysis (SNA) and interpretive methods in order to explore Chinese immigrants’ shared meanings of “home” in social relationships within their Chinese-food-nets. In the following chapters, I conduct quantitative and qualitative data analysis in the order of the levels of reflexivity, from empirical findings to interpretive analysis.

CHAPTER THREE

EXPLORING THE COMPOSITION, CONTENT, AND STRUCTURE OF CHINESE-FOOD-NETS

3.1 Introduction

As discussed in the previous chapters, in Toronto, Chinese immigrants establish and cultivate their communities through the practice of food sharing. In this chapter, using social network analysis, I attempt to explore what the Chinese-food-nets look like for first and second generation Chinese immigrants in Toronto. To study the composition, content, and structure of the Chinese-food-nets, I am interested in addressing the following questions: 1) What is the composition of these Chinese-food-nets? 2) What is the content of the relationships between Chinese immigrants and the people with whom they share Chinese food? 3) In what way do they provide each other with social support? 4) What is the structure of the social relationships in the Chinese-food-nets? 5) Is there a generational difference?

To date, very little social network research has examined how immigrants create communities within Toronto through exploring the role of food in their home-making and community-building (Anderson et al. 2016; Mallett 2004; Poulain 2017). Through comparing and contrasting the Chinese-food-nets of first and second generation immigrants, this research creates knowledge on how diverse Chinese immigrants construct their relationships differently in their food networks. The findings from this chapter contribute to our understanding of the nature of social relationships in Chinese-food-nets and how well Chinese immigrants are integrated in Canadian society. The findings also serve as a beginning point for exploring the shared meanings of “home” from the perspectives of Chinese immigrants.

The Chinese-food-net in my research is a novel approach inspired by the more commonly used personal community (Chua et al. 2011) and ego-nets approaches (Crossley et al. 2015). One of the earliest and most well-known “personal community” studies, the East York Study, was conducted by Barry Wellman and his team in Toronto in 1968, with a follow-up study in 1977-1978. The research objective was to understand the nature of community by using a network approach for the East York area in Toronto, which was mostly made up of single-family dwellings and lower middle class residents. The first study was based on two-hour surveys of a random sample of 845 adults, and the follow-up study added interviews to fill in the gaps left by the survey, in order to gather richer information about the composition and dynamics of personal communities. The studies found that participants had multiple definitions of community, which allowed them to mobilize different sets of ties for different supports, such as routine sociability, emotional crises, and financial aid (Wellman 1979). Throughout the years, the studies of personal community have evolved as the nature of our society changes. Today, the sense of “community” is no longer rooted in neighbourhoods or one spatially-bounded place, a finding especially true for immigrants who have family and friends in different countries (Chua et al. 2011:101). Still, Wellman’s team found that the personal communities fulfill the same function physical communities once did: for instance, they provide “personal recognition, a sense of belonging, emotional support, small favors and social control” (Degenne and Forsé 1999a:32). A number of contemporary studies show that people, especially immigrants in cities, still preserve their communal solidarity in “urban villages.” That is, they reproduce the more traditional village life (*Gemeinschaft*) they have known, even in their new cities (Young and Willmott 1957; Gans 1962; Liebow 1967; Stack 1974). In the case of my research, eating Chinese food requires immigrants to have face-to-face meetings in the same geographic location, somewhere in

Toronto. But do their food networks also look like urban villages? Can the Chinese-food-nets be considered as a type of personal community for Chinese immigrants in modern society?

The Chinese-food-net in my research is a variation on the personal community, and can be considered a type of “ego-net,” defined as “the network which forms around a particular social actor, be that a human actor or a corporate actor, such as an economics firm or national government” (Crossley et al. 2015:1). Like all networks, ego-nets comprise a set of nodes (for example, human individuals), a set or sets of ties (that connect the nodes), and a set of node attributes (for instance, age, gender, income, ethnicity) (Crossley et al. 2015:4-7). In addition, an ego-net is “a network of contacts (alters) that form around a particular node (ego)³” (Crossley et al. 2015:18). Personal community is also a type of ego-net. Each personal community is a network centred on a human actor, surrounded by people to whom the actor “feels close.” Similarly, in the Chinese-food-nets, the research participants are egos, and the people they have listed in their food networks have the role of alters. I apply the concept of “personal community” to Chinese-food-nets because it provides a useful framework for studying the structure of relationships of people who connect with each other based on a shared interest in eating Chinese food. The difference is that, in the latter, participants are connected by food sharing, not necessarily by the emotional closeness that marks personal communities.

3.2 Data Collection

As mentioned in the previous chapter, during the interviews, the research participants were first given a survey to provide information on themselves and their Chinese-food-nets.

³ Note that the “ego” and “alter” in an ego-net do not refer to the “ego” and “alter” mentioned in the method of collaboration for doing analysis in the previous chapter. In this research, although an “ego” is a research participant/Chinese immigrant for both the ego-net and analysis, the word “alter” refers to a person who a research respondent includes in the ego-net, unlike the researcher/analyst in the method of analysis.

Overall, the survey took from 14 to 48 minutes, with an average of 26.8 minutes. In general, it took the first generation immigrant participants longer to fill out the survey than second generation participants. Also, I needed to translate the content of the survey data from Chinese into English for the first generation participants, and their explanations of their information that was audio recorded during the survey helped me to ensure the accuracy of the translation.

Unlike having different open-ended questions asked later during the interviews, the survey questions were designed to be the same for both first and second generation research participants so that their findings can be compared. Part One obtained information on research participants' attributes, for example, age, gender, occupation, education, and income range. Part Two asked the research participants to list up to 12 people with whom they shared Chinese food. This step is called the "name generator," and "asks respondents to provide a list of contacts, termed alters, with whom they share one or more criterion relations" (Chua et al. 2011:106). The survey asked them to provide the names of up to 12 people who come to mind, however, the number was intentionally left open for them to come up with people whom they feel comfortable mentioning based on the principle of voluntary participation. As a result, 21 egos listed in total 197 alters, that is, on average nine alters each. The name generator was then followed with "name interpreters," which "elicit information about each named contact and the nature of the ego-alter relationship" (Marsden 2005 as cited in Chua et al. 2011:106). These egos were also asked to provide information about the alters, for example, gender, age, ethnicity, occupation, relation to ego and degree of intimacy ("feel close to"), locations where they share Chinese food (private homes, public restaurants, or both), type of Chinese food (for example, hotpot, noodles, Sichuan), and the "content" of ties (i.e. what is provided during their experience of having Chinese food, for instance, emotional support or practical information and financial support, as

well as whether the support is reciprocated). Part Three of the survey asked the egos to identify whether the alters are connected to one another by filling out a table to indicate whether the alters know each other. The information gathered in Part Three is useful for graphing the structure of alter-alter ties, whereas Part One and Part Two give attribute information on egos and alters that can be used to explore the composition and content of the Chinese-food-nets.

Note that to ensure the anonymity of research participants and the people they list, as required by the research ethics, the names of egos and alters were written on separate pages, and each person was assigned a unique ID number in order to protect their identities. Only the ID number was used later when participants filled out the information about themselves and their alters. Data with personal identifiers are securely stored in a locked area that only I have access to.

3.3 Data Analysis

To prepare for data analysis, quantitative data obtained from the survey was entered into an Excel spreadsheet. I then created individual datasets for each research participant's Chinese-food-net, including datasets for attributes (for composition and content analysis) and datasets including adjacency matrices with and without egos for structure. I also created a master dataset (level 1) containing all information on each ego and alter, as well as a dataset (level 2) including information collected only from the egos. The analysis of quantitative data obtained from the survey was conducted in R and UCINET software and explores three aspects of the Chinese-food-nets: composition, content, and structure.

To facilitate understanding of the data analysis findings that follow, I first present basic information about research participants (egos). As briefly mentioned, the egos for SNA (social

network analysis) are all Chinese immigrants (n=21) living in Toronto with experiences of eating Chinese food. Among them, 13 are first generation immigrants, and eight are second generation immigrants. Their ages range from 26 to 81, with a median age of 35 and mean age of 48 (SD=21). I constructed two age groups: old (aged 68 or above, seven egos, all first generation immigrants) and young (aged under 68, from 26 to 47, 14 egos, first and second generation immigrants) because I expected that they would show some significant differences in some aspects of their Chinese-food-nets, for example, old Chinese immigrants are more likely to include only Chinese alters in their food networks. There are 14 female and seven male egos in the sample⁴. The sample included egos from different socioeconomic statuses (SESs), which is a standard conceptualization of social class in Canadian sociology (Boyd 2008), measured by combining information on egos' occupations, incomes, and education, and in some cases, for example, if the egos are students, their parents' occupations. I constructed an ordinal variable for SES with five categories: "1"-lower, "2"-lower middle, "3"-middle, "4"-upper middle, and "5"-upper. As a result, eight egos are lower middle, eight are middle, and five are upper middle. No one is lower or upper in the research sample.

3.3.1 Composition

Research participants wrote down at least three people whose names came to mind with whom they shared Chinese food, so the number of people is large enough to be considered as constituting a food network for each ego. Among them, nine out of the 21 participants listed 12 people (the maximum number set by the researcher) in their Chinese-food-nets. For the composition of the egos' Chinese-food-nets, I am interested in addressing the following research

⁴ As explained before, it was more difficult to recruit male participants for the study even when I deliberately tried recruiting only males toward the end of the recruitment process.

questions: Who are included in their food networks? How many of the alters are family and how many are friends of the egos? Do they tend to share food with people who are similar to themselves (homophily), for example, in ethnicity, SES, gender, and age? Where do they share Chinese food— at home, in restaurants, or in both locations?

Several variables needed to be coded for the data analysis. First, for the variable “relation,” there were many different relationships with alters mentioned by the egos, including spouse (partner, husband, wife), boyfriend, son, daughter, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister, brother, grandson, granddaughter, father, stepfather, mother, aunt, cousin, schoolmate, same home town, friend, ex-partner, roommate, roommate’s boyfriend, son’s friend, mother of son’s friend, colleague (co-worker), neighbour, and mentee. Judging from the descriptions of relationships provided by research participants, for simplicity, the relations are categorized as family and friends (non-kin). Second, the homophily measures— ethnicity, SES, and gender—are coded in a way to be compared with the ego. For example, although all egos self-identify as Chinese, the alters they included came from different ethnic backgrounds such as the Philippines, Vietnam, Korea, Iran, America, Scotland, England, the Netherlands, France, Poland, Russia, and Jamaica. The variable “ethnicity” is coded as “1” for Chinese and “2” for non-Chinese to find out whether the alter was from a similar cultural background as the ego. The frequency tables are produced in R software to explore the composition of egos’ Chinese-food-nets. The findings are shown below.

The alters have different relationships with the egos. Overall, out of the total number of 197 alters mentioned by the 21 egos, 70 alters (35.5%) are family members, and 127 alters (64.5%) are friends. Younger immigrants included more friends than family in their Chinese-food-nets. This finding is consistent with that of Chua et al. (2011:109) that young people are

more likely to have friend-centred networks. Chua et al. also point that even for socially mobile people such as immigrants, kinship continues to be important (2011:110). As shown in my research findings, even though a large number of their relatives are not in Canada, most egos include both family and friends in their networks. The exceptions are Alex (300) and Helen (1200), both of whom are first generation younger immigrants, so they may not have any family members in Canada. Other research participants are either older first generation immigrants who spent a lot of time with their children and grandchildren in Canada, including eating together, or younger first generation immigrants who got married or already have relatives in Canada, or second generation immigrants who grew up eating Chinese food with their family.

Egos share food with alters in various locations. For simplicity, I asked them to indicate whether they eat together at private homes, public restaurants, or both. In response, 13 alters (6.6%) were described as eating with egos only at home, 82 alters (41.6%) only eat at restaurants, and 102 alters (51.8%) share food both at home and in restaurants. I expected that egos would more likely share food at home with family and in restaurants with friends. As predicted, people are more likely to share food with family than with friends at home. In contrast, people are more likely to eat out in restaurants with friends than with family. There is no significant difference between friends and family for people who share food both at home and in restaurants. The findings show that home as a private space is usually reserved for family, and sometimes for friends, but people are more likely to enjoy sharing food in public with friends.

Next, for the homophily measures, I explore whether egos include people who are similar in their Chinese-food-nets by looking at the variables of ethnicity, gender, SES, and age. First, do egos only share food with Chinese? Overall, 167 out of 197 alters (84.8%) are “Chinese,” including Han Chinese, Chinese Canadian, Chinese Malaysian Canadian, Hong Kong Chinese,

Iranian Chinese, mixed, and Taiwanese. Although there are different ways to define “Chinese,” for the purpose of this research, it is meaningful to have the same cultural type of Chinese for people who have similar food practices. Although the majority of alters are Chinese, most younger egos, regardless of whether they are first or second generation immigrants, have both Chinese and non-Chinese in their food networks: Penny (200), Alex (300), Sydney (400), Susan (700), Nancy (800), Jane (1000), May (1100), Mia (1700), Peter (1800), Glen (2000), and Jack (2100). The exceptions are Helen (1200), John (1400), and David (1900), who include only Chinese in their food networks. These unusual structures are likely to be the result of individual choices judging by their responses to the interview questions. The younger immigrants have opportunities to make friends or work with people from different ethnicities in Canadian society, so it is not strange that they will share Chinese food together. This finding on younger immigrants is consistent with the findings by Chua et al. (2011:103) that immigrants expand their personal communities in a new country to have new ties. In contrast, most older first generation egos have only Chinese alters, including Ling (100), Li (500), Zhang (600), Wang (900), Kong (1300), and Lisa (1500). These older egos are all from Mainland China and most of their alters are from Mainland China as well. Their circles are more limited because most of them came to Canada after retirement to take care of their grandchildren. The only exception is Rose (1600) who is from Malaysia and included Caucasian alters because they are friends of her son.

Regarding the gender of the alters, overall, 116 females, 79 males, and two neutral alters⁵ are included in egos’ Chinese-food-nets. There is no significant difference between male (41.1%) and female (58.7%) alters. Most egos include both males and females in their food networks, apart from one, Helen (1200), who listed only female alters (the same gender as her). People

⁵ The two alters were identified as “neutral,” neither male nor female, by an ego in the survey responses.

have family members and friends with different genders, and gender does not seem to be an important factor for most egos when it comes to food sharing.

Next, judging by their occupations, education levels, and personal incomes, most alters have similar SESs to their egos. It is very rare for people to share food with those who are from SESs that are very different from their own. In addition, people tend to share food with friends of a similar age from the same generation, whereas their family members consist of a wider range of ages from different generations.

3.3.2 Content

The following section explores both the tangible and intangible content shared within the Chinese-food-nets when research participants eat together with their alters.

First of all, social support is the core of the content of the Chinese-food-nets. Chinese immigrants get together with their family and friends for meals not just to enjoy delicious food, but also to give and receive social support from one another to improve their well-being. A social support system is understood to be “an enduring pattern of continuous or intermittent ties [personal network] that play a significant part in maintaining the psychological and physical integrity [well-being] of the individual over time” (Caplan 1974 as cited in Song et al. 2011:117). The idea of social support has generated more interest in research since the 1970s (Song et al., 2011, 116). Social support is often connected with “health” in social sciences research. For example, Cassel considered social support as a category of social condition relevant to protecting health. He spoke broadly of social support as “the protective factors buffering or cushioning the individual from the physiologic or psychological consequences of exposure to the stressor situation” (Cassel 1976:113). Some researchers have seen social support

as providing information of many kinds. For instance, Cobb (1976) classified three types of information as social support based on their different functions: first, information that leads people to believe that they are loved and cared for (i.e. emotional support); second, information that makes people feel valued; and third, information that lets people feel a sense of belonging and mutual obligation in a network. Similarly, Cobb also thought the role of social support was to moderate the effect of life stress. In addition, social support can be perceived as meeting instrumental needs, for example, providing help with job searches (Degenne and Forsé 1999b). There are a variety of conceptualizations of social support reflecting its ambiguous nature, and it can provide both tangible and intangible resources for individuals (Song et al. 2011:118).

In the Chinese-food-nets, I expect that people actively provide social support to one another through conversations when they share food together. My research adapts the views of Berkman (1984), who defined social support as “the emotional, instrumental, and financial aid that is obtained from one’s social network.” I measure social support by asking research participants to provide information on whether the alters give emotional support (talking about personal issues), practical information (for example, information on the housing market and job hunting), and financial support (help with money outside of the meals). However, the social support used for quantitative analysis is constructed as categorical variables and cannot capture the rich content of each kind of support, such as the essence of the support and whether the support is positive or negative. It is only a beginning point to explore the social support that occurs in Chinese-food-nets.

In addition to the types of social support people offer one another in their Chinese-food-nets, I measure the strength of ties between egos and alters by looking at intimacy (whether the ego considers the alter as someone they feel close to), frequency of contact (how often they share

food together), and reciprocity (whether social support is both given and received). Moreover, I am interested in the tangible aspects of food sharing as well. For example, what kind of food is being shared between egos and alters? Are the foods they are sharing something they are familiar with, such as food from their hometown?

The coding for social support, reciprocity, and intimacy is more straightforward. It is “1” if there is social support, reciprocity, and intimacy, and “0” if there is not. The frequency of contact is a bit tricky to code since the egos provided a variety of ways to describe how often they shared food with the alters. The responses include: every day, every day for two to three months a year, four times a week, three times a week, twice a week, once a week, four times a month, two to three times a month, twice a month, once to twice a month, once a month, every couple of months, once a quarter, once every four months, once every half a year, once to twice a year, once a year, and once every few years. After computing the frequencies of this variable, I divided responses into five relatively balanced categories: “1” for once a year or less (21 alters); “2” for once a quarter to more than once a year (59 alters); “3” for once a month to more than once a quarter (37 alters); “4” for once a week to more than once a month (48 alters); and “5” for every day to more than once a week (32 alters).

People share a great variety of Chinese food in their Chinese-food-nets. For example, in their responses, people write down hot pot, Cantonese dim sum, homemade, meat and vegetable, rice noodles, wonton, lobster, Sichuan, Northern, Northeastern, Huaiyang food, Shanghai cuisine, congee, fusion, Hong Kong tea, Langzhou noodle, famous or creative Chinese food, fried rice, “multicultural,” “all kinds,” and “everything.” These last three were not explained so the meaning remains vague. When coding for the type of food they share, I had to judge whether the food is familiar to them based on their own cultural backgrounds. For instance, Sichuan

cuisine would be familiar food to someone from Sichuan but not necessarily familiar to someone from Hong Kong. I therefore have constructed a new variable, “familiar food,” with “1” if it is an ego’s familiar food, and “0” if not. However, what does “familiar” food mean? Quantitative data with two categories cannot capture the intangible meanings associated with sharing a certain type of food. The meanings are discussed in more detail in the next chapter with qualitative data.

I next show the quantitative analysis findings. First, I explore the intangible social support within the Chinese-food-nets, including emotional support, practical information, and financial support. I also examine how the social support interacts with network composition measures such as relation and gender⁶, and other content measures such as reciprocity, intimacy, and frequency of contact. Second, I present findings from the tangible content shared within participants’ networks, particularly the type of food shared among egos and their alters.

First, social support is the essential content of the Chinese-food-nets. Chinese immigrants count on people in their communities to provide different kinds of support, and much of it, apart from financial support, takes place during meals in the form of conversation. However, the results show that not everyone in the food networks is supportive, and not all kinds of ties give the same kind of support. Actually, people need different types of ties to access diverse resources for social support (Wellman and Wortley 1990). Among the different kinds of social support, emotional support is about caring, whereas support such as practical information and financial help are instrumental to living well in Canada. Next I present the different types of social support in more detail.

Emotional support is the feeling of being cared for or loved (Song et al. 2011:117). When filling out the survey, research participants only needed to indicate whether emotional support

⁶ Two gender neutral alters are left out from the quantitative analysis because the number is too small. Both provided emotional support and practical information, but no financial support.

was given by their alters. However, the particular meanings of emotional support from the perspectives of Chinese immigrants remain ambiguous, and I will discuss these meanings with interview data in the next chapter. Overall, a lot of emotional support was given in the Chinese-food-nets, by 172 out of 197 alters (87.31%). Actually, for 11 egos, all alters provided emotional support. 90.5 % of women and 82.3 % of men gave emotional support. Although this finding is consistent with the general observation that women are more likely to provide emotional support (Chua et al. 2011:112), the gender difference is not significant. More friends (90.6%) give emotional support than family do (81.4%).

Practical information is often considered as a form of social capital. For example, information exchanged in the network can lead to enhanced life chances such as receiving helpful advice, having diverse knowledge, and getting desirable jobs (Chua et al. 2011:111). Overall, 161 (81.73%) of alters provided egos with practical information. In nine egos' Chinese-food-nets, all alters gave practical information. There is no gender difference (81% women and 82.3 % men). As with emotional support, more friends (82.7%) provide practical information than family (80%) do, but the difference is not significant.

For financial support, the research participants were asked to recall whether there have been any financial transactions between themselves and their alters beyond sharing the meals, for example, providing tuition for school and paying for groceries. Looking at the results, 50 (25.38%) alters have given financial support, which is a much smaller number compared to the number of alters who provided emotional support and practical information. About the same percentage of men (26.6%) and women (25.0%) helped the egos with money. Most of the people who provide financial resources are family. More than half of the family members included in the egos' food networks provide financial support (54.3%) compared to less than 10% of friends

(12 out of 127 friends). Actually, half of the friends (six) who assisted the egos with money come from one ego who is a first generation young immigrant and does not have any family members in the Chinese-food-net. So the findings imply that it is rare for friends to provide financial support, whereas it is relatively common for family members to do so. This finding differs from the findings for the more intangible forms of support, such as emotional support and practical information being received more often from friends than from family.

Furthermore, the research participants were asked to specify whether they thought the social support was reciprocated by the alters—in other words, whether both the ego and the alter give and receive social support from each other. It does not have to be a certain type of social support as long as there is an exchange of support. As a result, most alters, 193 out of 197 (97.97%) reciprocated the social support. The only four alters who are not in two-way relationships with the egos are an uncle, a father, a mentee, and a colleague. Specifically, according to participant explanations, the father and uncle only gave support, the mentee only received support, and the colleague did not give or receive much support because the two were just eating together. Therefore, most Chinese immigrants seemed to give and receive support from one another when they share Chinese food.

Intimacy is another important variable for measuring the content of the networks and strengths of the ego-alter ties. One assumption I had going into the research was that the Chinese-food-nets would be very similar to a “personal community” consisting of people the ego “felt close to,” because I expected that a large number of alters would be people that the egos were close to. When I asked the research participants to identify the intimates in their food networks, they pointed out the alters with whom they felt close and could discuss personal issues. As it turns out, about three quarters (74.62%) were intimates to the egos. So sharing

Chinese food is something Chinese immigrants tend to do with their close ties. Also, it means the Chinese-food-nets are similar to the conventional personal communities for Chinese immigrants in this research.

In terms of social support, I naturally presumed that intimate ties would provide more emotional support because by definition that is what makes them “intimates.” Moreover, the findings show that, overall, alters gave more emotional support than practical information. Contrary to expectations, the findings reveal that people who are considered as intimates by the egos mostly offered support in the form of practical information (77.64% compared to 75.0% for emotional support), which is in essence an instrumental kind of social support. This tendency may be a result of Chinese immigrants’ high demand for helpful information in order to survive in a new country with a set of strange and different social norms. Another interesting finding is that more friends (84.3%) are seen as intimate than family members (69.3%) are. One of the reasons could be that friends more than family members give to and receive from the egos both more emotional support and practical information, implying that egos are more likely to talk with friends than family about their personal problems and to exchange helpful information, which makes them feel closer to their friends.

The next sets of findings are about the most tangible aspect of Chinese-food-nets: the food. Chinese immigrants share food more frequently with family than friends for several reasons. First, many egos eat with their significant others on a daily basis. These people tend to be their partners, parents, siblings, children, grandchildren, or other family members with whom they live. Second, Chinese immigrants get together with their relatives to eat big meals for important holidays such as the Chinese New Year and Mid-Autumn Festival and, in many cases, Christmas here in Canada. So they see their relatives at least four times a year. In contrast, with

friends they share meals whenever they like, usually less frequently than daily, but more frequently than once a quarter, yet overall less frequently than with family.

In addition, Chinese immigrants are more likely to have familiar food with family but to try out new food with friends. Chinese food does not always mean familiar food. Chinese food includes the familiar food for a particular Chinese immigrant, but Chinese food also comprises food from other regions of China that may be unfamiliar. That is why I needed to construct the variable of familiar food or not and not just assume that all Chinese foods are familiar to every Chinese immigrant. The analysis results show that people tend to eat more comfort and familiar food with family at home, as mentioned earlier when discussing the location of food sharing. At the same time, they are more adventurous with friends, and so more likely to eat unfamiliar food in public restaurants, for instance, Chinese food of a different region from their hometown or a new Asian fusion food. The quality of experiences may be different for eating with family compared to friends, but both are good opportunities for cultivating relationships. Nevertheless, there are times when family and friends mix types of food and locations. For example, some Chinese immigrants like to invite non-Chinese friends to their homes to celebrate traditional Chinese holidays and eat particular foods. The detailed experiences of food sharing and community building will be discussed more in the next chapter with the interview data. In the next section, I present the structure of Chinese-food-nets, which not only maps out the individual networks but also gives a more clear and unique picture of the composition (e.g. relations and ethnicity) and content (e.g. intimate and social support) for each research participant.

3.3.3 *Structure*

One key measure of the structure is the density of the networks. Density is defined as “the proportion of existing to maximum possible links” (Degenne and Forsé 1999a:23). In other words, it is the number of ties between everyone in the network divided by the total number of possible ties given the same number of people in that network. It is a proportion ranging from 0 to 1. Note that in an ego-network, connections between alters and the ego are omitted from the calculation of density because they exist by definition. When no one connects with anyone else in the network, the density is 0. In contrast, when everyone connects with one another in the network, the density is 1. Usually the density of a network is somewhere between 0 and 1 because some people are likely to connect with some other people in the network but not everyone connects with everyone else (although that is possible). The extreme case would be cliques where everyone connects with everyone and the density is 1 (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:Chapter 11). Density is a rather crude measure of cohesion and of an ego’s role in the network, because it simply counts the connections among alters, and does not take into account the ways in which the connections are structured.

The concept of structural holes is helpful for understanding the ways egos connect with alters and how these ways affect egos’ constraints and opportunities, and it refers to “some very important aspects of positional advantage/disadvantage of individuals that result from how they are embedded in neighborhoods” (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:Chapter 9). The concept of structural holes is also useful for determining how much information is available for members in the network. In ego-networks, structural holes are the absence of a connection between pairs of alters, which puts the ego, who by definition connects to all alters in the position of acting as a “broker” between two alters. Since members of a food network may be connected to members of

other networks, some egos may have access to information that has not already been obtained by the members of their food networks. They can act as brokers and have access to the flow of non-redundant information between people from opposite sides of the hole. While people who have more cohesive networks are more likely to have similar information, people who act as brokers have the advantage of accessing diverse sources of information (Burt 2001:35). In the case of my research, some egos have more cohesive networks or even cliques, while others are acting as brokers because they connect to more than one separate network. For example, for some egos, family and friends are different networks of people. The structural hole can be visualized in network diagrams. Similar to brokers, who have the advantage of accessing more information, egos who occupy the centre position of a “star” network can also benefit from the network structure because all alters would need to connect with that ego in order to reach other alters. This star role is measured by centrality. The higher the centrality, the more “powerful” the ego, because the ego can control what is exchanged between alters who are not otherwise connected.

Lastly, the concepts of brokerage and betweenness are measures of the extent to which an ego is filling the structural holes among alters. Brokerage is useful for determining the power, influence, and dependency effects an ego has in the networks. The ego may act as a broker many times between different alters. An ego’s brokerage role is examined through the number of instances where that ego lies in the direct path between two alters by looking at the brokerage score. In contrast, betweenness measures the concept of centrality. Ego is “between” two alters if the position of the ego is on the shortest direct path from one alter to the other. The maximum value for betweenness occurs when the ego is the centre of a star network. In other words, the ego is between two alters for every pair of alters in the network. The higher the value for betweenness, the more direct communication between pairs of alters goes through the ego. Thus,

brokerage and betweenness are different ways of measuring how “powerful” or “central” egos are in their networks (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:Chapter 9).

Therefore, the network structure has impacts on the kinds of information individuals have access to and the possible common meanings being constructed in the networks. For example, people who are connected across different networks are more familiar with alternative meanings and have more opportunities to learn new ideas than people in closed-network groups (Burt 2004:349). The network structure affects the cultural meanings accessible to Chinese immigrants in Canada, and thus how well they understand the shared meanings of cultural norms in a Canadian society to fit in with the majority of Canadians. Moreover, individuals who are between networks with different cultural meanings need to find ways to synthesize these meanings. Sometimes it can be challenging, but sometimes new meanings emerge from straddling two cultures. The findings of these structure measures can show how similar or different the networks are between first and second generation immigrants. The adjacency matrix included for each ego is used to produce the measures for density, brokerage, and betweenness. On the next page are the findings of structure measures obtained from UCINET.

Table 1: Ego Network Basic Measures

Ego ID	Size (number of alters)	Density	Normalized Brokerage Score	Normalized Ego Betweenness
100	6	0.53	0.47	0.23
200	10	0.29	0.71	0.60
300	10	0.58	0.42	0.39
400	5	0.60	0.40	0.20
500	12	0.64	0.36	0.18
600	12	0.58	0.42	0.21
700	12	0.53	0.47	0.26
800	10	0.58	0.42	0.16
900	3	0.33	0.67	0.67
1000	12	0.38	0.62	0.44
1100	6	0.73	0.27	0.13
1200	10	0.27	0.73	0.54
1300	6	0.80	0.20	0.07
1400	5	1.00	0.00	0.00
1500	12	0.24	0.76	0.62
1600	11	0.58	0.42	0.18
1700	12	0.56	0.44	0.14
1800	12	0.48	0.52	0.28
1900	12	0.47	0.53	0.21
2000	7	0.29	0.71	0.50
2100	12	0.44	0.56	0.32

Looking at the network statistics, the average density is 0.52 (SD=0.19), which is neither too low nor too high. Most ego-networks have a moderate density, except for ego 1400 (John) whose network density is 1. With some variation, most egos can manipulate the flow of information and social influence in the network to some degree. At the same time, they are subject to some social control because some alters know each other but not everyone knows everyone in their networks. However, in the extreme case of ego 1400, he is subject to a lot of social control and cannot really manipulate the network. Moreover, 1400's normalized brokerage score (which measures the number of pairs not directly connected divided by number of pairs) is 0, with a normalized ego betweenness of 0. So 1400 does not play the role of a broker, nor is he the centre of a "star" network, because all alters of this ego connect with one another. In contrast,

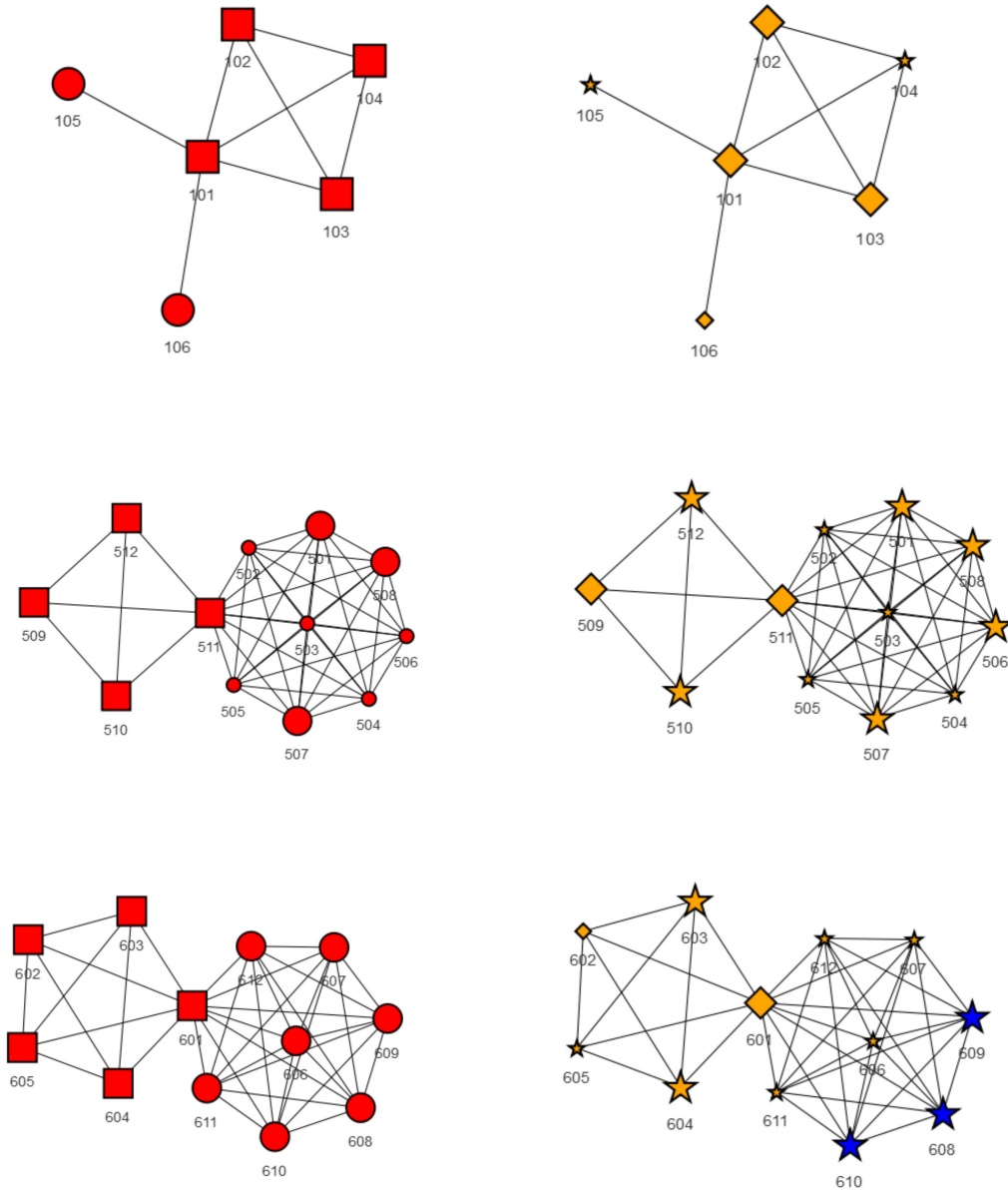
other egos have some advantages of being brokers with an average brokerage score of 0.48 (SD=0.19) and occupy a somewhat central position, with an average normalized ego betweenness of 0.30 (SD=0.19). So most egos can control some flow of information and shared meanings in their networks because information from some alters needs to go through the egos to get to other alters. Nevertheless, none of the egos are the centre of their networks, since many alters can communicate directly with one another (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:Chapter 9). These structural measures tell us that the majority of Chinese immigrants in this study have food networks where they have the opportunity to serve as brokers to some extent. Meanwhile, they experience some constraints and social control, except for ego 1400, who can be considered as an outlier who does not serve as a broker and is potentially subject to maximum social control from the alters. Despite the similar structure measures, the egos actually have unique networks with different alters in it, which can be better explored by looking at the network diagrams.

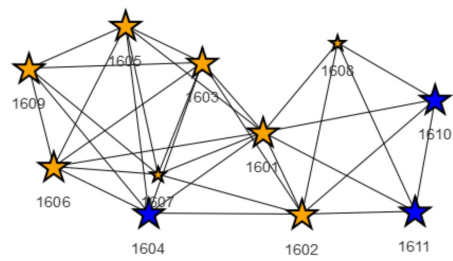
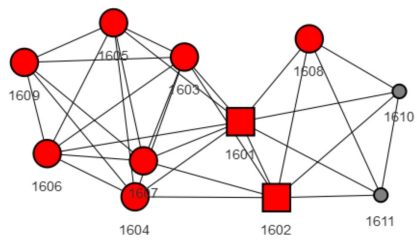
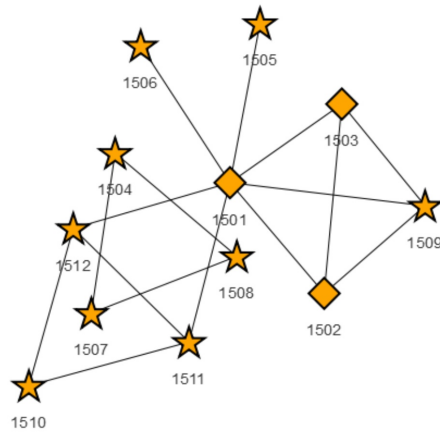
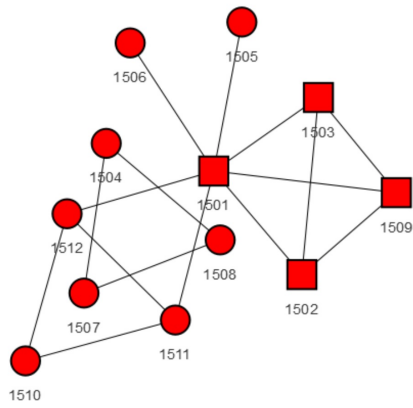
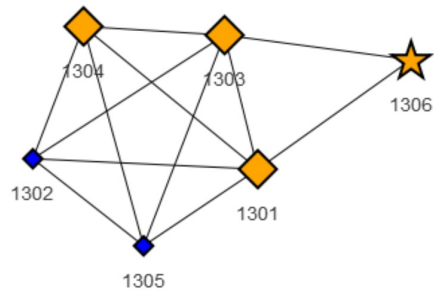
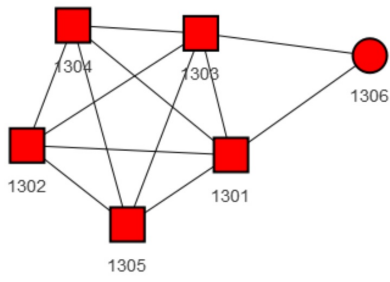
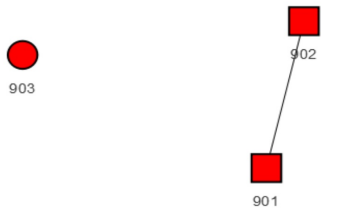
Next, the network diagrams for exploring the composition, content, and structure are drawn using *visNetwork*, which is an R package for visualizing. The graphs are an efficient way to display a social structure that represents information about the relations among nodes (Hanneman and Riddle 2005). Furthermore, they show the relationships through lines and individuals' attributes through shape, size, and colour. To produce the graphs, I needed two files: first, an adjacency matrix file without an ego, which specifies the ties among alters (the ego is removed because clearly the ego connects with everyone) for mapping the structure of the networks, and second, an alter attribute file with information, particularly on relations, ethnicities, and intimate and social support, to further explore the important composition and content measures. I decided to create the two graphs for each research participant with the same structure but different attribute measures. The first graph contains information on relations,

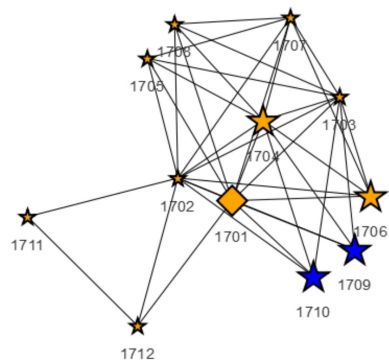
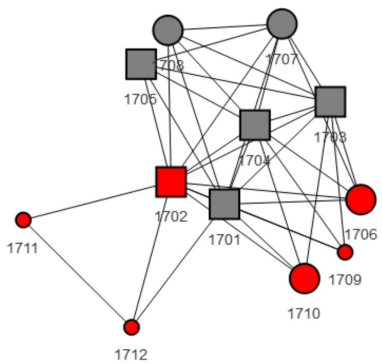
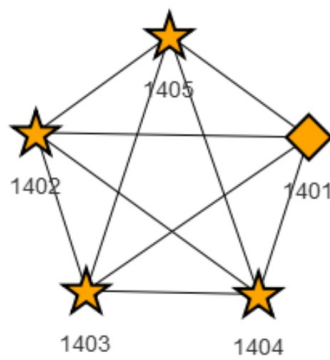
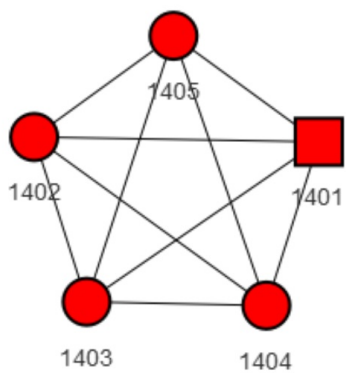
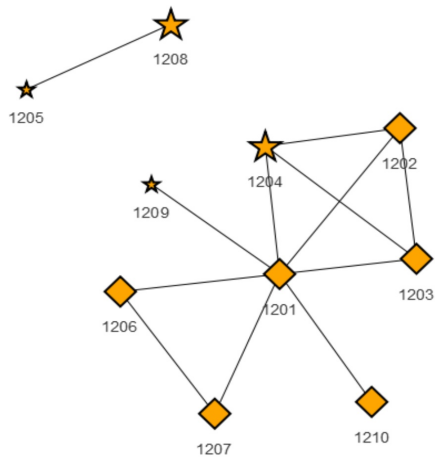
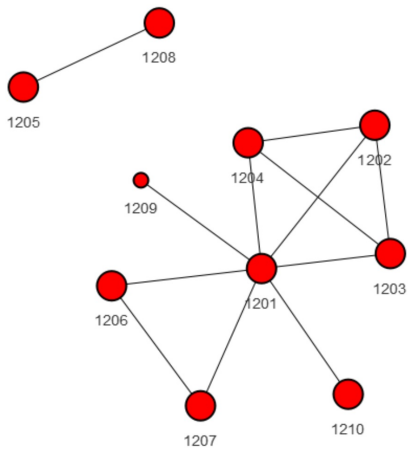
ethnicity, and intimates. The relation is shown through the shape of the node. If the alter is a family member of the ego, then the shape is square, and if the alter is not a family member (i.e. is a friend), then the shape is a dot. The colour of the node indicates the ethnicity: red for Chinese and grey for non-Chinese. A bigger node implies that the alter is considered an intimate by the ego. The second graph displays the types of social support between the egos and their alters. Emotional support is shown through the colour of the node: yellow if there is emotional support and blue if there is no emotional support. Practical information is indicated by the size of the node: a bigger node means there is practical information being provided, and a smaller node means there is no practical information. The shape of the nodes shows financial support: a diamond shape implies that there is financial support and a star shape indicates no financial support. Then, I divided the graphs into three groups based on their generation and age: Group One is first generation older immigrants (seven egos—100, 500, 600, 900, 1300, 1500, 1600, average age 75.3—range from 68 to 81); Group Two is first generation younger immigrants (six egos—200, 300, 1100, 1200, 1400, 1700, average age 33.3—range from 26 to 47); and Group Three is second generation (mostly younger) immigrants (eight egos—400, 700, 800, 1000, 1800, 1900, 2000, 2100, average age 34.6—range from 28 to 47).

Figure 1: Network Diagrams for Chinese Immigrants

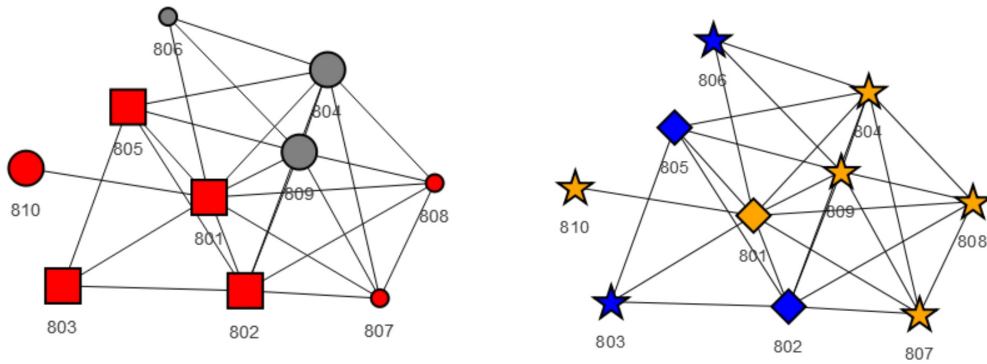
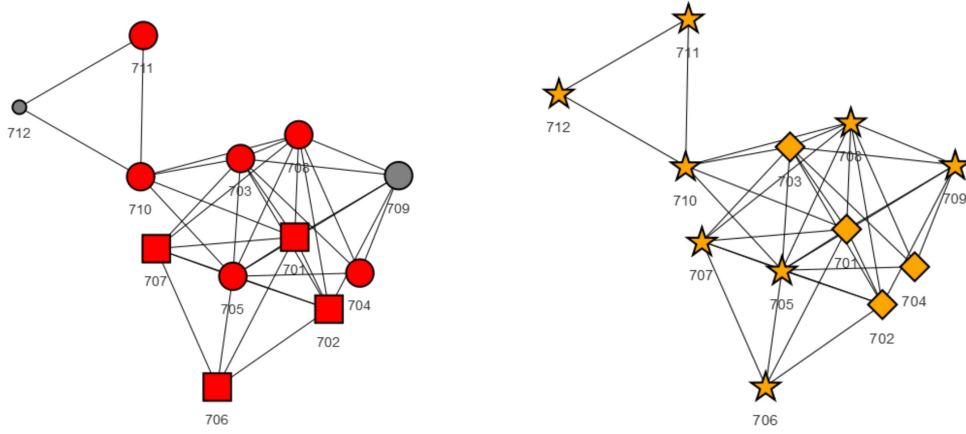
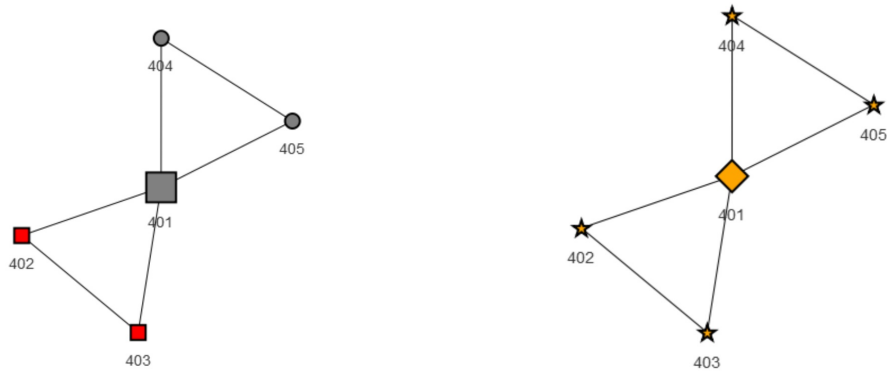
Group One: Older First Generation (Egos 100, 500, 600, 900, 1300, 1500, 1600)

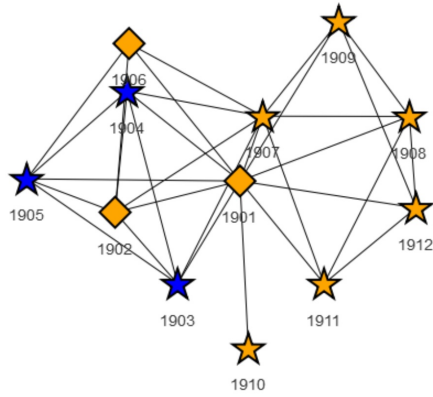
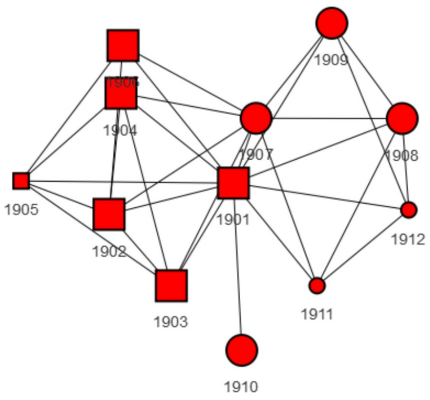
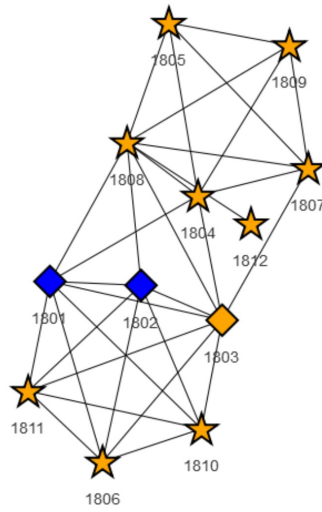
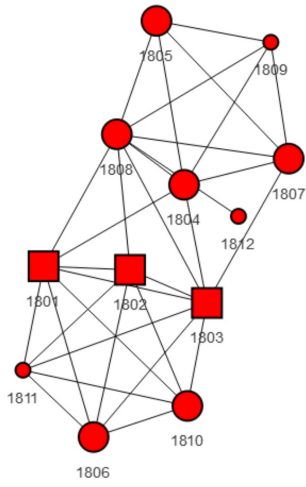
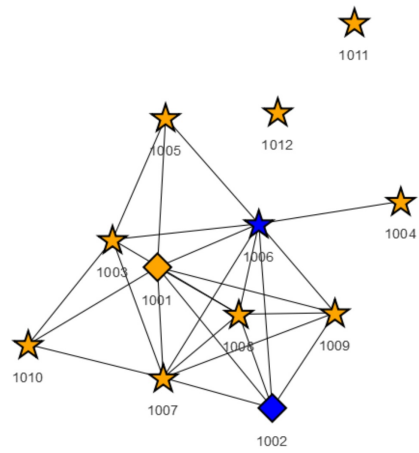
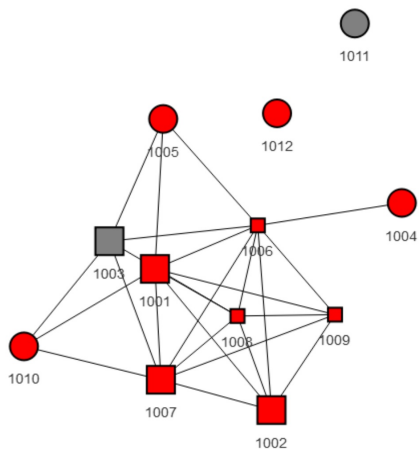


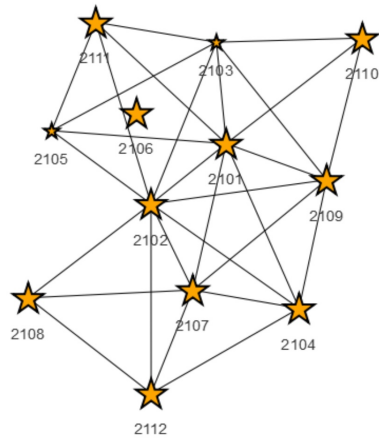
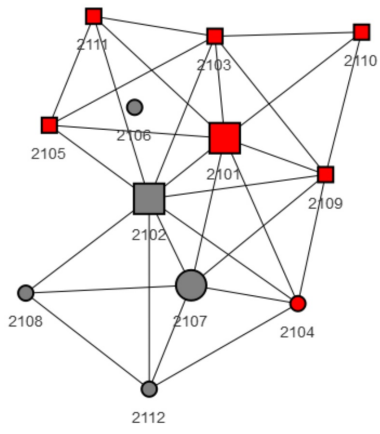
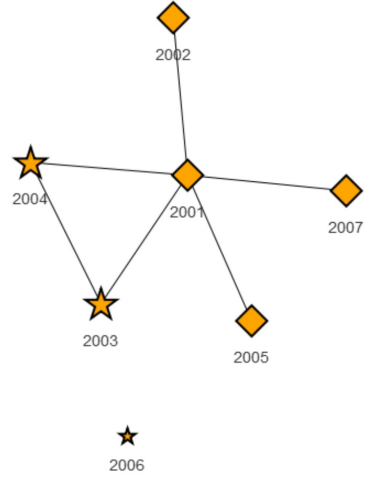
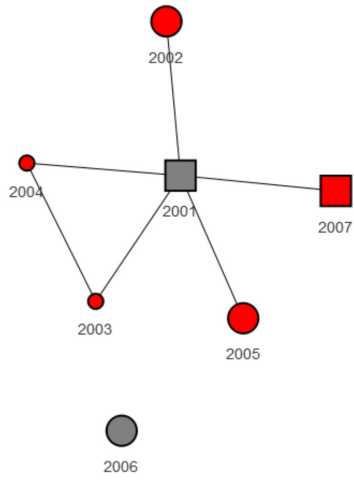




Group Three: Younger Second Generation (Egos 400, 700, 800, 1000, 1800, 1900, 2000, 2100)







For Group One, which contains seven older first generation Chinese immigrants, all Mandarin speakers, the graphs show that most of their alters in the Chinese-food-nets are ethnically Chinese (red nodes). The only exception is ego 1600 (Rose) who has two alters, 1610 and 1611, who are not Chinese. In fact, both alters are Caucasian. They are her son's friends, so they occasionally eat together. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that most people included in the older first generation Chinese immigrants' food networks are Chinese. This may be a result of language barriers that prevent them from making friends with other Canadians who do not speak Chinese languages. Most egos have both family and friends in their Chinese-food-nets, and we can roughly see that family members (square nodes) are connected and friends (dot nodes) are outside of the family networks. Some friends are connected with one another. Moreover, all family members are considered intimates (bigger nodes), whereas only some friends are seen as intimates. Moving on to the other set of graphs about the social support, they show that most alters provide emotional support (yellow nodes), with the exception of ego 900 (Wang). She does not communicate personal issues with her family—in this case, her son and daughter—or her friend. Overall, some alters give practical information (bigger nodes), and some provide financial support (diamond-shaped nodes). Note that financial support is mostly from family members. Only 1600 (Rose) does not receive or give any financial support to her son and daughter. As mentioned before, Rose is different from the rest of the Mainland Chinese egos in this group because she is Malaysian Chinese. Her Chinese-food-net is more ethnically diverse than those of other older immigrants.

Group Two consists of six younger first generation Chinese immigrants. Looking at the graphs, we can see that overall they are more ethnically diverse than the ones for older immigrants' food networks. The majority of egos in this group have non-Chinese alters (grey

nodes) in their Chinese-food-nets. The alters are from various cultural backgrounds such as African (205), Filipino (304), Vietnamese (305, 1708), and Caucasian (1106, 1701, 1703, 1704, 1705, 1707). In the case of ego 1700 (Mia), her food network includes many Caucasians because she married a Caucasian. Many of the alters listed are her in-laws, who are also open to eating Chinese food. The two exceptions who only have Chinese people in their food networks are 1200 (Helen) and 1400 (John). In fact, Helen also only includes females in her Chinese-food-nets, and John has extremely high-density food networks (density=100%). These may be due to their individual preferences. Most egos in this group have moderate density networks, implying that some alters are not connected with one another. Overall, there are fewer family members than friends in their Chinese-food-nets. This may be because many of the younger first generation immigrants came to Canada to study at university or to work, so they left their family in their country of origin. Actually, many of the family members they have in their networks now are their spouses, family of their spouses, or children. Among them, egos 300 (Alex) and 1200 (Helen) do not have any family members in their Chinese-food-nets. More friends are seen as intimates for these younger first generation immigrants. In terms of social support, most alters provide emotional support and practical information. Family members give more financial support except for 1200 (Helen). In her case, many of her friends help her out with money since she does not include any family in her Chinese-food-nets. Overall, we begin to see that younger first generation immigrants have more ethnically diverse networks compared to the older first generation immigrants because of reduced language barriers. They have made new friends or have found a spouse who is not Chinese at school or at work in Canada.

Finally, looking at the graphs of Group Three egos—eight younger second generation Chinese immigrants—we can see that they have more ethnically diverse Chinese-food-nets than

older immigrants. Their alters are from a variety of cultural backgrounds including Scottish American (401), Dutch Canadian (404), Russian Canadian (405), English Scottish (709), Jamaican (712, 1103), Korean (1011), French (2001), Iranian Canadian (2005), Caucasian Canadian (2006), British (2102), Indian (2106, 2107), Polish (2108), and Filipino (2112). Although most of the egos' families are ethnically Chinese, they themselves were born and grew up in Canada, and so they have made friends with people from different cultural backgrounds and share Chinese food together. The exceptions are 1800 (Peter) and 1900 (David), who only have Chinese family and friends in their food networks, although one of Peter's friends is an Iranian Chinese, which I put in the same category with Chinese. In the case of David, he explained that he preferred to hang out with friends who are also Canadian-born Chinese (CBC). Compared to the first generation younger immigrants, they are better connected because of their families, particularly parents, who are also in Canada. They consider some family and friends as intimate ties. For social support, they show similar results compared to first generation immigrants. A lot of emotional support and practical information are provided in the networks. Once again, family is more likely to give financial support. Overall, the second generation immigrants have Chinese-food-nets with their Chinese family as well as spouses and friends from different cultural backgrounds in Canada. Although they experience fewer language and cultural barriers than first generation immigrants, they encounter a different set of challenges, particularly structural barriers and racism, which I will discuss in more detail in the next chapters.

3.4 Conclusion and Limitations

In summary, in this chapter, I have explored the composition, content, and structure of the Chinese-food-nets using the quantitative data collected from the survey. The SNA is very useful for discovering what the Chinese-food-nets look like. As a result, I have a better idea of how the different network compositions, content, and structures can affect the shared meanings being constructed in the Chinese-food-nets, as well as how findings differ between different generations and ages, such as how younger immigrants tend to have more diverse food networks.

Nevertheless, the network analysis of quantitative data has some serious limitations. First, the inquiries were limited to only up to 12 ties. People may actually have far more than 12 ties in their food networks and their personal communities may include many close ties. There could also be intimate ties that are not included in their Chinese-food-nets. Moreover, communities these days are no longer constrained by neighbourhoods, and people socialize with their close ties online in addition to face-to-face meetings such as eating together (Rainie and Wellman 2012). Consequently, the Chinese-food-nets cannot totally represent the true personal communities of Chinese immigrants in Toronto.

Second, the quantitative data were collected from closed-ended questions in the survey for data analysis, so there is only minimal information about the nature of very important concepts, and the meanings of variables remain ambiguous and unknown. For example, the fixed categories oversimplified the complex nature of the variables, especially composition and content, such as emotional support. The nature and meaning of emotional support was also not elaborated on. Furthermore, there is very limited information for understanding the quality of relationships. For instance, emotional support can have many levels, from complimenting a nice

outfit to revealing the deepest personal secret. Moreover, the quantitative data cannot capture the positive or negative experiences of the support.

The SNA approach as empirical science, like all forms of inquiry, operates on certain presuppositions that allow some things about the Chinese-food-nets to be noticed and other things to go unnoticed (Bonner 1997:7). To better grasp the meanings of “home” shared by the Chinese immigrants in their food networks, I need to apply radical interpretive methods that can describe the lived experiences of the Chinese immigrants and their essential meanings from their perspectives. Although the SNA gives a good description of Chinese-food-nets, it overlooks the unique and particular lived experiences of Chinese immigrants. Within the networks, Chinese immigrants still constitute the shared meanings within on an ongoing basis as their lived experiences change. So far in the research, only patterns are explored, not meanings. When shared meanings are not studied, the empirical findings of the composition, content, and structure of Chinese-food-nets obtained by quantitative data do what ethnomethodologists would call “losing the phenomenon.” Furthermore, only looking at the empirical findings of quantitative data can lead a study to end up with what Charles Taylor (1977:105) calls the “brute data,” the data “whose validity cannot be questioned by offering another interpretation or reading, data whose credibility cannot be conditioned or undermined by further reasoning.” So, not only do the shared meanings need to be explored, but the possibilities of different interpretations also need to remain open and cannot be settled with the “brute data.” Berger and Luckmann (1967:6) also point out the need to resist alienated knowledge that lacks the interpretation of meanings crucial for getting to the truth and the real social being of the researcher. Moreover, to understand the social reality of food sharing among Chinese immigrants in their networks, we need to study both “objective facticity and subjective meaning,” since “[s]ociety does indeed possess objective

facticity. And society is indeed built up by activities that expresses subjective meaning” (Berger and Luckmann 1967:18). In the next chapter, I explore the lived experiences and meanings of “home” for Chinese immigrants, using qualitative data from the open-ended interview questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE COMFORT OF HOME IN FOOD SHARING

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, using SNA to explore the composition, content, and structure of the Chinese-food-nets of first and second generation Chinese immigrants in Toronto, I found that among the generational and age differences, older first generation immigrants have less diverse food networks compared to younger first and second generation immigrants. However, the shared meanings in the Chinese-food-nets and the lived experience of Chinese immigrants remain unknown. In the next two chapters, I carry out interpretive analysis to address the problem of displacement/homelessness. In this chapter, I conduct phenomenological analysis to study the shared meanings and lived experiences of Chinese immigrants in Toronto, using qualitative data collected through the open-ended questions that were asked during the interviews. Phenomenological analysis can provide insights into the Chinese immigrants' solutions to the problem of displacement discussed in the earlier chapters. The beauty of phenomenological analysis is that it goes beyond what scientific methods tell us about observable Chinese-food-nets to reveal the essence of food sharing experiences. As it turns out, although Chinese immigrants appear to have different structures of food networks across generations and ages, the essences of the meanings preserved in these networks are very similar.

This chapter is organized into the following sections: first, I give an overview of the phenomenological approach. Next, I discuss interview data collection and analysis preparation. Then, I describe the life-world of Chinese immigrants, thus setting up the context for qualitative data analysis. After that I present the meanings of “home” under the overall theme of comfort

from the perspective of Chinese immigrants: nostalgia, familiarity, habit, affective support, and being yourself. Finally, I discuss the differences between the first and second generation Chinese immigrant life-worlds.

4.2 The Phenomenological Approach

Phenomenological research focuses on studying lived human experience and uncovering the essence of a phenomenon (Van Manen 1998:9-10). For example, as a phenomenologist, I ask the question: For Chinese immigrants, what is the essence of the lived experience of sharing Chinese food? The phenomenological approach I use draws on the type of human science introduced by Max Van Manen, a Dutch-born Canadian scholar influenced by the European methodological traditions, particularly by the work of German and Dutch authors (Van Manen 1998:2). In North America, the human sciences include symbolic interactionism, phenomenological sociology, ethnography, ethnomethodology, critical theory, and so on. The human sciences deal with “mind, thoughts, consciousness, values, feelings, emotions, actions, and purposes, which find their objectifications in languages, beliefs, arts, and institutions” (Van Manen 1998:3). Human scientists think that humans meaningfully experience “things” and that the feelings are expressed through their language (Van Manen 1998:14). Moreover, human science operates under the assumption that lived human experience can be made intelligible and accessible to human reason. In other words, we can understand and describe lived human experience (Van Manen 1998:16). As Van Manen points out, human scientists are interested in gaining a deep understanding of “the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences” by asking the question, “What is this or that kind of experience like?” (1998:9). Human scientists study conscious persons who act purposely in the world and express themselves by creating objects of

“meaning.” Meanings are socially constructed in various ways, and human science provides the key to understand the lived structures of meanings (Van Manen 1998:4), which are similar to the “overall structures of meanings” discussed by Berger et al. (1973:63). In my research, I am interested in exploring the overall structures of meanings in the lived experience of Chinese immigrants in Toronto, especially the meanings of home embedded in their food sharing activities.

Phenomenological research is the human scientific study of phenomena, since it is a “systematic, explicit, self-critical, and intersubjective study of its subject matter, our lived experience” (Van Manen 1998:11). The main methods used in human science are description, interpretation, and self-reflective or critical analysis. In this chapter, I focus on providing descriptions and interpretations through the phenomenological approach, and in the next chapter I conduct critical analysis. Phenomenologists give descriptions of the experiential meanings of our lives as we live them (Van Manen 1998:11). A good phenomenological description is “an adequate elucidation of some aspect of the lifeworld—it resonates with our sense of lived life” (Van Manen 1998:27). As discussed before, a life-world is an ordered reality with collective shared meanings and significance that give sense to the living activities (Berger et al. 1973:63). For instance, a Chinese immigrant life-world is a reality organized around a socially constructed overall structure of meanings. These meanings contain collective shared significance that makes sense to Chinese immigrants. As stated by Van Manen (1998:26), phenomenological descriptions actually include two elements: descriptive (phenomenological) and interpretive (hermeneutic). He writes, “Phenomenology describes how one orients to lived experience, hermeneutics describes how one interprets the ‘texts’ in life” (1998:4).

Providing a strong and rigorous description can be difficult but is desirable. Actually, it is to attempt the impossible, or as Van Manen (1998:18) puts it, “to construct a full interpretive description of some aspect of the life-world, and yet to remain aware that lived life is always more complex than any explication of meaning can reveal.” Additionally, sometimes the life-world to be interpreted may be outside the researcher’s horizon. Therefore, the purpose is to construct “an animating, evocative description (text) of human actions, behaviours, intentions, and experiences as we meet them in the life-world” (Van Manen 1998:19). Thus, there can be infinite possibilities in interpretive descriptions, reflecting the infinite variety of human experiences. Unlike poetry and literature that are implicit and particular, phenomenology aims at making universal meaning explicit. For instance, phenomenology works to tease out universal lessons from a certain poem or painting (Van Manen 1998:19). Furthermore, for phenomenology, objective and subjective are not mutually exclusive. Objectivity means that the researcher “stays true” to the object. Subjectivity means the researcher engages with the object in a unique and personal way (Van Manen 1998:20). Anything, whether it’s empirically measurable or subjectively felt, can be potentially of interest to phenomenology when the object presents itself to consciousness (Van Manen 1998:9).

Good phenomenological descriptions are compelling and insightful. Moreover, the writing process itself can cultivate self-development for the researcher (Van Manen 1998:8). Furthermore, it is worth noting that from a phenomenologist’s perspective, research is an exploration of what it means to be human (Van Manen 1998:12) as well as an act of caring by which the researcher seeks to understand what is most essential to the true nature of the research object. Human beings are simultaneously who they automatically are and who they must try to be, so to do research is to challenge the existing and often taken-for-granted ways of being in the

world (Van Manen 1998:5-6). Therefore, good phenomenological description provides informative insights into an interpretation of what the research participants are exercised by—in the case of my research, the Chinese immigrants’ relationship to food—and is handled with care.

4.3 Data Collection

The texts being analyzed in this chapter come from answers to open-ended interview questions. As mentioned in previous chapters, these in-depth questions were asked during the second part of the interviews after research participants had filled out the surveys. By responding to the interview questions, participants could expand on their survey responses and provide much richer information on their lived experiences in relation to Chinese food sharing and feelings of home. For example, some of the key questions were: What is it that attracts you to Chinese food? What do you often talk about when you have Chinese food together? What do you see as the relationship between having Chinese food in Canada and “feeling at home”? What does home mean for you? What is your relationship to Chinese food and celebration? Through asking these questions, I hoped to learn more about the actual experience of having Chinese food and to enrich my earlier SNA findings with deeper content. Moreover, since phenomenological hermeneutics works with and within language, the findings of the experience will have resonance with more universal themes implicated in the relation of home to food, as seen through the prism of Canadian Chinese immigrants.

Overall, the interview questions were designed with the easier-to-answer questions near the beginning and the more sensitive questions toward the end. Most interview questions were the same for the first and second generation Chinese immigrants, but a few specifically addressed generational differences, for instance, those arising from being either new or long-

established Canadian residents. I started the interviews by asking interviewees to talk about themselves and their experiences in Canada, in an open question to encourage them to say anything they wanted to. However, for the first generation, in order to understand their motivation for moving to Canada from their country of origin, I also asked: Why did you come to Canada? What did you expect to achieve in Canada? What do you like about Canada? These questions were not applicable for second generation Chinese immigrants because they were either born in Canada or had moved here at a very young age, and so had not themselves made the decision to come. Then I asked about experiences with Chinese food and meanings of home. The first generation immigrants were given a few follow-up questions to elaborate on whether they ate Chinese food when they missed home and so on. After a question on Chinese identity and sense of belonging, I asked the first generation immigrants about what they associate with having Chinese food in Canada as well as what they associate with having Chinese food in China. In contrast, the second generation immigrants were asked about whether they had visited China and their experiences with Chinese food there. Next I asked all interviewees whether they had tried any food other than Chinese food, to see how diverse their food choices were, and to imagine how they would feel about life in Canada if they could not have Chinese food. I then followed up with the first generation with the question: Does Chinese food play a role in helping you integrate into Canadian society? The last of the interview questions were more challenging because they concerned struggles and barriers faced in Canada. Once again, I tailored the questions for different generations. First generation participants were asked to reflect on their move to Canada, their expectations for the move, the cultural barriers they experienced, as well as whether they had become Canadian citizens. In contrast, the second generation were queried about barriers they experienced as a result of growing up ethnically Chinese in Canada, any

communication barriers with their parents, and their Chinese language skills. At the end of the interview, I always left time for research participants to freely express anything else they wanted to talk about related to their experiences as Chinese immigrants and with eating Chinese food.

The interviews for the first generation Chinese immigrants were conducted in Mandarin, their native language, to better capture the meanings from their perspectives. Prior to the interviews, I translated all interview materials approved by the Office of Research Ethics from English into Chinese, including the information letter, consent form, interview questions, and the feedback letter. The entire interviews were in Mandarin, apart from the occasional use of English words to express specific meanings. In contrast, the interviews with the second generation Chinese immigrants were conducted in English, their first language.

4.4 Data Analysis

After the interviews, I began a roughly six month long process of transcribing and translating interview texts. Since all interviews were audiotaped, the transcripts were produced from the audio recordings. Of these, the English interview texts were transcribed using the software NVivo and Trint machine service. I transcribed the Chinese texts manually with the assistance of Xunfei software, using the following process: I read out the Chinese audio recording, and the software output Chinese characters, a faster approach than me typing in Chinese. I was the only human involved, which ensured the confidentiality of the interview data. I also reviewed and edited the transcripts and translations to ensure accuracy. Moreover, I offered the research participants opportunities to review their interview transcripts.

All names mentioned in the data analysis are pseudonyms to protect the privacy of research participants. The pseudonyms were chosen from popular Chinese or English names to

reflect the backgrounds of participants. For example, a Chinese pseudonym was assigned to a first generation Chinese immigrant who does not have an English name, and an English pseudonym to a second generation Chinese immigrant.

4.4.1 The Chinese Immigrant Life-World

Like all people, Chinese immigrants live in a world with shared meanings, which is called a “life-world” by phenomenologists. It is a world of the natural attitude of everyday life, described by Husserl as “the original, pre-reflective, pre-theoretical attitude” (Van Manen 1998:7). A life-world is fundamentally social, as it begins with socially constructed meanings and is under ongoing collective maintenance. In my research, the Chinese immigrants preserve and maintain their shared cultural meanings in Toronto by interacting with other people, particularly through food sharing. Here I use the phenomenological approach to uncover the Chinese immigrant life-world. What distinguishes phenomenology from other types of interpretive methods such as symbolic interactionism is that as well as trying to understand “interaction patterns,” phenomenologists seek to “understand the overall structure of meaning within which these particular patterns and symbols are located and from which they derive their collectively shared significance” (Berger et al. 1973:63). In other words, in addition to providing analysis for the concrete situations, it is important to understand the social world within which the particular is meaningful (Berger et al. 1973:63-64). To understand the particular meanings of home and the importance of food sharing among Chinese immigrants, I discuss three aspects of their life-world: first, Chinese immigrants experience the modern condition of pluralization of life-worlds; second, they are strangers in a new country; and third, they are often seen as exotic and inferior by mainstream Canadians. In the following paragraphs, I elaborate on each aspect.

First, Chinese immigrants living in modern Canadian society experience a plurality of life-worlds, just like most people in Canada. As pointed out by Peter Berger et al. (1973:64-65), modern life “is typically segmented to a very high degree, and it is important to understand that segmentation (or, as we prefer to call it, pluralization).” People no longer live in unified life-words like they did in more traditional societies: instead, they navigate among different groups within the same society as a result of division of labour and other kinds of institutional segmentation (Berger et al. 1973:64). For example, people socialize with their family at home, colleagues at work, friends in public places, etc. All members of a group may not know all the other members of that group, and they are even less likely to know all members of the other groups. Moreover, each “life-world” in modern Canadian society has a different set of norms. Berger et al. (1973) states that a central aspect of the pluralization is the divide between private and public spheres (65). Similarly, Charles Taylor (1989:292) writes about “the separation between work and home life, and the growth of a capitalist, mobile, large-scale, bureaucratic world” (as cited in Dunnington 2011:118). Although immigrants may have freedom to organize within their own homes, they need to learn and adapt to a new set of capitalist norms when they start to work in Canada. Also, as Chinese immigrants continue living in Toronto, where plurality is intrinsic to the process of their urbanization of consciousness, the plausibility of their home world weakens as well. This is a necessary consequence of the pluralization of life-words. Weakening the plausibility of the home world creates the risk of homelessness, according to Berger et al. (1973:82). Regardless of whether their home world before coming to Canada was more traditional or modern, they gradually adapt to the Canadian way of life with the pluralization of life-worlds. In comparison, second generation Chinese immigrants, growing up in Canada with Chinese parents, have been exposed to multiple cultures and worlds since the

very beginning of their social experience. Pluralization has entered into the process of childhood—a time when the basic formation of self and the world occur (Berger et al. 1973:67). Therefore, I argue that Chinese immigrants, whether first or second generation, live in a condition of pluralization of life-worlds in Canadian society. They have to keep organized in their minds a multiplicity of social relations and a plurality of cultural meanings (Berger et al. 1973:71). Consequently, modern individuals, including Chinese immigrants, according to the perspective established by Berger et al., suffer from a deepening condition of subjective “homelessness.” Note that this “homelessness” is different from physical homelessness, which refers to the state of having no home or living on the streets. Their experience of society and of self may be experienced as a mental and physical loss of “home” (Berger et al. 1973:82). This issue of the homeless mind, a potentially weakened sense of belonging in one’s place of residence, a phenomenon of the modern life-world according to Berger et al., is one of the themes explored in this research. Do Chinese immigrants experience many different life-worlds in Toronto? If so, it is unclear which one would be the “home world.” In my research, the life-world of food sharing is examined, and I discuss how the meanings of home are preserved there later in the chapter.

Next, Chinese immigrants are strangers in Canada. In modernity, moving geographically is possible. The first generation Chinese immigrant participants came to Canada with the hope of a better life. But living in a new country means to begin as strangers: adjusting to the new life can be very difficult. It is particularly wearying to learn to navigate the new life-worlds of public institutions in the English language, which is not only alien but also often incomprehensible to outsiders (Berger et al. 1973:65). The taken-for-granted cultural patterns for in-group members are actually strange to immigrants. As pointed out by Alfred Schutz (1944:499), the approaching

stranger, in this case, the Chinese immigrant, does not share “certain basic assumptions which alone guarantee the functioning of these recipes.” By recipes, Schutz (1967:80) means a set of knowledge that individuals must have in order to see their everyday world as orderly. For example, a recent Chinese immigrant may not know how to cast a vote in a Canadian Federal Election. Thus, Chinese immigrants need to learn cultural patterns that seem to be unquestionable to the members of the mainstream. In some cases, the cultural patterns of the approached group may not necessarily be seen as better. For example, the Chinese still tend to respect older people and almost always give their seats in public transit to older people, which is not always done in other cultures. Naturally, the Chinese immigrants cannot live their life the old way with their “thinking as usual.” In addition to learning the new cultural patterns in order to fit in with mainstream Canadians, which is not always easy, sometimes Chinese immigrants need to make decisions between whether to act in the old familiar way or in a strange new way, and the answer may not be clear-cut. It often involves complicated negotiations between the meanings of discrepant worlds. As Schutz (1944:503) points out, an immigrant as the approaching stranger “becomes aware of the fact that an important element of his ‘thinking as usual,’ namely, his ideas of the foreign group, its cultural pattern, and its way of life, do not stand the test of vivid experience and social interaction” in mainstream Canadian society. Moreover, second generation Chinese immigrants experience another type of struggle in that they are constantly in between at least two sets of different cultural patterns. They are also often in between different groups, for instance, they fully identify with neither Chinese nor mainstream Canadians. The pluralization they experience is therefore more complex. In fact, all Chinese (and other) immigrants engage in a specific form of interaction, one that synthesizes both nearness and distance (Simmel 1950:1) between their culture of origin and that in their new country.

Finally, Chinese immigrants are often seen as an exotic and inferior group by mainstream Canadians. According to Simmel (1950:3), strangers are not conceived of as individuals, but as a particular type. In the case of Chinese immigrants, this type is considered a different and less valued ethnicity. This situation was evident in the more overt Head Tax and Chinese Exclusion Act of the past, and remains in the more covert systematic inequality of the present discussed in the previous chapters. As stated before, Toronto is reputed to be the world's most multicultural city. Torontonians come from diverse cultural backgrounds, and about half of them are first generation immigrants who were born outside of Canada. Many Torontonians, including the recent immigrants and native-born Canadians, enjoy the benefits of being exposed to a great variety of cultural practices, including food practices, and learning from people from distinct cultural backgrounds. However, beneath the surface of diverse Torontonians living together peacefully, in reality, multiculturalism cannot accommodate or give priority to every cultural practice. Phenomenologically speaking, the pluralization of life-worlds that is a feature of modernity is more poignantly experienced by immigrants, especially non-European immigrants including Chinese immigrants, by virtue of being strange to the modern Toronto life-world. Moreover, there are expectations for the newcomers to fit in and meet the standards set by earlier immigrants, mostly white Europeans. What are Chinese immigrants' particular experiences living in a multicultural yet still Eurocentric city such as Toronto?

At present, Canada is seen as the pioneer of implementing multiculturalism in the world, and it promotes diversity as one of its strengths and core values (Blake 2013). Tracing back to its origins, the official policy of multiculturalism was declared in 1971 under Pierre Elliott Trudeau, who was the Prime Minister at the time when violent struggles for civil rights inspired by Martin Luther King and others were happening in the United States, and dramatic remaking activities

were taking place in Quebec. Under these conditions, the hope of the policy was to achieve a somewhat “win-win situation” among diverse cultural groups, particularly the British and the French in Canada (Bissoondath 2002:35). Nevertheless, multiculturalism has been criticized for being fundamentally flawed and for being a product used for covering up historical conflicts (Bissoondath 2002:56). Building on this version of multiculturalism, multiculturalism is currently far from ideal, especially for the members of minority groups.

In the case of Chinese immigrants, although the Head Tax and Chinese Exclusion Act are a distant memory, they still haunt some Chinese Canadians. Some researchers argue that the overt forms of structural inequality have diminished over time for Chinese immigrants in Canada, but the more subtle forms of structural and cultural barriers are still prevalent (Li 2003; Hasmath 2012). For instance, at present, Chinese Canadians are still officially considered as a “visible minority” group in the census conducted by Statistics Canada, despite the fact that the Chinese population is now the largest ethnic group in Toronto, surpassing the size of English, Scottish, Irish, German, etc., as stated in Chapter One. Furthermore, in the eyes of mainstream Canadians, Chinese Canadians are often seen as the strange “other” based on how their physical appearance differs from that of the majority of Canadians (Li 2003). Additionally, Chinese immigrants do not have a shared history with mainstream European immigrants: consequently, they may not be considered as belonging to the dominant groups in Canada. In particular, since the first generation Chinese immigrants were born outside of Canada and have not belonged to Canada from the beginning, they may be seen as people without history from the point of view of native-born Canadians, and so are viewed as only able to share in the present and future but not in the past (Schutz 1944).

Culturally, Chinese food practices are often considered exotic by dominant groups of Canadians. For example, Maria Niderman (2017) described “the smell of exotic food products in Chinatown” as one of the Toronto smells “every Torontonians knows too well.” Under multiculturalism, cultural celebrations and festivals are encouraged in Canada: for instance, people see the dragon dances at Chinatown festivals. Nevertheless, most people do not have a good understanding of Chinese cultural values and are unaware of Chinese immigrants’ struggles in everyday life, not surprisingly given the very limited amount of information published about Chinese immigrants in Canada. Moreover, Chinese immigrants are often treated as a whole group by mainstream Canadians rather than being seen as very distinct individuals. As pointed out by Bissoondath (2002:225-226), “Trading in the exotic, it [multiculturalism] views the individual not as a member of society at large but a unit of a smaller group ethnically, racially and culturally defined—a group comforted by the knowledge that it has access to familiar foods, music, etc.” Although Chinese food is well-liked by many Canadians, stereotypes about Chinese food exist widely in Toronto. For example, a Toronto-based video game called “Dirty Chinese Restaurant” features “players chasing cats and dogs with a cleaver, scavenging for ingredients, and dodging immigration officials” (Global News 2017). Therefore, in the Chinese immigrant life-world, the weakness of the plausibility of the home world can be more poignantly experienced in relation to the sense of belonging in their country of residence.

In addition, some Canadians tend to think all Chinese immigrants are similar due to lack of understanding of the diverse Chinese population. It is misleading to speak of “the Chinese” as if there are no differences in experience and worldview between the people of Hong Kong, a long time colony of the British Empire, the people of Taiwan, an island with a democratic system, and people of the mainland, a huge country ruled by one communist party, not to

mention the diversity of people from different regions of mainland China and overseas, all with distinct cultural practices, such as food choices. In my research sample, I included participants from diverse regions, including Hunan, Inner Mongolia, Shenzhen, Nanjing, Heilongjiang, Chongqing, Taipei, Hong Kong, Klang, and Toronto. The “Chinese food” discussed during the interviews covers a very wide range, and it often means only the food familiar to the particular participant. Although there are similarities among the research participants, making any cultural generalization is challenging. Furthermore, the aim here is not to make an empirical generalization. The interest of phenomenology is to get at the structure of consciousness and to seek to develop more “universal” themes through that.

From the perspectives of the Chinese immigrants, they experience various barriers in Canada. For the first generation immigrants, language barriers came up most frequently in their interview responses. For example, as Mia says:

Mia (younger first gen): When I first came to Canada, my speaking English was not good, neither was my listening English. I could not understand slang, so it was a bit difficult for me to communicate at the beginning. I remember when I went to class for the first time, which was a math class, there was a Canadian student sitting next to me. Then the professor was lecturing and I asked him a question. I misunderstood something the professor said so I asked a wrong question. Then the student probably thought my English was not good or something. He did not sit next to me in the next class (interview transcript, August 31st, 2018).

For older first generation Chinese immigrants, cultural barriers are nearly impossible to overcome, as mentioned by Zhang in relation to food:

Zhang (older first gen): I think the biggest problem of eating western food is that I can't taste. When you taste something foreign, you don't know if it's good or bad. For example, for tea or alcohol, you can taste. For western food, you can only eat but not to taste. Some people when they drink wine, they can talk about where it comes from, its sweetness or something; they can talk a lot about it. So I think, that's good and the environment is elegant, but I can't fit in, that way I don't feel that I belong nor express my voice (interview transcript, June 17th, 2018).

Both Mia and Zhang show particular expressions of the experience of strangeness. In Mia's case, it's the English language, which is the language of the host country but not her own. In Zhang's case, it's the taste of Western food that she is not familiar with. Both the English language and the taste of Western food are taken-for-granted cultural patterns in Canada. For first generation immigrants such as Mia and Zhang, these cultural patterns of the home groups are not articulated for the members of the foreign group. In fact, most first generation research participants have mentioned that they had difficulties with the English language. As stated by Schutz (1944:504-505), to master a language requires more than knowing "the linguistic symbols catalogued in the dictionary and...the syntactical rules enumerated in an ideal grammar," but it also means to understand several other factors such as the emotional values attached to sentences, secondary meanings derived from the context, and codes like idioms, technical terms, jargons. It is challenging for first generation Chinese immigrants to learn all these different levels of the English language well. For example, Mia pointed out that she was unable to understand slang. As a result, she was treated as an outsider of the group by the student in her class.

In contrast, second generation Chinese immigrants do not have many language or cultural barriers because they grew up in Canada. However, they have other kinds of struggles, for instance, identity crisis, as shown in Susan's response:

Susan (second gen): So I think Chinese people, there is an identity of a Chinese. They don't need to say it or look for it...growing up, even being Canadian, the question we asked ourselves is how are you different Americans. What is your identity? We don't really have an identity because we're all from somewhere else. The only true Canadians are First Nations and even then we got all these issues. They don't see themselves (as Canadians) either...even though I see myself as Chinese Canadian, I know like my genes are genetically I've got this history that's Chinese. But that's what I think is the difference is they're not searching for anything. They know who they are. They are Chinese and that's one of the great cultures (interview transcript, June 17th, 2018).

Here Susan, as a second generation Chinese immigrant growing up in modern Canadian society, describes experiencing the pluralization of life-worlds. When she says that, “But that’s what I think is the difference is they’re not searching for anything,” it is an expression of an idea of a more traditional life-world where a sense of home and identity is more plausible. For her, a sense of home is weakened by the pluralization of life-world, the core feature of Canadian society, which is more intensely experienced by being a member of the “visible minority” group among various ethnic groups.

Moreover, second generation Chinese immigrants are more aware of the history of the Chinese in Canada, such as the Head Tax and the Chinese Exclusion Act, than the recent first generation immigrants. Consequently, as members of a visible minority group, some of them feel strongly about racism. As Chinese Canadians, they are “racialized,” meaning that they “have acquired a racial vision of life, to have learnt to see oneself, one’s past, present and future, through the colour of one’s own skin” (Bissoondath 2002:94). An interviewee, Peter, recalled his own experience and his experience working with other Chinese youth:

Peter (second gen): Race affects how people interact with you. I know that they’re going to look at me as a Chinese person, right? They see my resume they know I’m Chinese. So knowing that right away. I’m also growing up with internalized racism. Race is something you learn and you try to internalize it. Affects the way you are as a person. So having worked with Chinese youth in terms of mental health, a lot of that is the experience of isolation. Isolation is a huge thing that Chinese youth experiences in Toronto. It’s complicated but I think it has to do with you are a model minority... On one hand, they’re told that you are model minority you will be able to succeed. And that they’re kind of sold a story like you could be like white people. But on the other hand, it is way more complicated than that and there’s some sort of racism also exist for them (interview transcript, August 28th, 2018).

What Peter says about “race” can be explained by Cooley’s (1902) concept of looking glass self, which is used for describing how one’s self and identity are developed through interpersonal interactions in society. Here Peter is aware of his race when he appears in front of

others. He says “I know they’re going to look at me as a Chinese person.” He then reacts and internalizes people’s judgment about him being Chinese. Finally, he develops the self through the judgment of others. Peter also points out that Chinese youth develop this self as a model minority. The Chinese youth are perceived as “the other” in Canadian society, as strangers as a result of their race. They are not considered as members of the home group by others in Canada, and this is internalized to be parts of their identity. Although these Chinese youth grow up in Canada, they react to the judgment from others that they are near and far at the same time (Simmel 1950). Their self develops in relation to the other and so has both self and other as part of their identity. This tension between the self as model minority and as other points to the tension between self and other. Consequently, they develop a more complicated self and identity that does not fully belong to the home group or the strange group.

We can see that the first generation and second generation Chinese immigrants face different specific sets of challenges in multicultural Canada. Nevertheless, as members of a strange group in the modern Canadian society with pluralization of life-worlds, they both have lived experience of sharing Chinese food with family and friends. Chinese food is actually better preserved than Chinese languages, as shown in the interview findings. Most second generation participants can only speak very little Mandarin or Cantonese, but they still eat Chinese food frequently. In the next section, by examining their food sharing experiences, I present their solution to the problem of displacement by conducting a thematic analysis.

4.4.2 Thematic Analysis

As discussed, phenomenological research is the study of essences, understanding the object of analysis as a phenomenon by trying to articulate what is essential to that object for it to

be what it is. One way to conduct this kind of attentive practice of thoughtfulness is to reflect on essential themes arising from the interview texts, an approach known as thematic analysis (Van Manen 1998:10-12). As Van Manen (1988:77) writes, trying to grasp the essential meaning of something involves “a process of reflectively appropriating, of clarifying, and of making explicit the structure of meaning of the lived experience.” “Theme” in this context is taken to mean “an element (motif, formula or device) which occurs frequently in the text” (Van Manen 1998:78). Thematic analysis thus refers to the process of recovering the themes represented in the meanings. For phenomenologists, themes go beyond the frequently appearing words that can be captured by computer programs: they may instead be considered “the structure of experience.” Thus, conducting thematic analysis means determining the experiential structures in concrete situations (Van Manen 1998:79). For example, immigrants commonly experience “displacement or loss of home,” especially in a new country where they feel like strangers and where their “thinking as usual” from their cultural of origin can no longer prove adequate in a new country with different cultural patterns and ways of life (Schutz 1944). Schutz (1944:503) states that “The discovery that things in his new surroundings look quite different from what he expected them to be at home is frequently the first shock to the stranger’s confidence in the validity of his habitual ‘thinking as usual.’” Thus, the problem of displacement is more of a subjective experience that needs to be studied beyond the obvious and externalized generalizations. In my research, I am interested in finding out what a Chinese immigrant does in such situations, particularly, how they cope with the problem with displacement through food sharing. More importantly, what are the meanings shared in their Chinese-food-nets? I need to keep in mind that meaning is multi-dimensional and multi-layered (Van Manen 1998:78). Moreover, shared meanings may vary within different types of social relationships. My thematic analysis employs

a “selecting or highlighting approach,” so instead of attending to the entire interview texts as a whole or doing detailed reading of every single sentence, my analysis selects the texts that “seem particularly essential or revealing about the phenomenon or experience being described” (Van Manen 1998:93). In this case, I select the texts that support the description and interpretation of the experience of “feeling at home” in relation to food sharing. Phenomenology seeks to get at the understandings that make the object what it is. As such, what is essential is not an empirical generalization. Nevertheless, phenomenology can reveal the essences of what is said by the research respondents.

During interviews, the research participants and I engaged in conversations to get at the truth of their lived experiences. The conversations have the question-and-answer dialogic structure mentioned by Gadamer (1975 as cited in Van Manen 1998:98). I often asked follow-up questions to prompt participants to elaborate on their answers and provide further details. As pointed out by Gadamer (1975:330), “[t]he art of questioning is that of being able to go on asking questions, i.e., the art of thinking.” So the conversation is actually a collaborative hermeneutic situation in which the researcher (me) encourages research participants to reflect on their lived experiences and so reveal deeper meanings in order to come up with themes (Van Manen 1998:99). Later, I examined the interview transcripts closely to determine the essential themes for phenomenological textual description, that is, “aspects or qualities that make a phenomenon what it is and without which the phenomenon could not be what it is” (Van Manen 1998:107). In my research, I have identified the essential themes by inquiring about the lived experiences of Chinese immigrants, particularly how they preserve meanings of home in their food networks. The thematic analysis is presented next.

In light of the findings from the SNA in the previous chapter, as well as findings from the life-world analysis, I organize the texts to reflect three distinct groups of participants: 1) older first generation Chinese immigrants; 2) younger first generation Chinese immigrants; and 3) (younger) second generation Chinese immigrants. Groups 1 and 2 are both the first generation Chinese immigrants who are strangers to a host country in Schutz's (1944) sense. However, their relationships differ structurally because the immigrants in Group 1 may have family nearby, so that they have more of a hold on the "home world," while immigrants in Group 2 may be far away from their family overseas, and instead seek to understand and more fully participate in the host country. Consequently, immigrants in Group 2 may experience more difficulties in the process of integrating into Canadian society, such as learning new cultural patterns that are not articulated for them, as described by Schutz (1944). In contrast, immigrants in Group 3 would be more involved in the pluralization of life-worlds as against a home world versus a host world because they grew up in modern Canadian society.

The purpose of this thematic analysis is to explore and to understand the common themes arising from the meanings of home from Chinese immigrants' perspectives across the different generations and ages. As discussed before, Chinese immigrants in Toronto experience the problem of displacement/homelessness, whether it is due to the loss of home for the first generation immigrants, or to the divided home for the second generation immigrants. Furthermore, they need to cope with the lived experience of often being perceived as strangers in Canadian society. The thematic analysis aims to uncover the essence of meanings of home as shown in relation to eating Chinese food. The relationship between food and home is central for the Chinese. There is a traditional saying in this culture that "food is the god of people." According to *Key Concepts in Chinese Thought and Culture* (2019), food is considered to be of

the highest importance to the Chinese because it provides “the basic recourses or material conditions essential to human life.” “God” (used interchangeably with “heaven”) refers to the most important or the basic element that is the foundation of everything else, such as supporting families, living peacefully, and having fulfilling jobs. It’s pragmatic rather than spiritual. From the interview responses provided by research participants about their lived experience of eating Chinese food as Chinese immigrants in Canada, I present a number of interrelated themes under the overall theme of comfort as their solution to the problem of homelessness/displacement. These themes were prevalent in the descriptions of food sharing activities among the Chinese immigrants.

Comfort

Penny (younger first gen): I feel comfortable about eating [Chinese food]⁷. And it’s also a habit...Home to me is a place where you can recharge. When you come back from working or something else, it’s a place where you can be at ease, and relaxed. Chinese food has the similar effect because of its familiar taste...[What do you eat when you miss home?] Noodles, the kind with soup. You drink soup and eat a bite of noodle. It’s my comfort food. I am from Northern China, and there is a lot of food made of flour. I often eat noodles at home. [It’s your familiar taste?] Yes (interview transcript, June 10th, 2018).

May (younger first gen): It feels comfortable to eat [Chinese food]. It’s a habit I developed growing up (interview transcript, July 24th, 2018).

John (younger first gen): I think Chinese food is related to home...I have been eating Chinese food since I was a child. Growing up in China, I rarely ate western food. I feel like I’m more used to eating Chinese food, and it tastes better too. There is some western food that I like. But if I don’t eat Chinese food for a few days I will feel uncomfortable (interview transcript, August 10th, 2018).

Susan (second gen): Home means to me the food that I eat at home. So actually Chinese food plays a part...Like hot chocolate. Makes me think of I went tobogganing with my friends and we come inside and I burn my tongue on the hot chocolate it wasn’t even good. But it’s homey, it is comfort. Yeah, so stuff that’s warm and comfortable (interview transcript, June 17th, 2018).

⁷ Square brackets are used to represent interviewer’s comments or prompts.

David (second gen): I want to go to congee or noodles or that's always my go to comfort food (interview transcript, August 30th, 2018).

Comfort is a common theme mentioned in the responses of first and second generation Chinese immigrants. As presented earlier in the literature review, comfort is also a universal meaning of home, with its association of being relaxed, at ease, and so on. For example, it is used to describe the place where one lives with the feelings of belonging (Oxford English Dictionary 2019a). Comfort can also refer to the familiar homeland that disappears when one moves (Young 2011). Eating Chinese food provides a feeling of comfort for Chinese immigrants in Canada. Both generations have grown up eating Chinese food at home. The food is usually prepared by their parents or other family members. Among the wide range of Chinese food, what they mean by comfort can be Chinese food in general, or noodles or congee in particular. Susan also mentions hot chocolate as her comfort food, which is not really Chinese food. Thus, it is not necessarily food from Chinese culture that offers them a sense of comfort, it is the food they have been eating since they were born, and in the case of Chinese immigrants, it is likely to be Chinese food that their families eat. Therefore, no matter which generation the Chinese immigrants are from, they feel comfortable with the food that they ate at home growing up. Here the feeling of comfort transcends any generational differences.

Comfort is an intangible feeling that goes beyond scientific measures. The scientific definition of comfort is “that condition in which discomfort has been avoided” (Rybczynski 1986:226), which fails to capture the subjective experience of comfort. As Gadamer (1996:132) states, “modern science has come to regard the results of such measuring procedures as the real facts which it must seek to order and collect. But the data provided in this way only reflect conventionally established criteria brought to the phenomena from without.” The feeling of comfort cannot be easily measured and is more than the absence of discomfort. It can also refer

to a state of experiencing positive feelings, for instance, feelings of genuine intimacy.

Furthermore, avoiding discomfort would not automatically produce a feeling of well-being, which can be rather spiritual in nature. Well-being is a complex and ambiguous concept with a desire for more. As Bonner (2009:87) points out, well-being is “not just the absence of illness, but rather points to a life where illness is accepted as part of life that includes luxury; a life that privileges our desire for more, for better, and for the best; and a desire that finds its highest expression in the range of choices and seductions.” So well-being may include both the feeling of comfort and discomfort/illness when discomfort/illness is accepted as a part of being. In contrast, dullness is not stimulating (Rybczynski 1986:228-229). For Chinese immigrants, when they enjoy that bowl of warm noodle soup prepared by their loved ones and say, “this makes me feel comfortable,” we know it’s something special. In addition, this feeling of comfort has several layers of cultural and historical meanings beyond what can be measured by science. In the case of noodle soup, not only does it taste warm and delightful, but it also has the cultural meaning of good wishes in some parts of China. For example, in Fujian province, people eat noodle soup on their birthday instead of cake to wish for longevity. In Shandong province, people eat noodle soup after someone is back from travelling, to celebrate their safe return: moreover, noodle soup is easy to digest, so the person who has just come home does not feel overwhelmed by heavy food. Actually, the recognition of comfort involves a combination of sensations—conscious and subconscious, physical, emotional, and intellectual (Rybczynski 1986:230-232). Sometimes, comfort involves or even requires forgetfulness, for example, people tend to feel comfortable when they are healthy. Health, according to Gadamer (1996:75), can be forgotten since it is “the remarkable protected state in which we feel ourselves safely enfolded so that we are able, lightly and effortlessly, to embrace our desire for active participation in life.”

Comfort is fundamentally ambiguous and subjective, and it contains many layers of meanings. This ambiguity in meanings can be thought of as a “grey zone” that requires analysis. The idea of a grey zone points to “the way concepts and language are haunted by a fundamental indeterminacy to which any interpretation seeks to provide a resolute answer” (Bonner 2009:82). Blum (2011:9) thinks of the grey zone as a region of ambiguity because “it is the space of indeterminacy upon which all determination ultimately depends.” What is the feeling of comfort when Chinese immigrants eat together? In the following section, I conduct a thematic analysis of comfort to reveal the different aspects of it that are shown through the interview responses. Here I present the different key and interrelated meanings shown in the responses of interview participants: nostalgia, familiarity, habit, affective support, and being yourself, all representing different relations to Chinese food.

Comfort of Nostalgia

Zhang (older first gen): When I miss home, I will eat Suzhou cuisine (from my hometown). When we went back this time, we got together for food many times, and we were just back for three months. Therefore, we ate Suzhou cuisine with many students. Because I haven’t had it for a long time, miss that taste, authentic! (interview transcript, June 17th, 2018).

Ling (older first gen): When we celebrate Chinese holidays together, we talk about things from the past (interview transcript, June 7th, 2018).

Rose (older first gen): Home was where my parents were. My parents passed away. I no longer feel like home when I go back to Malaysia. Home is where my family is...I miss something my mother made that you couldn’t buy it anywhere outside, that’s the taste of home. Furthermore, my mother made it from scratch: she fried peanuts and hulled rice by herself. I couldn’t taste that anymore (interview transcript, August 18th, 2018).

John (younger first gen): When I miss home, China, I miss things that my parents cooked, although they are not as sophisticated as food you get at the restaurants. I ate them growing up, really miss that taste. For example, my mom would fry some vegetables for me; now I know it is not that good, but I still like it. Also steamed bao, I ate less after I moved here; at home my mom would make steamed bao for me, with a special filling,

and it tasted wonderful. And I miss the finger foods from the city I am from. Every time when I talk about them, I miss them (interview transcript, August 10th, 2018).

Sydney (second gen): [Chinese food is] delicious but it also reminds me of [things]. You know. How I grew up in different places; I've traveled with good memories... So I think Chinese having Chinese food in Canada is... there's a very close relationship between the two. Because I believe that if you grew up with Chinese food, you have an endless number of memories of taste memories as well as food sharing memories that you don't get in mainstream (interview transcript, June 15th, 2018).

As shown from the interview texts, participants often express comfort in their feelings of longing for the past, missing home, and remembering good memories. This is true for both first and second generation Chinese immigrants. They long for pleasant food sharing experiences with loved ones, for example, family (especially parents), friends, and students. This suggests a desire to preserve the taste of home, as it existed in the past, which may reflect a profound dissatisfaction with their surroundings at present (Rybczynski 1986:13). To understand this attitude, we need to understand what being an immigrant is like in modernity. As discussed before, Chinese immigrants, as modern individuals living in Canadian society, experience the modern condition of homelessness: furthermore, they are often perceived as exotic strangers by mainstream Canadians. Consequently, they deal with missing the feelings of home by recovering their earlier experiences of having Chinese food, that is, when they were surrounded by people who cared about them and enjoyed with them the particular kinds of food that were familiar. By doing so, they remember a time when they were not considered outsiders, and they are comforted by these memories. Moreover, nostalgia is a feeling with a mix of pain and pleasure. The Chinese immigrants experience the pain of what is missing, for example, their family and friends who are no longer constantly present in their lives. Meanwhile, they experience the pleasure of the memory by talking about what is absent but present in the memory. For instance, first generation younger immigrant John talks about how much he misses the steamed bao made by

his mother in China that tasted wonderful. This is part of how taste brings past experiences to mind. If we only treat the experience as compensation, the multidimensional experience of taste is reduced, especially in relation to a unique food. Thus, the taste of the food is essential, in John's case, that "wonderful" taste, and is not just a compensation for the struggles of missing home and being a stranger, although that adds a little intensity to the experience. Additionally, when Chinese immigrants share familiar food, they become "homecomers," as described by Schutz (1945). Living in a new country where cultural practices, including common food practices, are very different from where they come from, eating Chinese food, whether at home or in restaurants, provides a temporary experience so that they are back at "home." The Chinese immigrants return to an environment of which they have always had intimate taken-for-granted knowledge. As stated by Schutz (1945:370), "To feel at home is an expression of the highest degree of familiarity and intimacy." Next, I discuss the theme of familiarity.

Comfort of Familiarity

Alex (younger first gen): I have been eating Chinese food since I was born. Familiarity (interview transcript, June 14th, 2018).

Helen (younger first gen): If I cook, I always cook Chinese food. Then, I'm used to it. For example, I know how to make rice or noodles or where to find materials for them. If it's western food, you don't even know how to order, or what they consider to be good taste (interview transcript, August 14th, 2018).

Nancy (second gen): I mean if we are talking about home cooking that I always associated with what my mom makes. [Chinese food] is just something that I'm familiar with. I'm eating all my life (interview transcript, June 20th, 2018).

Susan (second gen): [Eating Chinese food is] like back home: it's familiar. And all of those people that I've gone to funerals with have been families so for them certainly is that older generation Chinese food is going to be [served] (interview transcript, June 17th, 2018).

Peter (second gen): My family is definitely associated with food. And if we do anything, it really is going out to eat. And even when I see my aunts and uncles we're going for dim sum, usually dim sum but we go out to eat. So food is definitely...food is family...It's kind of like the food that I've had growing up. I haven't grown up with a crepe. Even rice. When I was living in Hamilton. And I didn't cook rice at all because I never had a rice cooker. I was craving it. There's familiarity and there's also just taste so good (interview transcript, August 28th, 2018).

Both first and second generation Chinese associate home and food with familiarity. They have been eating Chinese food since they were born. They cook Chinese food at home and eat it with people at home, as well as sharing it on public occasions, including social functions such as funerals. They have knowledge of how to cook a certain food and what the food should taste like. Unlike having to learn very different ways of life in Canada, especially for first generation immigrants, cooking and eating Chinese food is relatively easy. While this interpretation may be accurate from the conventional sociological perspective, it makes the Chinese part of Chinese food incidental, just like Italian food is easy for Italians to make. This pursuit of what's easy can explain the rise of fast food very well, but not why people hold on to taste as an intangible cultural heritage. Familiarity with Chinese food is cultivated. For example, the "taste" mentioned in Helen's response is a cultivated sense, which is one element of the phenomenon of taste. It is not instinctual because Helen says that she does not know what good taste would be for Western food. Similarly, Alex and Nancy both talk about eating Chinese food all their lives, which is also cultivation. In Peter's response, family, familiarity, and taste all point to a binding together by an enigmatic sacred cultural practice connecting Chinese immigrants' past and future. The familiar food here serves as an intangible heritage that is passed on and so connects the different generations of Chinese immigrants. The familiar taste of Chinese food shared across generations is cultivated and particular: as Peter says, "when I see my aunts and uncles we're going for dim sum...I haven't grown up with a crepe...I was craving [rice]."

Comfort of Habit

Ling (older first gen): It's a matter of habit. I don't like the meat with blood [steak]...Of course eating Chinese food feels like home. In contrast, eating western food does not feel like home because I grew up eating Chinese food (interview transcript, June 7th, 2018).

Wang (older first gen): This is the taste all my life. I don't like western food. It's a habit. It's impossible to change the taste (interview transcript, June 28th, 2018).

Li (older first gen): Why do I like Chinese food? It's an eating habit, a traditional habit of the Chinese (interview transcript, June 17th, 2018).

Kong (older first gen): It's a habit I developed all along. I think it is hard to change a habit that you formed when you were a child. I think it's easier to change other habits, but harder to change eating habits...Sichuan cuisine has its particularity, and we are all used to the spicy taste. Actually we have changed quite a bit but we still can't change our eating habits. We are still eating the same things. We have made some changes with how to cook them (interview transcript, August 7th, 2018).

Several interviewees, especially older first generation immigrants, mentioned that eating Chinese food is a habit. Since their interviews were conducted in Mandarin, habit was actually translated from the Chinese “*xiguan*,” a word that came up very frequently in their responses. Most of these first generation Chinese immigrants have spent the majority of their lives outside of Canada, and their lived experiences in China are very different from those in Canada. When it comes to food, many of them had very limited exposure to non-Chinese food before moving to Canada, and they had very particular ways of cooking and eating. According to Bourdieu (2010:49), the particular taste of Chinese food “feels itself to be natural—and so it almost is, being a habitus—which amounts to rejecting others as unnatural and therefore vicious.” For instance, someone from Sichuan province has been used to cooking and eating spicy food ever since he was a child, and the taste was a tradition that was passed on from generation to generation. In addition, they were able to keep these ways even after they moved to Canada because they had control over the meals in their own homes if they could get the right

ingredients. However, for Bourdieu and the interviewees, the focus of habit is not on the content of the habit. What is mentioned is the reaction to what is other than the habit, the vicious. For example, Ling talks about steak because blood can seem unnatural and vicious to one who has been habituated to well-cooked food. What's missing is the content of Chinese food as the intangible heritage. Is this habit something that people are used to or is it a rich heritage that has been cultivated and preserved through generations? Bourdieu's conventional sociological interpretation of habit needs to be pushed further because it can be used to explain similar behaviour with vastly different content, for instance, the habit of fast food and the habit of Chinese food.

Moreover, it is more difficult for older people to change their eating habits compared to the younger immigrants who are more adventurous and open to a variety of food. Many of the older first generation immigrants do not seek to try foods other than Chinese. This was evident in their responses to the question of whether they had tried different kinds of food besides Chinese. Some said that they have tried new food because their children took them. However, in one extreme case, unwillingness to change the habit was damaging for family relationships as demonstrated in the following text:

Lisa (older first gen): Yes, home and food are related. For example, my friend thinks his grandson is a banana person [white inside and yellow/Chinese outside], and only eats western food. They can't eat together at home anymore...It's a habit in life, especially for eating. Furthermore it is hard to change and it is regional-specific (interview transcript, August 17th, 2018).

While Bourdieu's conventional sociological perspective would explain these as the habits of the older first generation and the second generation, from the phenomenological perspective, the different habits reveal the contrast between the traditional and the modern life-worlds. The more traditional life-world of the first generation Chinese immigrants is a more integrated one,

and so food is an essential experience within that. However, the second generation Chinese immigrants are more embedded in the modern life-world, which is a pluralization of life-worlds. Consequently, there exist the possibilities of different foods as core to certain life-worlds from within the pluralized modern life-world. For some first generation immigrants, it may be hard to understand the pluralization of life-worlds from the perspective of a more traditional life-world. As mentioned in Lisa's response, her friend sees the grandson as a "banana person" who seems inauthentic and impure because the grandson mixes the qualities of Western and Chinese that are usually separate in traditional society but can actually coexist in modern Canadian society.

Comfort of Affective Support

Although, as mentioned in the previous chapter, there are various forms of social support being given and received within the food networks of Chinese immigrants, when asked about the meanings of home, interviewees tended to talk about affective support, which is more emotional rather than practical. Home for Chinese immigrants is a place of relaxation and warmth, where affection and love provided by family and friends are embedded in social relationships. Next I discuss some aspects of the affective support shown in their responses.

The first generation Chinese immigrants, both young and old, talked about affection as the meanings of home in relation to food sharing. Since they were interviewed in Mandarin, what they mentioned was *qing*, which translates into sentiment or affection in English. The interviewees spoke about the different kinds of *qing*, including *qinqing*, meaning affective kinship, and *youqing*, meaning affective friendship. In Chinese culture, affection is often established and maintained among people who are familiar with one another, for example, family and friends. Furthermore, for the Chinese, elements of mutual trust and obligation are parts of familiar relationships (Yang 1994:111). Actually, the kinds of familiar relationships with

affective sentiments include both kinships among family members and non-kinships such as among friends. Although affection mostly refers to affective kinship in the interview texts, for some interviewees, the boundaries of kinship and friendship are not clear-cut because they use affective kinship (*qinqing*) for talking about both family and friends. Below are their interview responses:

Ling (older first gen): Besides eating Chinese food, home to me means loved ones and affective kinship. No matter whether they are friends or family, there is a kind of affective kinship...When we eat together we can see everyone, although it's really nothing, but we feel homey (interview transcript, June 7th, 2018).

Li (older first gen): When people eat Chinese food together, it's lively, and diminishes the loneliness. Secondly, people exchange emotions, care about each other's physical health—that feels like friendship. There is a kind of vitality. It's boring to always eat by yourself. When people get together, there is eating and laughter. You will feel a sense of home. We all eat together with family affection. Family gathering over holidays is a tradition in Chinese culture...For us Chinese, feelings of home mean family affection. I think it's very strong; that is great. How to preserve family affection? There needs to be frequent contact, especially over the holidays when family affection gets integrated—that is especially necessary (interview transcript, June 17th, 2018).

John (younger first gen): Home for me means emotional feeling. Haha...emotional feeling and affective kinship...it's like a safe harbour or something like that. Anyway I feel that home is a special place, emotionally and practically. It's a special space that you share with your family. Emotionally it is a private space...the place where there is emotional feelings is home. I think home is different from hometown. Hometown is where you are from and grow up. Home is where your loved ones are. At present, you can go where you can feel affective kinship and emotional feeling (interview transcript, August 10th, 2018).

In John's interview response, he mentioned both affective kinship (*qinqing*) and emotional feeling (*ganqing*). In fact, they are very similar, but *ganqing* has a broader range of social relationships that extends beyond family. As stated by Yang (1994:121), *ganqing* “stands for the emotional commitment in such long-standing and intimate social bonds as those found between a parent and child, husband and wife, close friends, teacher and student, and certain favorite relatives.” So this kind of homey emotional feeling exists in a variety of intimate

relationships, including kinships and non-kinships. Actually, John included both family and close friends/colleagues in his Chinese-food-nets with whom he has strong social bonds. Moreover, *ganqing* involves sacrifice in giving. Among people with deep *ganqing*, unconditional support was often offered instead of calculative exchanges such as reciprocity, obligation, or indebtedness (Yang 1994:122).

Another aspect of affective support that came up frequently in the interview responses is unconditional support. Both first and second generation, especially younger Chinese immigrants, talked about it as their meaning of home. The unconditional support, mostly provided by their families, is greatly valued, especially as they struggle with living in Canadian society as Chinese immigrants.

Alex (younger first gen): Being with family is happiness for me. They always provide unconditional support no matter what you want to do (interview transcript, June 14th, 2018).

Mia (younger first gen): Home is where you feel warm. Whenever you go back, there will be people who support you and care about you. Even if you fail at something outside, when you go home, someone is there to support you. [Is it a kind of unconditional support?] Yes (interview transcript, August 31st, 2018).

Peter (second gen): Home means family, it means people. Home means comfort to a certain extent. Although there's issues with like how comfortable I am with my family right now. Home is being able to be a shithead sometimes and not worry about it because you know your family is still going to be a family at the end of the day. It's an unconditional love connection (interview transcript, August 28th, 2018).

Jack (second gen): You know Chinese mothers; they'll bombard you with soup, dishes, desserts and all sorts of things. [That's how they show they care about you.] Exactly. So it definitely is a big part of the formulation of what I consider to be home. Even now mom, even though I don't live with her anymore, she'll make efforts to bring me soup. And that's a simple reminder of the home (interview transcript, September 14th, 2018).

The kinds of unconditional support include emotional support and practical help. When people are eating together, the support is given and received in the form of conversations.

David (second gen): We talk about everything. We talk about our life now, like we talk about our kids. I don't have any kids. But how about their kids or what their kids or we talk about having kids. So yeah we talked a lot of emotional stuff and then we talk about what's going on in their life. How's it going? Jobs if we change jobs, we talk about it what not, pretty much everything. Except finances like that sometimes we talk about how much things cost. Like my best friend he just finished renovating his house and we just talk about things like, oh what's, how's your renovation going? What's trouble you have? It's like how much the cost of tiles and everything (interview transcript, August 30th, 2018).

However, when asked about the meanings of home, the emphases are on the emotional feeling or unconditional support in general rather than practical help. Overall, the idea of family, generations, imitate relationships, affections, unconditional love, and so on connects to Tönnies' (2002) *Gemeinschaft* discussed earlier. *Gemeinschaft* (community) represents the intimate and private living together with one's family and friends where people cultivate genuine bonds. In addition to the biological kinship, the common relation is established through the mutual love for Chinese food as part of shared cultural heritage, which brings people affection and unconditional love when they eat together within physical proximity (Tönnies 2002:33-43). Although Chinese immigrants live in Toronto, a big city that tends to be more like *Gesellschaft* (society), they establish and maintain a more *Gemeinschaft* way of life through food sharing. This is consistent with the existing research findings mentioned earlier that show that immigrants tend to reproduce communities within big cities in North America. Moreover, this can be considered as one way Chinese immigrants preserve a "home world" in a modern Canadian society with the pluralization of life-worlds. When they share Chinese food with close family and friends, the conversations are free and intimate, as opposed to the more guarded and scripted ones of the workplace. The latter needs to be more disciplined and focused and is analytically different from the former. Although in the previous chapter, the various kinds of social support were discovered by quantitative data, it's through the life-world analysis of qualitative data that the different

meanings of the social support become knowable.

Comfort of Being Yourself

During the interviews, a number of interviewees, although not the majority, mention “being yourself” as their meaning of home, as shown below:

Li (older first gen): Home for Chinese is a very important place, a very free place where you can be yourself without pretending and do whatever you want: feel real, simple, and genuine. The feeling of home means anything can be talked about among family members, no matter whether something’s right or wrong, it can be shared (interview transcript, June 17th, 2018).

Helen (first gen): Home is more like, who are you? People move, eat different things, live at different places: thus, home to me is not fixed. Moreover, I’m an immigrant. So every time I tell people about what I eat, what I’m used to, what I had before, I’m telling them who I am, what my experiences are (interview transcript, August 14th, 2018).

Sydney (second gen): Home means the place where you are yourself, where you freely communicate your thoughts and feelings, and where the other members of the home have a shared experience. So for example, you know, my brothers and I would have been...like when we were in school we would have been, maybe the only, not that it mattered, maybe the only specifically Chinese Malaysian families. So you have a shared experience of that background, just with those household members, and they have a shared understanding of the unique way we have (interview transcript, June 15th, 2018).

Here home as “being yourself” is associated with being free, relaxed, and comfortable. It largely exists in the private sphere. For example, Li talks about the feeling of being free around his family members and Sydney talks about her shared experience with household members. The private sphere in modern Canadian society provides opportunities for people to have more autonomy and is important for shaping one’s identity (Berger and Kellner 1964:7). For both first generation and second generation Chinese immigrants, no matter if their life-worlds are traditional or modern, the private sphere is where they can feel content with who they are and be at “home.” Furthermore, Li’s response also hints at the theme of affective support discussed earlier. He says “anything can be talked about among family members, no matter whether

something's right or wrong, it can be shared." Moreover, the self is fluid and is cultivated through different experiences, including the experiences with food in the past and present. As Helen says, "home to me is not fixed...every time I tell people about what I eat...I'm telling them who I am." However, the content of "self" is missing in their responses. For instance, although Sydney mentions that being Chinese Malaysian as a shared background and experience with her brother is part of her unique self, she does not really elaborate on what that self means. Overall, in these interview responses, when they talk about home as being themselves, home is mainly associated with being in the comfort zone.

4.4.3 The Cosmopolitan Second Generation Chinese Immigrants

It is worth noting that the meanings of home have a wider range for the second generation Chinese immigrants compared to the first generation ones. They are more cosmopolitan. The second generation Chinese immigrants' consciousness and life-world are modern. While the conventional sociology would recognize this as "cosmopolitan," it is actually because they are more involved in the pluralization of life-worlds than the first generation immigrants. For them, home can mean both Toronto, where they grew up, and Hong Kong, a place far away from their current place of residence but where their family and cultural heritage are, and even other cities around the world where they can eat Chinese food and have meaningful experiences. Some of them also pointed out having multiple homes as a hybrid, which reflects their lived experiences in today's world. The expanded meanings of home are shown in the following texts:

Nancy (second gen): I think as I've grown up, my sense of home it's kind of expanded because when we were younger all you know was that neighbourhood around you. Now you have because you can come downtown or go elsewhere. I kind of feel like downtown Toronto and Scarborough are home to me (interview transcript, June 20th, 2018).

Glen (second gen): Home is where you feel like welcome and safe and connected to good networks and where you can build something, or it also can be like where your heart is.

There are other places up [north] in Toronto that I feel at home [in], but I think in terms of like a permanent home sense [downtown] Toronto feels like my home (interview transcript, September 7th, 2018).

Jane (second gen): Home for me is what I think Hong Kong is [even though] I haven't been there that much. But I consider it a second home. I've visited Hong Kong in the past ten years; I've visited maybe like four times. But when I go back, it feels like home because a lot of the times, it's always to see family. So like seeing half of my family's there. So on my mom's side. So I say home in a sense like I see all my uncles and aunts and cousins again. And to me that's different from when I travel by myself or with my friends. For example, last week I went to Vancouver by myself, but that's traveling—I didn't see family. Going to Hong Kong it doesn't feel as traveling because it's like almost every day I'm going to have tea with my grandmother or you know meet with my cousin or family. Almost all I would say has to do with dim sum. We're having lunch or having dinner, and also celebrating if I'm in Hong Kong during that time. It is definitely for celebrating those special events, like the Winter Dinner, for Chinese New Year, whatever...I consider Canada my first home. So having Chinese food here it's just normal. It's not like exotic or special. It's food at home, but also food at restaurants, is strongly tied with family (interview transcript, June 29th, 2018).

David (second gen): So for me when I travel, like to San Francisco or Japan or in the States, I always try to have Chinese food wherever I go. So it just is not nearly as good. So to me I look at home as being in Toronto because of the food here. Like the last day in Paris. We were in Paris for a week and a half. The last day we had ramen noodles in Paris. It was good. Like it was pretty good or surprisingly good. Oh it's actually pretty close to Toronto...Like maybe it's not as obvious but the fact that I have lived here my entire life and it's the only city I've ever known. Like I grew up here, well I would say I know the city. But, yeah there's something about the city. It's not a perfect city. The TTC sucks you know. But it's just a good city. Like the outskirts: I don't live in the city technically, I live in Richmond Hill, which is up north outside the city. Right. But I still consider living in Toronto. It's just, yeah, that is my home I guess (interview transcript, August 30th, 2018).

Jack (second gen): [Are the Chinese home and Canadian home mutually exclusive?] Not at all. I think it's the easy way to label it [Chinese home or Canadian home] but it's always going to be a hybrid. I remember growing up my grandmother from my dad's side used to teach me to make dumplings, and I love that. I bring that with me into my home now. Every so often, we really want dumplings, so we will go out [to buy materials] and we will make dumplings. That is still very much part of our day-to-day and part of our household, but it's still different, it feels different. I know that if I'm at my grandmother's house and my mother's house, it's inherently Chinese. That is a defining part of that household. I don't think it is an active divide. It's not like this is my Canadian home; this is my Chinese home. So I think it's very much an easy way to label my inherently Chinese roots with all of that (interview transcript, September 14th, 2018).

Unlike the second generation immigrants, the first generation Chinese immigrants, especially the older ones, do not consider Toronto or Canada as their home since they have not grown up in Canada. Their strange and challenging lives in the new country may not make them feel a sense of home, which is supposed to be comfortable, as discussed earlier. Essentially, they still inhabit a more traditional life-world compared to the second generation who take the pluralization for granted and thus come across as more cosmopolitan. For instance, when Jack says that his Chinese home and Canadian home are a hybrid, he expresses “home” from the perspective of life-world pluralization. He seems to be between the “old” and the “new,” “modern” and “traditional,” that makes him appear more “cosmopolitan” (Blum 2003:116). In contrast, people with a more traditional life-world, including some older first generation Chinese immigrants, may struggle with the modern life-world. For instance, they may call someone the “banana person” as mentioned before because they have difficulties perceiving that person as exhibiting the distinct qualities of Caucasian and Chinese at the same time. From a pluralized perspective, although home is a different activity for the second generation immigrants compared to the first generation ones, the meaning is similar. Both generations consider home as essentially a feeling of comfort.

4.5 Conclusion and Discussion

In this chapter, using phenomenological analysis, I explore the lived experiences and the shared meanings of Chinese immigrants. First, I explain the Chinese immigrant life-world and their struggles as strangers in Canada. The first generation Chinese immigrants face barriers of adapting to the new set of cultural patterns that are not articulated for them while their own taken-for-granted cultural patterns are often seen as inadequate. The older first generation

immigrants may be able to hold on to their home world more by having social interactions with mostly family, but the younger generation who are more eager to integrate into Canadian society may experience difficulties fitting in. The second generation Chinese immigrants are more involved with the pluralization of life-worlds, but they frequently suffer from negotiating between different and sometimes conflicting cultural patterns. While the weakening of the home world is a common issue for all modern Canadians with a pluralization of life-worlds, the problem of displacement/homelessness is even more severe for Chinese immigrants as marginalized strangers in Canada. Sharing Chinese food is one of their ways of coping with the problem. As observed in the previous chapter using SNA, younger Chinese immigrants have more diverse food networks than older immigrants, although the content of their food networks are similar, for example, they exchange various forms of social support. While the findings of quantitative data using SNA provide important generalizations, in this chapter, phenomenological analysis is able to bring out the deeper meanings as well as the more nuanced analysis of the similarities and differences between the generations. The meanings of home as essentially a feeling of comfort are further explored under the interrelated themes including nostalgia, familiarity, habit, and affective support and being yourself. Furthermore, the differences shown in the structures of the Chinese-food-nets across different generation and ages are essentially the differences between traditional and modern life-worlds. Although both younger first and second generation Chinese immigrants have more diverse food networks than the older first generation's because they have more exposure to non-Chinese people in public, such as school and the workplace, the younger first generation immigrants' sense of home may not be as "cosmopolitan" as that of the second generation Chinese immigrants who grew up in modern Canadian society with the pluralization of life-worlds and so have a wider range of the

sense of home as a hybrid. For both generations, the food communities for Chinese immigrants exhibit features of the traditional community (Gemeinschaft) where people share common bonds around and interests in eating Chinese food. Many of the relationships are family oriented and are centred around the ethnic practice of Chinese food, a cultural practice that is a given (Bonner 1997:20-22). The essences of the meanings of home in these communities are more emotional and spiritual than rational. Therefore, the Chinese immigrants preserve their traditional communities within modern Canadian society. This is not only true for Chinese immigrants, but also immigrants from various other ethnic backgrounds such as English, Irish, French, German, Japanese, and so on. It is the similar human nature and human need that transcend the ethnicity. There might be concrete differences between ethnic groups, for example, instead of noodle soup, pizza is the comfort and homey food for Italians, and some would say it is also the comfort food for Canadians since it is so popular. So, the essences revealed from the meanings of home from the perspectives of Chinese immigrants may be universal for people from various ethnic backgrounds who struggle with the problem of homelessness/displacement in Canada. Nevertheless, what are the particular experiences of sharing Chinese food across different generations of Chinese immigrants in Toronto? In the next chapter, I discuss the more unique experience of Chinese food as an intangible cultural heritage and present the meanings of home beyond the common theme of comfort.

CHAPTER FIVE

BEYOND COMFORT: HOME AS CELEBRATION AND HOSTING

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I described the Chinese immigrant life-world. Living in a modern Canadian society with pluralization of life-worlds, Chinese immigrants suffer from the weakening of their home world. Furthermore, they need to constantly organize and negotiate a plurality of cultural meanings. The struggles differ between first and second generation Chinese immigrants. The former begin as strangers in Canada, so they need to learn the cultural practices of the dominant groups of Canadians. As shown from the interview responses, older first generation immigrants hold on to the home world more, especially if they have family (e.g. children) to interact with nearby. In comparison, younger first generation Chinese immigrants who have left their families overseas are more eager to fit into Canadian society, so they seek to understand and try to participate more fully in the host (mainstream) culture of Canada. In contrast, second generation Chinese Canadians were born and raised in Canada, so they are more involved in the pluralization of life-worlds. For them, the struggle is not about adjusting to a new culture as is the case with first generation immigrants, but more about negotiating between the different cultures (e.g. Chinese vs. Canadian) that they grew up with, especially given that Chinese culture is marginalized in Canada. Next, using phenomenology, I was able to get at the structure of consciousness and through that develop a more “universal” theme for the meanings of home for the Chinese immigrants in Toronto. Despite having different struggles, the data from all three groups, older first generation, younger first generation, and second generation, show that the meanings of home in their food sharing activities is essentially a feeling of comfort. In

this chapter, I go beyond comfort to explore other possible meanings of home, for example, celebration and hosting. I also push the interpretive analysis further by conducting a motive talk analysis to reveal the deep structure that the surface meanings rest on. Lastly, I present the intangible cultural values in Chinese food. First, I give an overview of the method of analysis.

5.2 The Method of Reflexive Analysis

Analysis, also called reflexive analysis, originated in the late 1960s with the intellectual collaboration of Alan Blum and Peter McHugh, who were two young sociology professors at Columbia University, and a small group of their committed students (Raffel and Sandywell 2016:3). In their book, *On the Beginning of Social Inquiry (OBSI)*, co-authored with Stanley Raffel and Daniel Foss, they state that analysis is reflexive and generative, and the main interest of analysis is the “grounds or auspices” of whatever is said or written, meaning “the foundations that make what is said possible, sensible, conceivable” (McHugh et al. 1974:2). Analysts are not interested in merely describing whatever is said or written, or “finding something in the world, or making sense of some puzzling datum, or answering an interesting question...or any other essentially empirical procedure” (McHugh et al. 1974:2). Therefore, the method of analysis goes beyond concrete knowledge at the factual level and focuses on formulating the conditions of knowledge at the grammatical level. I discuss the distinction between factual and grammatical in detail later in this section.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, the overall methodological and theoretical perspective of my research is radical interpretive inquiry (RII), coined by Kieran Bonner (1997), a configuration of phenomenology/ethnomethodology, hermeneutics, and analysis. Reflexivity is a central concern for RII, and being reflexive means taking responsibility for what is said, beyond

merely describing something. As stated by Bonner (2001:267), “The problem of reflexivity for sociology concerns the ability of the inquirer to take responsibility for what one says while simultaneously being able to say something substantial about the phenomenon or object of inquiry.” Although reflexive sociology has been written about by a great range of scholars (e.g. Ashmore 1989; Bourdieu 1992; Giddens 1990, 1991; Lynch 2000; Pollner 1991, 2012; Woolgar 1988; Archer 2010), the development of RII and this particular kind of reflexivity is influenced by a variety of classic and contemporary sociologists and philosophers, and is most especially influenced by the reflexive analysis work of Blum and McHugh. In this chapter, I apply the method of analysis that pushes reflexivity to a higher level compared to the phenomenological analysis in Chapter Four. In particular, I use Blum and McHugh’s (1971) analysis of motive to formulate the deep structure that makes surface meanings possible when I analyze an interview response about Chinese food sharing. Next, I elaborate on a number of theorists, including Weber, Schutz, Berger, Garfinkel, Blum and McHugh, and their approaches, to present a trajectory of the ascending levels of reflexivity in relation to the analysis of motive.

According to Blum and McHugh (1971:99), to analyze motive is to consider motive as a public and observable course of action rather than something concrete and private. Motive is “a public method for deciding upon the (sociological) existence of action...[and] is an observer’s rule of relevance in that it represents a sociologist’s decision (his election) as to how items of concrete behaviour are to be reformulated as instance of social action.” Thus, motive in this sense is not a concrete thing, but a way of comprehending social action. The concept of social action was put forward by Weber, who originated the interpretive paradigm within the discipline of sociology. In comparison to the other two influential classical sociologists, Emile Durkheim and Karl Marx, Weber focused on *Verstehen* (understanding) and the study of meanings. For

Weber (1947:88), sociology concerns “the interpretive understanding of social action,” and social action is “behaviour which, because of the subjective meaning attached to it by the acting individual (or individuals)...takes into account the behaviour of others and is thereby oriented in its course.” People as social actors take into account their own meanings and others’ meanings attached to the behaviours. Consequently, their actions are oriented to the behaviours of others. An example of social action would be Chinese immigrants eating fish during the Chinese New Year. Doing so is a tradition in many Chinese regions, and fish also symbolizes a wish for prosperity in the coming year. Just as everyday members are social actors, so are sociologists, and thus being reflexive is essential when sociologists interpret social actions. As noted by Bonner (2001:268), the sociologist “whose task it is to interpret this action, needs to reflect both on the member’s reflexivity and on his/her own reflexivity.” Weber’s distinction between behaviour and action is useful for providing a reflexive analysis account of motive.

Schutz’s phenomenology takes reflexivity to a higher level than Weber. Schutz builds on Weber’s focuses of meaning and social action and pushes them further to study the interpretation of everyday lived experiences by adapting phenomenology from philosophy. As seen from Chapter Four, the Schutzian perspective is productive for understanding the meaning behind the food network structures and the importance of understanding what respondents say in the context of the reality definitions of modern culture. Schutz (1977:220) argues that reflexivity “involves neither mere observation of external behaviour, nor private introspection, nor a process of psychic identification” but is instead a human scientific approach, and refers to something that philosopher Edmund Husserl called the “life-world within which all scientific and even logical concepts originate.” Schutz adapts a consistent theory of meaning found in phenomenology rooted in the work of Husserl and thinks that in everyday life human beings look at the world

from within the natural attitude where they take for granted the existence of fellow men without question, just as they take for granted the existence of the natural objects they encounter (Schutz 1967:98). They function intelligibly in everyday life on taken-for-granted assumptions. For instance, they draw on “a common stock of knowledge” of “physical things and fellow creatures, of social collectives and of artifacts, including culture objects” (Schutz 1967:81). For example, people know to use chopsticks to eat in a Chinese restaurant. Moreover, people often assume others have the same assumptions for conducting their everyday affairs. They interpret others’ meanings and achieve intersubjective meanings as they interact in multiple shared realities. Nonetheless, the meanings people give to others’ lived experiences cannot be exactly the same as the meanings others give when they interpret their experiences (Schutz 1967:98-99). There are always ambiguities and limitations to the interpretations of meanings. Conducting phenomenological analysis requires reflexivity, rather than simply describing the taken-for-granted meanings in everyday life (Schutz 1967:102). It needs to go beyond people’s know-how. In addition, Schutz asserts that the interpreter must take into account the particular quality of the experiences beyond the meanings, in order to achieve true understanding (1967:125).

The Schutzian perspective has been developed and applied by Berger and his colleagues. In Chapter Four, phenomenological analysis has been applied to overcome the limitations of a quantitative and verification driven approach by getting at the reality definition of modern culture that shapes what people understand and say. Specifically, I have used Berger et al.’s life-world analysis to show that even though the younger first and second generation Chinese immigrants have similar food sharing networks compared to the older generation, the younger immigrants have very distinct life-worlds. The younger first generation immigrants with their sense of “home” from their culture of origin seek to adjust and participate in Canada with a new

set of cultural patterns. Their struggles are different from those of the second generation ones, who are more involved with the pluralization of life-worlds in modern Canadian society but need to constantly negotiate between complicated and sometimes contradictory cultures.

Also building on Schutz's work, Garfinkel (1967) invented ethnomethodology to understand the "uninteresting" essential reflexivity of accounts in everyday life. Garfinkel's ethnomethodology has had a noticeable influence on the method of analysis.

Ethnomethodologists examine the methods of "members" in producing and managing the settings of everyday affairs, to make the settings accountable and therefore observable and reportable (Garfinkel 1967:1). Furthermore, Garfinkel notes that everyday members make use of reflexivity to communicate with one another to accomplish "rational-adequacy-for-all-practical-purposes of their procedures and findings" in taken-for-granted ways since they are not interested in observing or reporting the methods of their everyday practices (1967:18). For instance, at a dinner table, when someone serves tea, a Chinese person knows to hold the teacup with both hands to accept the tea to show gratitude. Ethnomethodologists use breaching experiments to show how social order can be broken (Garfinkel 1967:42). For example, when person A says, "I had some dumplings for dinner," Person B asks, "What do you mean, you had some dumplings?" Here person A assumes that person B knows what dumplings are, so the question "What do you mean?" seems nonsensical, and the social order may be disrupted. Ethnomethodologists are interested in describing how everyday life is an assemblance of an appearance of order. Compared to the scientific methods that are incomprehensible to everyday people, ethnomethodology shows how people's own theory and methods can be used to study human behaviour at a higher level of reflexivity beyond commonsense knowledge: these methods are observable but are uninteresting to most people. Nevertheless, Blum and McHugh

(the latter used to be a student of Garfinkel) think that the reflexive developments initiated by ethnomethodology need to be pushed further (Bonner 2001:269). McHugh et al. state that ethnomethodology aims to “rigorously describe ordinary knowledge” and “still conducts its inquiries under the auspices of a concrete, positivistic conception of adequacy” (McHugh et al. 1974:22). They also point out that ethnomethodology displays a “failure of analytic nerve” because it does not examine its own grounds (1974:23). Alternatively, Blum and McHugh developed the method of analysis to take reflexivity to a higher level than that of ethnomethodology.

One way to conduct analysis is through “collaboration” as outlined in *OBSI*, using the standard terms ego and alter. Here ego and alter have specific tasks as speakers. As stated by McHugh et al. (1974:4), “Ego, for us is the speaker how, by speaking, necessarily forgets his reason for speech. Alter reminds ego why he speaks by formulating ego’s auspices.” So basically, alter reveals the grounds of ego’s speech that are not shown when ego speaks. This way, alter makes ego a rational speaker. Then the ego can formulate the grounds of alter’s speech, etc. Thus, it can continue as an unending process of generating analysis (McHugh et al. 1974:4). In my research, participants can be considered the egos. When they speak, for example, when they talk about the meanings of home, such claims rest on unexplicated grounds. I, the researcher, as the alter seek to explicate the grounds of such claims by conducting an analysis to formulate the auspices in the responses shown in their interview texts. It is also possible for analysts to be egos and alters at the same time: that way, they uncover the grounds of their own speeches. For McHugh et al., to do analysis, collaboration is necessary. They note that this form of collaboration is different from teamwork, where members have distinct roles and can work separately, because in collaboration, analysts work toward deepening the analysis for the same

piece of work. The method of analysis was demonstrated with exemplary collaborative formulations of real life phenomena such as motive, bias, evaluation, snubs, travel, and art. For example, McHugh et al. (1974:7) suggest, “motives are not states belonging to persons but are an observer’s method for generating the idea of person...bias is not...a thing in the world, but a method for making that thing available. Similarly, art conceived analytically is not a distinct group of objects but a way of seeing any objects.” In this chapter, I focus on the phenomenon of motive.

Blum and McHugh (1971) consider motive to be ordinary members’ practical method for organizing their everyday environment. In order to describe motive as a method, Blum and McHugh formulate the ways that everyday members’ practices are grounded in their knowledge. The reflexive analysis approach to studying motive is different from that of the conventional social scientists. Rather than treating motive as something concrete and private that exists in people, Blum and McHugh argue that motive needs to be formulated as public and observable courses of action. The focus is the analytic status of motive instead of the concrete character. Blum and McHugh (1971:98) think that motive is “one common sense device for ascribing social membership, since motives are used by members to link particular concrete activities to generally available social rules.” Motive functions “as an observer’s rule for deciding the normatively ordered character of behaviour” (Blum and McHugh 1971:99). This means that people need to first know the social rules for doing motive talk as grounds for accomplishing the concrete character of ascribing motive. Thus, when people answer about a motive, they also reveal their choices of rules. Even when talking about “hidden” motives, Blum and McHugh argue that people still engage in “fully intelligible and observable courses of treatment—some public criterion enables us to grasp the topic” (1971:100). The method of analysis is to formulate

the deep structure that makes the surface display of motive possible. The method of collaboration mentioned earlier can be used for motive. In this case, people who speak about motive are the egos and the analysts are the alters who formulate the deep structure of the motive spoken by the egos.

The important distinction between the factual and grammatical perspectives in the formulation of motive has been addressed by Blum and McHugh (1971). As mentioned, people as practical actors use motive regularly to accomplish their everyday affairs. When actors are asking, answering, or reading about motives, they are essentially engaged in “formulating themselves and their environments, in constructing and treating with their common sense courses of action” (Blum and McHugh 1971:100). For instance, when we ask a Chinese immigrant, “Why do you eat Chinese food?” we expect them to answer with a reason, goal, or intention, for example: “Because I like the taste of it”; “Eating Chinese food makes me feel comfortable”; “It reminds of the taste of home, what my mother used to make.” Any answer here serves as a way to depict an environment for which a social state of affairs and some behaviours can be reported. People are required to have commonsense knowledge and the ability to formulate the situation in order to make the motive talk sensible and to produce an oriented action. Thus, to give a motive is to know how a behaviour is socially intelligible at the grammatical level. This is in contrast to the work of social psychologists, who locate a cause of action at the factual level (Blum and McHugh 1971:100). The emphasis of Blum and McHugh is to provide a “grammatical solution.” The sociological features of motive lie in “the organized and sanctionable conditions that would regularly produce the giving of a reason by a competent member in the first place” (Blum and McHugh 1971:101-102). In the example, reporting an answer such as “Eating Chinese food makes me feel comfortable” is to locate a factual response and treat motive as a cause. The act of

eating Chinese food also needs to be recognized as an intelligible behaviour that is a social action, and the motive talk needs to be formulated from the perspectives of practical members. Therefore, to formulate motive is not to give the observer's or the actor's notion of the cause of an action at the factual level, nor to offer an explanation of or reason for an action. Rather, doing analysis of motive means to provide "some description of the socially organized conditions which produce the practical and ordinary use of motive in the mundane affairs of societal members" (Blum and McHugh 1971:103). Thus, the responses to questions of motive can be considered as the surface level, and the formulation of the conditions of motive talk is the deep level. Blum and McHugh refer to the conditions as "the deep structure which makes the surface display possible at all" (1971:102).

By formulating the deep structure of motive talk, the method of analysis pursues a higher level of reflexivity compared to phenomenology or ethnomethodology. Although the method of analysis is influenced by phenomenology and ethnomethodology, it seeks to formulate the deeper structure at the grammatical level beyond the surface meanings at the factual level that is the focus of the other two methods. In my research, the method of analysis is at the highest level of reflexivity so far. In the previous data analysis chapters, I applied social network analysis (SNA) and phenomenology to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data at the factual level. There are different factual levels. By applying the life-world analysis used in Chapter Four, I was able to tease out the meanings that were missing in Chapter Three's analysis of quantitative data using SNA. Moreover, by revealing the overall structure of meanings, the life-world analysis begins to point to the grammatical level. The method of analysis starts at the grammatical level and the level of reflexivity can be pushed even further by using the recovery of the grounds of, for example, motive talk as raising an opportunity to pursue deeper questions such as what kind

of world would make members' motive method intelligible and interesting? As Bonner (2001:274) points out, "At this level, the inquirer asks after the inquirer's own interest in accounting for the reflexive practices of the member." By examining this, the inquirers consider why the analysis should be conducted in the first place. The inclusion of analysis and the higher level of reflexivity is what really sets RII apart from the conventional sociological approaches. Bonner points out that, "For Analysis, the examination of the assumptions of one's own inquiry (reflexivity) requires that one deal with problems of community and authority as against just theory and empiricism, reconstruct intellectual life as against just seek sounder sociological investigations, and seek an authentic relation with others as against pursue methodological objectives" (Sharrock and Anderson 1986 as cited in Bonner 2001:270).

However, this kind of social inquiry can be difficult to do, and unintelligible for some people and sociologists because it challenges the accepted disciplinary boundaries, and involves risks, particularly a risk of a life committed to the examination of life (Bonner 2001:283) since it goes beyond the known and expected. Nonetheless, doing any kind of inquiry is affirming a certain narrative. The need to pause and think about what we are doing is often ignored in our fast-paced modern society. Just like everyday social actors, researchers are decision makers in the world as well. As I see it, not making a decision or simply following authority is itself a decision. As a researcher, I have made the decision to go beyond the existing popular meaning of home as comfort to explore other possibilities that may lead to understanding richer possibilities buried in the participants' interest in Chinese food. In the next section, I present the possible meanings of home beyond comfort and then formulate the deep structure of a motive talk that contains an inventive relation to Chinese food as an intangible cultural heritage.

5.3 Analysis Beyond Comfort

5.3.1 Celebration and Hosting

Chinese immigrants in Canada celebrate various traditional holidays such as the Lunar New Year, Dragon Boat Festival, and Mid-Autumn Festival. There is always a particular food associated with different holidays. For example, they eat nian gao (sticky rice cake) during the Lunar New Year, zong zi (sticky rice dumpling) during the Dragon Boat Festival, and moon cake during the Mid-Autumn Festival. Each food also has a story associated with it. Celebrations are often happy occasions for the Chinese. Celebration is so prevalent in Chinese culture that there are many types of celebrations. Whether the celebration is comfortable or not depends on the people who are celebrating. The Chinese may still feel comfortable even when the event includes a large number of celebrants, for instance, when they celebrate the New Year in a crowded and noisy restaurant with family and friends.

When the Chinese celebrate the traditional holidays with intimates including family and friends, it is comfortable and relaxing (painless). The meanings of comfort include positive feelings of enjoyment, pleasure, content, being supported, etc. and the relief of negative feelings such as pain, sickness, mental distress, etc. (Oxford English Dictionary 2019a). This type of celebration can take place in someone's home, or in a public restaurant. As long as the celebration is among people who share intimate relationships, it is comfortable. For Chinese immigrants, eating familiar food with family and friends provides a sense of home. This kind of celebration exists for both first and second generation immigrants, as shown in the following interview responses:

Zhang (older first gen): So if eating at home, the number of guests can't be eight or 10, that would be too many to seat. You can have three or four close people. No need to invite them all together; sometimes different friends have different opinions, so it would be inconvenient for them [to all be together]. Furthermore, if there are too many people,

the quality decreases. Therefore we usually invite [our grand] kids to a homemade dinner at home, and we rarely eat out. We always invite them to our home, and we make two of their favorite dishes, which is good for conversation. The kids also do not care about eating; it's mostly to see us. I know a place for Cantonese dim sum, which replaces the function of a family gathering. More specifically, when five sisters go for dim sum and have a conversation for two three hours in the morning, it's the equivalent to a family gathering. It's a good idea to combine food and family gatherings. Our gathering with friends once a month is similar. Or we gather once a quarter. Gathering is a kind of activity, especially church activities (interview transcript, June 17th, 2018).

Penny (younger first gen): During the Chinese New Year, different groups of friends will get together many times. We eat at friends' homes or at restaurants. We take turns to eat and will eat for many days. We will chat about interesting things. We are so far away from China. In China the families have happy gatherings, and here we get together so we don't feel as lonely. We will eat traditional food (interview transcript, June 10th, 2018).

Peter (second gen): Celebration as always with food, and a lot of special food. And it's also family bringing people together, everyone together. I guess I have a pretty big family that's living all around me. So we'll get together, we will have like maybe 15 to 20 people at a gathering of all. All sorts of celebrations are always surrounded by food. Food is kind of like the main thing, right? We get together to eat. We don't get together to just celebrate... People are just generally in a better mood because this is celebration. And I think also there's excitement around the food too, definitely for me. Especially like my aunts, we always all get hands-on because their moms like to organize and we cook the food. One of my aunts would do it, and it's always excitement around like well what would you make? Yeah and you would try this one, see this one tastes good. I think the child is around the food as well. Yes. So celebration is basically food to me (interview transcript, August 28th, 2018).

Jane (second gen): Family is very strongly tied with my Chinese identity and community. Every Sunday going to dim sum with my mom is a normal thing, is part of the routine. So going to a restaurant, seeing all the Chinese people is like, OK, this is the thing we do, like people going to the church. It's a regular thing and it's part of my Canadian life here (interview transcript, June 29th, 2018).

Susan (second gen): [With friends]: We go to church. So when I was a kid, we went downtown and we always had Chinese food right after church downtown... So even if I didn't like being Chinese and I didn't like normal Chinese food, I liked the banquet food for funerals... It might be because it's still very communal, and you know you're now sharing life passing or a life celebrating life. But again you're sort of sharing it over food and you're talking about memories and there's something comforting about it, right?... I have memories of going over to my aunt's. And she lived in a part of Canada, Toronto, which has Italians and Greeks. And there was always, my mother would come back with bags of groceries. But there was a big vegetable exchange going on in the backyards, so she would exchange with her Greek and Italian neighbours. And so you get zucchini and eggplant. And my aunt would give them choi. And this would be how we got different

things because all these people from different places grew something different (interview transcript, June 17th, 2018).

As mentioned before, a lot of Chinese immigrants experience enormous cultural and structural barriers in their lives as strangers in Canada. These barriers generate feelings of alienation, isolation, etc. (Li 1998:76). When they eat Chinese food together, they can temporarily forget about their struggles. It is an example of the way a group can respond to the problem of displacement/homelessness. The danger of over-relying on this path to comfort includes having insular communities made up only of people who share similar cultural meanings and values, and perhaps providing a degree of comfort, reducing the urge to try integrating with the host country. I now seek to explore other possibilities in the participants' relation to food than the comfort that a sense of home gives. The interview responses below show that there is more to the participants' relation to food than a sense of comfort and home. There is also an interest in celebration and hosting.

Rose (older first gen): I think we Chinese care about being together [during holiday celebrations]. So we all go to my son's home, or all go to my daughter's home, or all go to my home...For example, on Lunar New Year, after the dinner, we sit around and have a conversation. When we eat New Year cake (nian gao), we would introduce it [to son's non-Chinese friend]. This is something we only eat during the Lunar New Year, and means wishing you a better year ahead (in Chinese, the words New Year cake nian gao sound similar to "a higher year"), get promoted and earn more money...[I said to him,] you are eating together with us and thus we are all good friends. My son brings a friend, my daughter brings a friend, plus myself, there are five of us. He will feel like home (interview transcript, August 18th, 2018).

Alex (younger first gen): Here I celebrate Chinese holidays with my roommate and friends who don't go back to China. Sometimes we invite non-Chinese friends to celebrate with us, and we make traditional food like zong zi (sticky rice dumpling) with them (interview transcript, June 14th, 2018).

Sydney (second gen): [With non-Chinese friends]: In recent years I've used Chinese holidays as an opportunity to share Chinese food with my friends. Also for the last several years, we've hosted Chinese parties mostly with a majority of non-Chinese friends. We have dumplings and it's an opportunity for them to know a little bit about

Chinese New Year, and also for me to kind of remember my experience of Chinese New Year in Mainland China (interview transcript, June 15th, 2018).

Jack (second gen): [With the non-Chinese significant other]: Earlier in a relationship, it was very much that these are the things that either I have or things that are good or even the things that I think you might like that I might not necessarily want. Especially if you go to dim sum, it can be very unapproachable if it comes in carts. Right. So being able to explain it to them. And tell them these are the things that are really good or are the flavour profiles. It really helps to adopt it. Now that I mean we've been together for seven years now. Now that we are pretty comfortable with Chinese food it's almost normal for us. It's just food... Like for Chinese New Year when we have nian gao. It's something that he or he wouldn't be familiar with but it's something that we explained to him. Finding the right moon cake for him because he doesn't really like them but we still try every year to find a different one. I think there's definitely something there by sharing those types of practices with someone who is so foreign to it (interview transcript, September 14th, 2018).

These Chinese immigrants (but not all interviewees) seize the opportunities to host celebrations and invite their non-Chinese friends to participate. In the interview responses above, they show a sense of pride in their cultural heritage, which is Chinese food, and they would like to introduce and share it with others who are not familiar with it. In a Canadian society where the Chinese immigrants are the strangers/guests, in the celebration with Chinese food, they turn this host/guest relationship around now that they are the host. Moreover, the self/other relationship is reversed because Chinese immigrants are the ones who have the cultural knowledge, and the non-Chinese participants are the ones who lack that knowledge. The Chinese immigrants can share the meanings of foods with their friends. Note that this is not really a very comfortable and relaxing situation because not everyone is familiar with the food and what is going on. Even for the Chinese immigrants, they need to talk about the foods and the significance of it as an intangible cultural heritage (ICH) at the event, knowledge that is usually taken for granted in Chinese culture, and be open for questions from the strangers. According to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO 2020), cultural heritage “does not end at monuments and collections of objects. It also includes traditions or living expressions

inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.” At the heart of Chinese food as a tangible object are intangible cultural values and meanings. Moreover, Chinese food is always shared during the Chinese traditional holidays no matter where the Chinese are in the world. Chinese food is an example of the ICH of China that does not need to be geographically restricted. It has been well-preserved by Chinese immigrants and can be seen as a gift to other cultures, in particular to Canadian culture. In multicultural Canada, ICH plays an important role in maintaining cultural diversity in the face of globalization. The ICH shared among different communities helps generate intercultural dialogue, and promotes mutual respect and learning for diverse cultural practices. By hosting celebrations involving Chinese food, especially with non-Chinese friends, Chinese immigrants actively safeguard and share their ICH. The interviewees above show in their own ways that this practice enables them to transcend the binary category of either being marginalized and nostalgic for home or feeling at home. At the celebrations, they would have a sense of home and proudly share their food and culture with Canadians from other cultural backgrounds.

In addition to the feeling of comfort, this kind of celebration involves more feelings of excitement and enjoyment, a combination of comfort and the discomfort of having “a cultural responsibility.” To be a host instead of a guest at a celebration involving Chinese food is a different way for the Chinese immigrants to be in Canada. This type of celebration does not really happen just in a private sphere or a public sphere in Berger and Kellner’s (1964) sense. According to Berger and Kellner, in modern Western society, the private sphere consists of marriage and children (family), and the public sphere is everything else (e.g. work). When

Chinese immigrants celebrate traditional holidays with non-Chinese friends, the shared reality and meanings are constructed between people who are familiar with the food and culture and who may feel like being in an alien and incomprehensible world. This type of celebration is more like a “third place” that is a place between private and public spheres where enjoyable socialization occurs. As described by Bonner (2011:56), “It is a public space different from a regulated work environment, insofar as it is informal, but also different from the privacy of home insofar as it is public.” It is more exciting and pleasant than comfortable. Furthermore, hosts are creating shared knowledge by introducing the cultural knowledge associated with Chinese food to people who don’t know about it. By doing this, they resist a fixed life-world and welcome the potential for collaboration to create something new. Next, I analyze the interview response from a second generation Chinese Canadian on hosting as a motive talk as one way to get access to the Chinese food culture.

5.3.2 Motive Talk Analysis

Jane (second gen): I’m back to the space where I can order from the menu. I can talk to this server. I know how to navigate the space so that to me is like very comfortable. And the belonging part makes sense to me. So I won’t feel out of place. And if I feel like I’m bringing someone who’s like not familiar with the space like my non-Chinese friends. It’s almost like I bringing them as guests. And I have to do extra to take care of them, to introduce things to them. And I’m like the host. It’s like a cultural responsibility. Me being part of the culture, I feel obligated that I have to teach them this (interview transcript, June 29th, 2018).

How should the above text be approached? Is it just Jane’s opinion about sharing Chinese food in a restaurant with her non-Chinese friends? What does it say about Chinese food culture? Although the response above is something said by Jane, from a radical interpretive perspective, the human mind, including Jane’s, is not independent of reality but rather intertwined with it. The language we use brings the world and consciousness together. One of the principles of RII is

that anything known requires a knower, so everything known and expressed is coloured by a perspective. The aim of analysis here is to recover this perspective that makes the knowledge possible and to make explicit the taken-for-granted intersubjective understandings around Chinese food sharing as introduced by Jane. What has been stated is not just Jane's personal, private, and subjective opinions about Chinese food sharing; her response rests on "common sense" assumptions that can be examined (Bonner 2013:22-23).

To uncover Chinese food culture, I treat Jane's response as an answer to a motive question: "What do you enjoy about eating in a Chinese restaurant?" Jane's response is not just any random response but is grounded in a discourse about intelligible reason-giving with regard to Chinese food sharing, and the conditions of knowledge that make Jane's response possible can be examined (Bonner 2013:24-25). Next, I analyze her response in terms of the conditions of the discourse for intelligible reason-giving by formulating the deep structure of motive talk, as put forward by Blum and McHugh (1971).

First, motives are observer's rules. The motive talk is guided by rule and is not an accident. According to Blum and McHugh (1971:103), motives are sociologically possible because some practical observers, in this case, Jane, the interviewers, and other possible observers (readers), have rules for locating motives as events in the world. The motive talk assumes that Jane is oriented to her environment (Bonner 2013:25). Here, when Jane was asked about her experience with sharing food in a Chinese restaurant in Canada with her non-Chinese friends, the question is actually asking for the motive for her actions. The question formulates the activity, Chinese food sharing, as accountable through motive talk, which has rules. In other words, the very question and answer presuppose a social environment of members orienting to each other's actions. Among all the possibilities that Jane can articulate about the activity, she

talks about acting as a host and introducing Chinese food to her non-Chinese friends whom she considers to be guests. She also speaks about food sharing as a cultural responsibility that she feels obligated to teach her friends about. Jane's answer would be recognized by commonsense members as a sensible answer to the question. This is an instance of social action, which is action that takes account of the behaviour of others. Here, in order for Jane's response to be intelligible, her talk needs to be considered as oriented action, which takes into account the meanings of sharing Chinese food in order to give a sensible answer. According to Blum and McHugh (1971:103), "motive is a procedure...rules must exist for such a procedure as motive to exist." Although it appears as if the motive belongs to the person called Jane, the talk is in fact constituted by a discourse called motive talk. The activity (Chinese food sharing) is constituted through observers' rules, required by the discourse of motive talk, in order to be recognized as intelligible talk (Bonner 2013:25). People, including the interviewer, Jane, and readers (observers) of the motive talk, all show themselves to be oriented to the normative order since all recognize Jane's response as satisfying the "conditions of knowledge" for doing intelligible motive talk.

Second, motivated objects are theorizers. Here the talk formulates Jane as a theorizer because, like all commonsense members she can account for her action (showing up at a Chinese restaurant). Blum and McHugh (1971:104) point out that "a concomitant of this first rule is that the ascriber know[s] (assume[s], presume[s]) that the object knows there are motive-ascribing rules." The ascriber (who asks why) is an everyday commonsense member who assumes that the object of the query (Jane) can account for the situation, and as an everyday member knows the rules for doing motive talk as itself a sensible practical accomplishment. The motive talk formulates Jane as an actor who has the capacity to know what she is doing and provide a rule-

guided response to the interviewer, and she is a competent member of the contemporary everyday world. The motive talk constitutes Jane as an oriented actor because her response, sharing Chinese food that gives her an opportunity to host and teach her friends about Chinese food, is a sensible answer. In contrast, people who are considered to be unable to know what they are doing would not be treated as motivated. For instance, Jane would not be considered an insane person, a brute, a child, etc., who are formulated as not oriented actors because of the possible nonsensical or irrelevant answers they would give. A nonsensical response given by an “incompetent” person might be something like Jane enjoys sharing Chinese food with her non-Chinese friends in a restaurant because her dream is to travel to the moon. Such an answer would raise questions about the actor’s ability to satisfy the social conditions required for intelligible motive talk. Such an answer would at the least invite a query from the questioner as to what the actor meant by such a reason, itself a demonstration that such an answer fails to meet those requirements.

Third, motives have a grammar that connects an event with a biography. Blum and McHugh (1971:105) state that “a third organized condition of motive ascription is a grammar that locates for a potential or would-be ascriber those conditions in the world which give notice that an ascription is to be done.” The grammar connects a phenomenon in the world, such as sharing Chinese food, to the available “corpus of designations.” Here, a commonsense biography, which is the observer’s version of a set of owned experiences, is a Chinese Canadian Jane as a social actor (a teacher, a host, a friend, someone who eats Chinese food growing up with her Chinese parents in Canada, someone who enjoys sharing Chinese food with non-Chinese friends in restaurants, and so on). These are all relevant to the particular concrete event of Jane sharing Chinese food with her non-Chinese friends. Motive talk draws on a grammar that

connects biography to the activity. Observers draw on their common stock of knowledge as mentioned by Schutz (1967) to connect the event to the biography. Hosting her non-Chinese friends when they share food in a Chinese restaurant is seen to be a relevant way of making sense of bringing together the activity (showing up at a Chinese restaurant) and the actor. Jane is a Chinese Canadian, so she would introduce and teach her non-Chinese friends in a Chinese restaurant when they share food. Being knowledgeable about Chinese food creates a sense of home (“belonging”) and also qualifies her to inform and educate her non-Chinese friends. Other parts of Jane’s biography may be seen as irrelevant to the event of Chinese food sharing: for instance, Jane is a part of a volleyball team. This whole situation can be accounted for by motive talk and the observers’ rules. That she is at a Chinese restaurant (activity) where she knows “how to navigate the space so that” it is “very comfortable” for her, means the relevant rule to connect both is her Chinese background. Her Canadian background is a relevant rule for understanding her non-Chinese friends, and so her sense of being a host is a relevant biographical item to connect with the activity of hosting her non-Chinese friends. That is, her Chinese Canadian biography connects with her feeling at home and hosting others who are not at home.

Fourth, motive formulates a type of person. The grammar includes “some collection of owned experiences which can be allocated to the agent of the act, and some rule(s) for showing the related character of the event and the collection of experiences” (Blum and McHugh 1971:106). Through the use of grammar, people select part of the biography that would sensibly explain the activity and leave out other possibilities. This search procedure is the rule for showing the possible relevance between the biography and the event and, thus, formulates a type of person. Here the idea of a Chinese Canadian, hosting her non-Chinese friends in a Chinese restaurant and so on in ordinary taken-for-granted ways, is seen as relevant to making sense of

the activity of Chinese food sharing: “Thus when users formulate the biographies called [a Chinese Canadian], the relevance of which [the activity of Chinese food sharing] is decided through a formulation of circumstances and characteristics such as [“feeling at home”, hosting her non-Chinese friends], they are formulating the biographies [a Chinese Canadian], as the type of person whose [desire to teach her non-Chinese friends] could produce [the activity of Chinese food sharing]” (Bonner 2013:28). So the talk formulates Jane (i.e. she formulates herself) as the type of person who has a double reason for enjoying eating in a Chinese restaurant, reasons that speak to the hybrid nature of her biography. She is the type of person who enjoys the home-like character of a Chinese restaurant and the type of person who, for those for whom it is not a home, she would want to make it more comfortable. Other types of persons that would count as having adequate reasons for sharing Chinese food include people who like to invite friends to their home to celebrate traditional holidays. When Jane talked about her experience with sharing Chinese food, she selected the parts of her life experience that for her would connect with the event. Out of all of the possibilities, she spoke about her familiarity with Chinese food and that she can navigate the space comfortably. For observers, it makes sense that Jane would be more knowledgeable about how to order, what to order, and so on in a Chinese restaurant compared to her non-Chinese friends. Moreover, she likes to host her friends as guests because of her sense of cultural responsibility. Jane feels obligated to teach her friends in a Chinese restaurant in Canada about Chinese food that is an ICH. Jane enjoys this “cultural responsibility” beyond comfort by orienting to the others’ lack of familiarity or knowledge. Furthermore, Jane’s response is intelligible, which “requires invoking relevant membership categorization, which, in turn, reveals a culture that counts certain categories as relevant” (Bonner 2013:28). Here, the idea of hosting her non-Chinese friends and teaching about Chinese food is seen as a relevant way to make sense

of the event of Chinese food sharing, in ways taken for granted by Chinese Canadians. The community of commonsense members of modern multicultural Canada, including Chinese Canadians, would see hosting and teaching about Chinese food as a reasonable explanation for sharing food. We are now getting an added dimension to the culture of contemporary Canada, where actors can see themselves as other (Chinese in a non-Chinese society) and the same (non-Chinese Canadians in a Chinese restaurant).

Finally, motive formulates an actor's methods. What is required for the formulation of a type of person? In order to identify a type of person, one needs to know "certain characteristics, traits, dispositions, and behaviours which make ownership of the biography relevant to the event" (Blum and McHugh 1971:107). To formulate a type of person is to formulate a course of action on the assumption that the person depicts a typical, possible course of action, regardless of the relevance of the biography to the event that the person makes. Furthermore, showing a certain type of a person provides a method of excluding other possibilities that the actor as this type of person is selectively doing whatever turns out to be. Jane formulates herself according to the conditions of knowledge of motive talk. Jane is formulated as having a method for making observable her double interest in belonging and hosting as a course of action. Jane's interest is in showing that she is a Chinese Canadian who enjoys her sense of belonging and enjoys creating a similar sense in those who do not have that same sense of belonging in a Chinese restaurant. Eating in a Chinese restaurant is her method for making available the double sense of enjoyment (belonging and hosting) observable as a course of action, so that abstract ideas like belonging and hosting, teaching and learning, are made available as ordinary courses of action. Through this particular expression of the discourse of motive talk, Jane shows herself to have methods for making observable her double interest in belonging and teaching about belonging. Enjoying the

food at a Chinese restaurant is her method for making observable her interest in a central element of Chinese culture and her interest in teaching about that culture.

This motive analysis now allows us to address a nuanced element of contemporary multicultural Canada. As already documented, there is much literature on the idea of Chinese Canadians being a marginalized group. Jane's talk shows an inventiveness where she turns around the host-guest relationship based on her confidence in Chinese food culture. The very element that supposedly marginalizes her in Canadian society—her Chinese-ness—is here an opportunity to recognize the ordinary everyday experience of possible marginalization by her non-Chinese Canadian friends. It is her knowledge of Chinese food, as an enjoyable object, that grounds the double enjoyment of belonging and hosting. Eating in a Chinese restaurant is her method for making this double enjoyment observable to herself and others. The motive talk analysis demonstrates how people, including Jane, the interviewer, and observers, consider her response as sensible by formulating the deep structure that the surface meanings rest on. As Blum and McHugh state (1971:108), “these public and rule-guided conditions must exist for motive ascription to occur sensibly.” What makes Jane's confidence in Chinese food culture sensible and intelligible? Next, I discuss the “good” or intangible cultural value in Chinese food.

5.3.3 Chinese Food as Intangible Cultural Heritage

In this section, I address the question: what is it about Chinese food that is worth preserving?

During the interviews, I asked interviewees what is good about Chinese food. Based on their responses, I argue that the “good” of Chinese food is that not only is it useful for survival, but it also contains a taste that reflects Chinese cultural values.

Chinese food meets the survival needs of Chinese immigrants in Canada. Besides the fact that people need to eat, Chinese immigrants can have more control over what they make and eat in their private spheres compared to the public sphere where there are rules and institutions they have very little control over. Furthermore, as discussed, workplaces such as Chinese restaurants and grocery stores that are centred on Chinese food provide many Chinese immigrants with employment opportunities that are otherwise unavailable in mainstream Canadian society for various reasons. In addition, the majority of Chinese food is available at a relatively low cost to not only Chinese but to anyone who wants to have it, which makes Chinese food accessible, as pointed out by a couple of interviewees:

Susan (second gen): Because it's convenient. Also because it's cheap (interview transcript, June 17th, 2018).

Nancy (second gen): My parents like what drives them to food is, I guess, that idea like the cheaper the better. They're not about spending a lot of money. They like going to places where you can buy. We eat fried rice very often. And it's like 30 dollars and you could feed the whole family that kind of food (interview transcript, June 20th, 2018).

Moreover, Chinese food provides a taste that attracts people. The majority of interviewees mentioned that they like the "taste" of Chinese food. But what do they mean by taste? In addition to pleasing the tastebuds, Chinese food reflects intangible cultural values that have been passed on for generations but are mostly unknown by people who eat Chinese food. The taste of Chinese food points to something beyond physical sensations. For example, Zhang and Sydney mentioned that a certain artistry and technique must go into making Chinese food for it to generate the good taste:

Zhang (older first gen): I think the seasoning and taste in Chinese food can't be achieved in western food. It has a lot of technical details (interview transcript, June 17th, 2018).

Sydney (second gen): Well-prepared with good ingredients, without shortcuts, you know. And try to the best of their ability to use the ingredients that were used where that region where that regional food was created (interview transcript, June 15th, 2018).

Additionally, for many interviewees, the good and tasty Chinese food means healthy food:

Ling (older first gen): Good Chinese food nowadays seems to be less oily, less salty, and healthier. It shouldn't be cooked for too long, especially for vegetables, the nutrients will be lost (interview transcript, June 7th, 2018).

Penny (younger first gen): First of all, I think it must be healthy. Then it must make you feel comfortable, for example, the food with less monosodium glutamate. After eating, not only does your stomach feel good, you will also be in a good mood. Otherwise you would feel, after I eat this, even though it tastes good, it is not helpful for my body. [So not just the taste, you are being rational about what you eat.] Yes. Of course good taste is key. [If it tastes good and is healthy, that would be the best?] Right (interview transcript, June 10th, 2018).

May (younger first gen): I think something that fits my taste, the right amount of salt. Something that's healthier, not too oily (interview transcript, July 24th, 2018).

Rose (older first gen): It is expensive to eat out. If we go out to eat every day, it's unhealthy, very oily, too salty, too sweet, so we make food at home. Now it is convenient to shop in Chinatown. I live nearby. When I first came here, there wasn't much to buy to make Chinese food in Chinatown. It's a habit growing up. I have eaten congee since I was a child, now I still have it for lunch. It is easy and fast to make, and it tastes good. I eat more vegetable and less meat (interview transcript, August 18th, 2018).

Although some of them elaborated on what they mean by healthy, they did not talk about the deep cultural values behind healthy Chinese food. There is an accepted Chinese nutritional philosophy that is different from that of the West. For the Chinese, a healthy diet usually includes both "normal foods and supplementary foods. People should have a balanced intake of foods from the 'cold', 'hot', 'dry', 'wet' and 'bu' (meaning nutritious)" categories (Wu 1995:23). Wu also notes that some Chinese food is considered to be medicinal and that the effort to keep healthy occurs in the everyday intake of natural foods. Different foods can provide different amounts and forms of energy to the body, and many foods are categorized as either "yin" or "yang," based on the yin-yang concepts that originated with ancient Chinese philosophy. Yang is hot and yin is cold, but the words do not just refer to temperature, they also

capture the nature of foods: for instance, among meat, lamb is hot, beef is warm, chicken and pork are neutral, duck is cool, crab and shrimp are cold (Wu 1995:24). It is desirable to have a combination of different natures of foods to obtain a balanced and healthy diet.

In addition, the Chinese diet has great variety. In China, there is a diverse range of foods. Besides the most well-known eight “camps” of food, including Chuan (Sichuan), Yue (Guangdong), Lu (Shandong), Min (Fujian), Shu (Jiangsu), Zhe (Zhejiang), Xiang (Hunan), Hui (Anhui), each region in China has very distinct dishes. When Chinese people go abroad, they bring their rich food culture with them. Consequently, Chinese food around the world does not consist of just one particular kind of Chinese food, but is a combination of a huge variety of foods and methods, some of which are still being invented to fit different audiences. Some interviewees point out that variety is what is good about Chinese food.

Susan (second gen): You can get a lot of variety. Convenience. Yeah and it’s tasty, it’s interesting (interview transcript, June 17th, 2018).

Jack (second gen): I think good Chinese food. I think there’s oftentimes a variety. I think it comes in different types of flavours and different combinations. I usually think that it’s more savoury than anything, and there’s always a savoury element to it that makes it really important for me (interview transcript, September 14th, 2018).

Jane (second gen): I eat Chinese food regularly because I really like it. I love it because of its variety. I like it specifically because I love rice; I love noodles. They are very basic for me, but like a good way. They’re like foundational and I won’t get sick of it. I will enjoy even if it’s like every day. I also find it nice that compared to western food or other foods. I like Chinese food for like different mixes of things. So it’s not just like one meat, one vegetable, you know, which is like a mix of different things. They’re also like bite size. So I like that I can eat a variety of things in small bites. Not like a big steak that I [need to] cut. [Convenient and also good variety.] Yes. And it’s good the next day. It’s just so much better prepared too, like colour, compared to other non-Asian food. [Taste?] Taste is also varied because it can be sweet, salty, and spicy. But it’s not that I don’t enjoy eating other foods. It’s like if you ask me to choose like out of all the other ones, like, Chinese or Asian [foods] are my favorites. [Compared to Western foods with individual dishes, Chinese people share a variety of dishes.] Yes, there must be sharing, only with the exception of Hong Kong tea. It’s one meal with one drink, and just to yourself. [Western influence, the sharing thing is very cultural and is a kind of cultural heritage worth preserving.] Yes. Always sharing. So that’s why I like and I need to

explain like OK we are sharing because this is the way the meal is. You have to do that, especially for my friends who are non-Chinese. I also have to explain not just the food, but the etiquette of the eating. So like a round table, or even serving them tea or some friends who don't know how to use chopsticks. I tried to encourage them. [So much more than food.] Yes. [The practice is reflective of the culture of sharing.] Yes. It's the culture of sharing, not just the food (interview transcript, June 29th, 2018).

The great variety of Chinese food is deeply influenced by the traditional Chinese value of “harmony but not uniformity.” As Zhang (2013) states, in Chinese culture, the concept of harmony implies that the universe unites diversity. The diversity is necessary but it does not equal contradiction. In some cases, differences result in contradictions but in other cases, they provide a necessary condition for harmony (Zhang 2013). The concept of harmony usually is shown through Chinese food. For example, one of the most popular Chinese dishes, hot pot, was mentioned in almost every interview I conducted. Typically, hot pot includes different kinds of food, from meat to vegetables to noodles and even some strange things like pig's brain. One thing we know is that it would include a great range of food, so even if it is just one dish, it is likely to satisfy the needs of people who share it.

Another point about the good of Chinese food is authenticity. The meaning of authenticity is viewed differently by different interviewees. Some believe that Chinese food is authentic only when Chinese people make it.

Alex (younger first gen): I like the food that's more authentic. The restaurants here [in Canada] do make some changes, but I think if they change too much, then you can't have that authentic taste. Change a little bit is fine, but not too much; give the customers here a little space to get used to the authentic taste (interview transcript, June 14th, 2018).

Sydney (second gen): More authentic. Yeah like fresh sure. Like not replacing... Yeah it's like you know people might replace certain vegetables with something that's easier and cheaper to get (interview transcript, June 15th, 2018).

Jane (second gen): [Do you prefer more authentic Chinese food?] Yeah, I think so. Even if you have something like fried rice when you have that Chinese place because it's made in a wok. But if you have at a western place it's just not quite the same, and the flavours

are different as well. Good Chinese food. Going to a place like Chinese people make it (interview transcript, June 29th, 2018).

Glen (second gen): It's fresh it's tasty. There's a lot of it. I don't know that it's kind of taste authentic I guess. [What do you mean by "a lot of it"?] The portion should be big and it should be cheap too. I don't know for me it's not authentic if they give you a tiny little thing and that it costs a lot. That's not the real Chinese food to me. That doesn't seem right. [Often like a feast?] Yeah, should be bountiful cooking (interview transcript, September 7th, 2018).

However, I argue that authenticity is not a fixed concept, but the term can be used as long as it reflects genuine experiences. As stated by Berger (1963:146), "To exist authentically is to live in full awareness of the unique, irreplaceable and incomparable quality of one's individuality. By contrast, inauthentic existence is to lose oneself in the anonymity of the Man, surrendering one's uniqueness to the socially constituted abstractions." Thus, we cannot simply conclude that Chinese food made by Chinese is authentic because it can be inauthentic if it is an imitation of the making of a certain food. What it means to be authentic is constantly evolving. In the case of Chinese food, it adapts various local tastes with its true essence preserved by Chinese all over the world. Also, authenticity is always displayed in public, in the presence of others. When people are authentic, they begin to create and can become more playful with others. They are aware of individual differences and diverse ways of being in the world. This quality of playfulness is reflected in the following interview responses.

Zhang (older first gen): What do we talk about when we have Chinese food together? For example, we talk about issues related to health, current politics, and everyday life in Canada, nothing else. It's to get close with each other. Eating is just a way and a medium for something good and intangible. [Furthermore, these are in our culture and tradition.] Yes. Also, when we have meals in Canada, they don't allow us to bring our own alcohol. But we Chinese need to have drinks with meals. Many people, after drinking, they tell the truth and many stories, so it's a kind of culture. [Showing their authentic sides brings people closer together.] Yes. Drinking a little bit helps with the excitement, but here you can't drink at all, just have dinners, which is not good... First of all the environment is different. In China eating Chinese food is elegant. You have your private room and you can keep eating, singing, and playing. Secondly, when you eat in China, you can bring alcohol with you, here you can't bring alcohol. You can bring wine or beer, whatever you

prefer instead of getting them at the restaurants. Buying alcohol at restaurants can be expensive. We usually keep eating until the end. We were asked to leave after 9 pm. We talked a lot since we hadn't seen each other for three years (interview transcript, June 17th, 2018).

Sydney (second gen): Immigrants provide support for each other in their networks. I think for immigrants and I would say for my parents it's more. Yeah I mean I see that, for example if they go to like a restaurant they could see people they know. Less so for myself as someone who lives downtown... Well I think you'll find if you speak to other second generation people, even if they don't [have the same level of interest], it happens that I have an interest in these topics. But even for people who do, it's like they have had no choice but to think a lot about being Chinese Canadian. [In the] second generation, they certainly have strong feelings around food. I would see among second generation Chinese Canadians, and now more and more among all Canadians, a playfulness related to food... I think many people from the mainland have as well: there's a bit of a game, where you know there's a humour, there's play having like really good food. So that's something that I think a lot of, and I think a lot of second generation people [also do] if they didn't grow up with a lot of knowledge of Chinese culture. The one thing they do know is food. So they have an active interest in it. But they don't take that seriously. There is something fun, something to enjoy, something to joke about, something to, you know, yeah, just treat it in a very playful way (interview transcript, June 15th, 2018).

Jane (second gen): [What do you talk about when you have dinner with your cousins?] A wide range of things, so funny stories, the board games that we play... that's part of getting together. Even though we play board games, so I guess part of the activity. We also combine it with a food thing. So for example like we are meeting for Canada Day even though we know it was like we're going to play games. We also make sure that we eat together. So [food and play] are always together. We're going to have dim sum. We're going to have games and laughter. So this is mainly for fun (interview transcript, June 29th, 2018).

In their responses, we can see that Chinese food serves as a medium for more playful relationships with others and the world. Authenticity is shown through playful activities, as mentioned in Zhang's response. In addition to the conventional ways of being playful mentioned in their responses, such as drinking and playing games, it is possible to imagine different ways to be playful. For instance, Berger suggests transforming one's awareness of society in a way that givenness is just an option. Doing that, one can experience something called "ecstasy," which is the act of coming out from the caves, facing the light and seeing the beautiful world, as told in Plato's allegory (Berger 1963:150).

5.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, in this chapter I go beyond the theme of comfort that is more popular among Chinese immigrants to analyze celebration and hosting, both of which involve the feeling of enjoyment and discomfort. I argue that celebration is a better solution to the problem of homelessness/displacement because by celebrating, Chinese immigrants become hosts rather than guests in Canada and can share their ICH with others. Although Chinese immigrants may have similar lived experiences as strangers in Canada, only some of the Chinese immigrants talked about celebration and hosting as part of their experience with sharing Chinese food. I then focus on Jane's response and analyze it as motive talk to reveal the deep structure that the surface meanings rest on to make observable the sensible and intelligible possibility of double enjoyment of eating in a Chinese restaurant. Finally, I discuss Chinese food not only as a medium for preserving a taste of home but also an intangible heritage with cultural meanings and values that are worth preserving, for example, artistry, health, variety, authenticity, and playfulness. To better preserve Chinese food as an ICH, it is important to overcome the insularity of comfort and have the courage to host celebrations to share something new and good with others in our diverse society.

CONCLUSION

THE RESEARCH JOURNEY HOME

I still remember the feeling of excitement in June 2018 when the public announcements of research recruitment went out and the emails from individuals started pouring in. I was surprised to see a great variety of people expressing their interest in participating in the study titled, “A Taste of Home in the Toronto Chinese Immigrant Community.” These were people I would not normally interact with as a first generation immigrant from Mainland China with my own networks: for example, an older first generation Chinese immigrant from Malaysia, a younger first generation Chinese immigrant from Inner Mongolia, and a younger Chinese Canadian born in Toronto with Chinese parents who used to live in India. From June to September 2018, I carried out interview conversations with research participants about Chinese food and the meanings of home at different locations of their choices. Some of these conversations took place in more formal settings such as meeting rooms at the Centre of Social Innovation or the Toronto Reference Library, while others happened at research participants’ homes with their kids nearby. I particularly enjoyed the interviews at cafes or restaurants where the conversations just flowed naturally as we ate food. Talking with the research participants has truly been an eye-opening experience for me. After hearing their diverse individual experiences, I felt a sense of responsibility to understand and share their truths as much as I could. To me the purpose of this research is not only producing knowledge for the academic community, it is also giving voices to the research participants in order to achieve a new shared understanding of Chinese immigrants’ lived experiences in Toronto.

With the radical interpretive perspective, I am more than a mouthpiece representing research participants' understanding, but I am also engaged in strengthening it through the "development of understanding" and "the possibilities of meanings" (Bonner 1997:142). During my research, I do not treat research participants as "subjects" and apply only "objective" scientific methods to study them. Instead, I conduct research to get closer to the "truth" from the perspectives of research participants by making knowable their lived experiences that are largely ignored in the dominant Western research literature and by challenging one of the existing dominant narratives of Chinese immigrants as inferior others. Furthermore, I present different possible meanings of "home" to show the rich intersubjective understandings in the many complicated dimensions of Chinese immigrants' lived experiences in Canada. My choice of research approach represents my own values, which affects my relationships with research participants. During interviews, I made sure that the experience involved mutual learning—for both the researcher and the participant. By taking part in the interview, participants reflected on their own sense of home. They had the opportunity to speak about their experiences with food sharing as Chinese immigrants in Toronto and to have the researcher listen, pay attention to, and give feedback on what they said. In particular, interviews with first generation Chinese immigrants were conducted in their native language, Mandarin, for them to better express ideas that they might have difficulties articulating in English. After the interviews, during the data analysis, I, as the researcher, was required to collaborate with research participants by not only describing but analyzing their interview responses. Thus, any self/other distinction was diminished because I was not just a detached objective observer representing what research participants ("others") said; I also constructed a shared understanding of the cultural meanings and assumptions embedded in their and our lived experiences. The true situation of social inquiry

is “ultimately a conversation between self and other, oriented to developing a sharable understanding of an object and not simply a therapeutic encounter [concerned with helping Chinese immigrants in Toronto understand themselves], a political encounter [concerned with respecting the voices of Chinese immigrants in a strange country], or even an encounter with a polyphony of diverse voices” (Bonner 1997:144). Therefore, the research serves as a mutually respectful conversation for co-constructing shared understandings of Chinese immigrants’ meanings of home in their food sharing networks.

Starting with the research problem of the subjective homelessness/displacement of Chinese immigrants in Canada, I first present my theoretical framework and methodological approach, following the principle of radical interpretive inquiry (RII), that theory and methods are intertwined. For the theoretical framework, I adopt the relational theoretical perspective influenced by various classical and contemporary social theorists, including, Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Simmel, and Berger and Kellner, given its cultural significance among the Chinese. As discussed before, Chinese society is considered relationship (*guanxi*)-based rather than individual-based or society-based. Moreover, I use the sociology of the meal put forward by Simmel to study the food sharing practices. In addition, to understand the shared cultural meanings in social relationships, I present the social construction of reality perspective by Berger et al. These perspectives together provide a suitable theoretical foundation for the research question. I use an innovative multi-method approach that not only explores the structure of the food sharing networks, but also analyzes the shared meanings within these networks. The Chinese-food-nets are mapped using social network analysis (SNA) of quantitative data collected from the survey. Next, by examining qualitative data collected from the open-ended interview questions, the lived experiences of Chinese immigrants and their shared meanings within the

food sharing networks are analyzed using phenomenology, and the unexplicated grounds that the meanings rest on are revealed by reflexive analysis.

The findings of the data analysis reveal that first and second generation Chinese immigrants have different struggles with the problem of subjective homelessness in their life-worlds. Furthermore, younger immigrants have more diverse food sharing networks than the older immigrants. Nevertheless, “home” means something similar across different generations and ages: it essentially brings a feeling of comfort. Moreover, some research participants respond to the problem in different ways compared to others by reversing their positions from guests to hosts in Canada through celebration and hosting. First, SNA is used to explore the composition, content, and structure of the food sharing networks. Chinese immigrants are sharing food mostly with their family and friends. Within these networks, social supports such as emotional support, practical support, and financial support are given and received. This is true for both first and second generation Chinese immigrants. However, when looking at the structure of the Chinese-food-nets through the diagrams, the differences in various groups (older first generation, younger first generation, and younger second generation) become clear. Most older immigrants only include Chinese in their food networks. In contrast, younger generation immigrants have more diverse food networks, with not just Chinese but people from various cultural backgrounds from the Philippines, Vietnam, Korea, Iran, America, Scotland, England, the Netherlands, France, Poland, Russia, Jamaica, and so on. Although younger immigrants, both first and second generation, have similar culturally diverse food networks, their lived experiences as Chinese immigrants in Toronto are quite different, as revealed through phenomenological analysis. In addition to experiencing the modern condition of subjective homelessness as a result of pluralization of their life-worlds, Chinese immigrants suffer as strangers in Canadian society.

The struggles differ across generations. The first generation immigrants need to learn the taken-for-granted cultural patterns of the approached society in order to fit in. Meanwhile, their own “thinking as usual” from the culture of origin becomes inadequate in the new country. The second generation ones experience a divided sense of identity between the Canadian ways and the Chinese ways. Although they are more involved with the pluralization of life-worlds compared to the first generation, their challenges lie in negotiating these different sets and sometimes conflicting cultural patterns. Nevertheless, the overall theme for the meanings of home for Chinese immigrants is similar across generations and ages. It is essentially comfort, including the comfort of nostalgia, familiarity, habit, affective support, and being yourself. Among these Chinese immigrant research participants, some from each group mentioned the experience of celebration and hosting, which is analytically different from the feeling of comfort because it involves more excitement, enjoyment, and even discomfort. By hosting celebrations involving Chinese food, they become hosts instead of strangers/guests in Canada. Furthermore, the deep structure of a motive talk of one piece of data is analyzed to show the sensible yet inventive possibility of how immigrants change from guests to hosts in Canada by teaching others about Chinese food as an intangible cultural heritage with meanings and values that are worth preserving, for instance, artistry, health, variety, authenticity, and playfulness. The findings from the qualitative data confirm and explain the structural differences and content similarities observed by the quantitative data: furthermore, they uncover complex experiences and meanings, as well as the deep structure that the surface meanings rest on, which is hidden in the quantitative data. Together, quantitative and qualitative data analyzed by SNA and interpretive methods provide a more complete picture of the food sharing experiences and the preservation of the meanings of home among first and second generation Chinese immigrants in

Toronto. Specifically, the different structures of food networks for different groups point at the different life-worlds of the Chinese immigrants. The similar social support provided among the Chinese immigrants is later revealed as a feeling of comfort as the essence of the food sharing experience. The various meanings of home, and the deep structure that the meanings rest on are captured by RII. Although Chinese immigrants across different generations and ages may have distinctive concrete struggles while living in Canada, analytically, in order to cope with the problem of subjective homelessness/displacement, some of them stay in their comfort zones while others choose to go out of them to embrace discomfort by hosting celebrations through sharing Chinese food as an important intangible cultural heritage with non-Chinese people in Canada.

My research contributes in several ways to our understanding of the lived experiences of Chinese immigrants, with a particular focus on how the meanings of home are preserved in their food sharing networks. First, the findings of the research add knowledge to the very limited recent research conducted to study the lived experiences of Chinese immigrants in Canada. Moreover, with the humanistic perspective, the insights gained from this research generate a reflexive and nuanced understanding of the cultural meanings and values in the food sharing experiences of first and second generation Chinese immigrants in addition to producing empirical knowledge of their Chinese-food-nets. Second, my research presents a new and unique research design. As presented in detail in Chapter Two, by going beyond the empirical mixed-methods approach, this innovative multi-method approach under the overall radical interpretive perspective provides a more holistic understanding of the shared meanings constructed in the Chinese-food-nets by collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data with SNA and interpretive methods such as phenomenology and reflexive analysis. Furthermore, the

bilingual interviews in Mandarin and English better capture the authentic perspectives of the research participants and enable findings to be compared across generations. Third, the new understandings challenge the dominant narrative of Chinese immigrants and reveal diverse and complicated lived experiences and cultural meanings that are largely unknown to mainstream Canadians. I hope to share the research findings to address misunderstandings about Chinese immigrants and improve cross-cultural understandings across different groups and disciplines. I do not confine myself to the boundaries of conventional sociology and have shared my research findings to a wide range of people in academia and the wider community. For example, during the writing of this dissertation, I presented the research at various academic conferences internationally. In addition, I presented the preliminary research findings in both Chinese and English to Chinese immigrant community members at an inter-generational workshop organized by the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter (CCNCTO). Meaningful conversations have taken place at these events to increase understanding. For instance, some older Chinese immigrant community members have expressed that they learned about the younger immigrants' struggles during my presentation so that they could understand their children and grandchildren better. Although it is difficult to translate my research findings into directly actionable, practical, and specific recommendations for policy makers and immigrant service providers, the knowledge and voices generated from the perspectives of Chinese immigrants are still valuable. They represent the first step in exploring and understanding the lived experiences of Chinese immigrants in Toronto for those living and working with them, including recent and long-time immigrants, native-born Canadians, policy makers, and service providers. Next, I reflect on some limitations and suggest possible future research directions.

Translating the interview responses from Chinese to English has raised some complicated issues. As mentioned, since all of the 12 interviews conducted with first generation immigrant research participants were in Mandarin, responses needed to be translated from Chinese to English for direct comparison with the interview responses in English by the second generation immigrant participants. The translation for the survey data was relatively straightforward because the majority of data was quantitative. However, the translation for the open-ended interview question responses posed some challenges. Since Chinese is my native language and English is my working language, I was capable of doing the translation. I began the process after transcribing the interview responses for the first generation research participants. Nevertheless, I struggled with deciding on my specific approach to translation because there were an infinite number of possibilities for the wording of each sentence. Traditionally, translation is understood to be a binary phenomenon with two elements in the process—in my research, an original text in Chinese and its secondary production in English. Thus, the relation to the original determines the translation, but relations can have different possibilities. For example, the translation can prioritize the research participants by strictly following their original language, including the idioms, or facilitate reader understanding by moving the language closer to theirs. For my research, I chose to move toward the readers by making the English translation as clear as possible while staying true to the original Chinese texts as much as possible. My goal was to ensure effective communication with the readers so they could share the perspectives of Chinese immigrants. Nonetheless, since this translation was conducted between two languages from very different cultures, a feeling of strangeness on the reader's side is unavoidable no matter how approachable I make the translation. Readers need to embrace this feeling of difference and foreignness when reading the English translation so as to gain a better understanding of the truths

of Chinese immigrants expressed through the original texts. Furthermore, I, the researcher and translator, as the mediator between the original texts and the translated product, create a “third space” for hybridity between language and cultures, as described in Buden (2006). Homi Bhabha also discusses the third space as an invention that “makes the structure of meaning and reference an ambivalent process, destroys this mirror of representation in which cultural knowledge is continuously revealed as an integrated, open, expanding code...[and] challenges our sense of the historical identity of culture as a homogenizing, unifying force” (2006:156). Thus, the translation creates a cross-cultural hybrid that does not exist in either culture. In fact, it is a very particular kind of hybrid produced by me as the translator given my own cultural knowledge. As I conducted the cross-cultural research and translation, I needed to be mindful about finding the deeper general truths that could be captured by a different language. This is not to deny the uniqueness of Chinese culture that may be lost in the English translation, but the translation for interview responses needs to focus on what is true for the participants so it can be understood in English (Ilesanmi 2009).

The research sample also has some limitations. With the non-probability convenience snowball sampling strategies, it was only possible to recruit Chinese immigrants from certain groups. For example, most research participants are connected with the CCNCTO because the public recruitment announcement was sent out on my behalf through the organization’s social media pages, newsletters, and so on. Among the eligible people who expressed their interest in participating in the research, I aimed to select a research sample that was as diverse as possible. For instance, research participants came from different parts of Mainland China (North, South, West, and East) as well as outside of Mainland China, including Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Canada. Moreover, research participants were from different social classes—from lower

middle class to upper middle class. However, there was no one from the lower or upper class in the sample. Also, as mentioned before, more females participated than males due to the small number of responses from men. Furthermore, although the research includes both first and second generation Chinese immigrant research participants, there are more first generation participants than second generation ones. Additionally, since no older second generation Chinese immigrant responded to the recruitment, all of the older research participants are first generation Chinese immigrants. The parents of most second generation research participants came from Hong Kong. Nevertheless, the research does not include the “1.5 generation” Chinese immigrants (who came to Canada when they were children or adolescents), who may be comparable to first and second generation Chinese immigrants. Another limitation of the research sample is that 21 research participants with the 197 people mentioned in their food networks still constitutes too small a sample to produce any generalizable knowledge, especially from the positivists’ perspective. The research sample is not representative of all Chinese immigrants in Toronto, so even the findings from SNA are not generalizable to the Chinese immigrant population. However, the aim of the research is not just making empirical generalizations, but getting at the structure of meanings of Chinese immigrants, and through them revealing more universal findings for immigrants from different ethnic backgrounds in Canada. Moreover, given that only very limited recent sociological research has been conducted on Chinese immigrants in Toronto, this research produces new knowledge on the shared meanings preserved by Chinese immigrants in their food networks, and it reveals the deep structure and intangible cultural values in Chinese food that underlie these meanings, which can be informative for future research. It would be beneficial to include in the sample Chinese immigrants from other geographic locations as well as 1.5 generation Chinese immigrants to

compare findings. It would also be informative to collect more waves of data and conduct longitudinal studies to see if the patterns and meanings have changed for the Chinese immigrants over time.

Third, the main focus of this research is the problem of displacement rather than discrimination. However, the problem of discrimination is worthy of more serious research in the future. As mentioned before, since the mid-19th century when the first Chinese immigrants arrived in Canada, Chinese immigrants had been discriminated against. The Chinese railway workers helped construct the Canadian Pacific Railway, but they were perceived as undesirable settlers, heavily exploited, and assigned more dangerous tasks than the white men. The documented history of earlier Chinese immigrants in Canada is mostly seen as a history of discrimination as they faced various forms of institutional racism, including the head tax and the Chinese Exclusion Act. For a long period in the 20th century, Chinese immigrants were treated as second class citizens as a result of this discriminatory legislation. Furthermore, Chinese immigrants had difficulties pursuing a decent living in Canada, so most of them turned to marginal enterprises such as laundry and food services. Even presently, Chinese immigrants are still being discriminated against, although less overtly, in their everyday life in Canada. For instance, Chinese immigrants often experience the glass ceiling in workplaces dominated by Canadians from the mainstream groups. Moreover, many Chinese immigrants' foreign credentials in work and education are largely unrecognized, and thus they have trouble finding decent jobs. Unfortunately, the human capital of Chinese immigrants is not utilized in Canada's labour market because the host country often fails to recognize its value. During my research interviews, at least three interviewees talked about instances of overt and covert racial discrimination in their lived experiences as Chinese immigrants. To inform systematic change,

the problem of racial discrimination needs to be studied to explore the complex and nuanced experiences of Chinese immigrants along with a more up-to-date Chinese immigrant history in Canada.

In addition to expanding the research sample and studying the problem of discrimination as discussed above, a number of possible future research directions that can build on the findings of this research could include but are not limited to, first, extending this research into exploring the lived experiences of Chinese immigrants and whether the meanings of home are preserved through other mediums in addition to food, for example, house-purchasing behaviour or cultural-specific practices such as Tai Chi. Second, it would be fruitful to study how shared meanings are constructed through other modes of communication besides face-to-face meetings, which are necessary for Chinese food sharing. For instance, as society becomes more digital, social media such as WeChat and Skype play a central role in how transnational Chinese immigrants connect with one another when they are not sharing meals. Third, this study could be repeated for immigrants and the children of immigrants from different cultural backgrounds to explore the more universal aspects of being strangers in Canada. Although “first generation immigrants” and “second generation immigrants” are widely used terms in academic research (e.g. Bersani 2014; Urban 2012) and official agencies (e.g. Statistics Canada 2018) to track the different cohorts of immigrants, these clearly defined terms need to be questioned because they are statistical but not necessarily sociological. For instance, Alex Sim states that Statistics Canada uses a cut-off point in population density to define “rural,” which does not capture the rural culture (Sim 1988:22 as cited in Bonner 1997:55). “Rural” here is a statistical category but not a sociological one. As Bonner mentions, the statistical category points to “the ontological and epistemological limits of the social sciences and their connection to the modern life-world, [which ironically] have not

been questioned” (Bonner 1997:57). Similarly, from the findings of my research, we can see that the term “second generation immigrant” does not reflect the ambiguous and complex lived experiences of the children of immigrants. Many of the research participants whose parents are first generation immigrants, while struggling with the problem of the divided home, still consider themselves to be Canadians, in this case, Chinese Canadians rather than immigrants. So it would be good to see whether similar experiences can be observed in the children of immigrants across diverse cultural backgrounds in Canada.

With RII, the research journey is always unending. According to Bonner (1997:145), RII is driven by two principles: a desire to know and recognition of human finitude. As a researcher and a first generation Chinese immigrant, motivated by a need to understand, I began the research by asking questions such as: What does “home” mean to Chinese immigrants in Canada? Do they preserve a sense of “home” in their food sharing networks in Toronto? What do the Chinese-food-nets look like? What are the Chinese immigrant life-worlds? Why do Chinese immigrants think it is important to share food? What is worth preserving in Chinese food as an intangible cultural heritage? In this research, I have addressed these questions from a radical interpretive perspective by analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data. In addition to producing empirical knowledge about the food sharing networks and meanings of home for Chinese immigrants, I inquire into their various life-worlds and the deep structure that underlies the surface meanings. Furthermore, I present the double enjoyment of belonging and hosting as a theoretical and practical possibility as well as a reality made observable by Jane’s interview response to show the limitations of the discrimination discourse, which would miss this possibility. Nevertheless, the findings are still incomplete, and the understandings can always be deepened. As the researcher who is sharing these findings, I cannot claim that I know exactly

what the participants mean because their understandings were shaped by their particular cultural and historical backgrounds. The meanings of home are unavoidably ambiguous. What I present is an intersubjective understanding between me/the researcher and the research participants.

After gaining a better understanding about Chinese immigrants' meanings of home shared in their food networks, we may make different choices and act differently. For example, at the end of the short film *Bao*, the mother, father, son, and his non-Chinese girlfriend all sit together around the table to make baos (steamed buns). As it turns out, the girlfriend makes great baos and surprises everyone. However, the father still turns away and does not participate in bao-making with everyone else. Meanwhile, the mother, son, and girlfriend happily make baos together. So we can see that in the film people respond differently to the same event. I hope this research, which presents the complex shared meanings of home behind different responses, will provide us with some new knowledge and insights to act in ways that better the lives of not only Chinese immigrants but all in our diverse Canadian society.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Information Letter

University of Waterloo

Date

Dear (*insert participant's name*):

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I am conducting as part of my PhD degree in the Department of Sociology and Legal Studies at the University of Waterloo under the supervision of Professor Kieran Bonner. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail if you decide to take part.

Over the years, the composition of recent immigrants in Canada has shifted from mostly white European descendants to more visible minorities. Toronto is Canada's largest and the world's most multicultural city, with almost half of its population born outside of Canada. Nowadays, Chinese languages are the most common among those whose mother tongue is other than Canada's two official languages, English and French (Statistics Canada 2017). Yet, very little recent research has examined the lived experience of Chinese immigrants in Canada today, especially in relation to "home." The purpose of this study, therefore, is to explore meanings of "home" from the perspective of Chinese immigrants in Toronto.

The study will focus on how Chinese immigrants preserve a sense of "home" in Canada by looking at Chinese food as important cultural heritage and everyday practice that shapes the identity of the Chinese Canadian community. At the heart of Chinese food as a tangible object are intangible cultural values and meanings shared in social relationships. Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage has become essential in building lasting peace in Canada. Therefore, I believe that because you are a Chinese immigrant living in Toronto with experience of eating Chinese food, you are best suited to speak to the various issues, such as social belonging, cross-cultural communication, and immigrant integration in today's multicultural Canada.

Participation in this study is voluntary. During the interview, first, you will be asked to fill out a survey in three parts. Part One asks about your demographic information (e.g. age, gender, occupation, income range, etc.). Part Two asks you to provide information about people in your Chinese-food-net, that is, a list of people with whom you eat Chinese food. You may list up to 12 people but you can stop at any time. Basic demographic information about the people you list will be asked, for example, gender, age, ethnicity, and occupation. You will also be asked about their relation to you, the location where you eat Chinese food, type of food, and what you share during meals, for instance, emotional support such as talking about personal issues, and practical information such as information about the job market. Part Three asks you to fill out a table to indicate whether the people you listed know each other for describing the structure of your network. Next, you will be asked to answer open-end questions about your experience with Chinese food in Canada. These questions will focus on your lived experience as a Chinese immigrant in Canada, what it is like to share Chinese food with family and friends, and how

having Chinese food is related to feeling at home. The interview will take approximately an hour and a half in length to take place in a mutually agreed upon location. You may decline to answer any of the survey or interview questions if you so wish. Further, you may decide to end the interview at any time by advising the researcher. For your participation in the study you will receive a \$15 gift card from Tim Hortons. Even if you choose to withdraw from the study at any time, the gift certificate is yours to keep. The amount received is taxable. It is your responsibility to report this amount for income tax purposes. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded to facilitate collection of information, and later transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the interview has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or clarify any points that you wish. Your participation will be considered confidential. Your identity and the identity of people who you mention during the interview will be protected. There will be a separate file containing the real names that link with pseudonyms; it will not be shared and will be stored securely on my password protected computer. Furthermore, your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study; however, with your permission anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained for a minimum of two years on a password protected computer and in my supervisor's locked office at St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo. You can withdraw your consent to participate and have your data destroyed by contacting the researcher within this time period. Please note that it will not be possible to withdraw your data once papers are submitted for publication. Only those associated with this study will have access to study records. All records will be destroyed according to University of Waterloo policy. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE#22959). If you have questions for the Committee contact the Chief Ethics Officer, Office of Research Ethics, at 1-519-888-4567 ext. 36005 or ore-ceo@uwaterloo.ca.

For all other questions or if you would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me by email at celia.huang@uwaterloo.ca. You can also contact my supervisor, Professor Kieran Bonner at 519-888-4567 ext. 28242 or email kieran.bonner@uwaterloo.ca.

For this study, I will contribute to a better intercultural understanding among recent and long-time immigrants, native-born Canadians, interdisciplinary researchers, and policy makers. I hope that the results of my study will be of benefit to those organizations working with immigrants, as well as to the broader research community.

I very much look forward to speaking with you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project.

Yours Sincerely,

Celia Huang

Appendix B: Consent Form

By signing this consent form, you are not waiving your legal rights or releasing the investigator(s) or involved institution(s) from their legal and professional responsibilities.

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Celia Huang of the Department of Sociology and Legal Studies at the University of Waterloo. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, to receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and any additional details I wanted.

I am aware that I have the option of allowing my interview to be audio recorded to ensure an accurate recording of my responses. I am also aware that excerpts from the interview may be included in the dissertation and/or publications to come from this research, with the understanding that the quotations will be anonymous.

I was informed that I may withdraw my consent without penalty by advising the researcher. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE#22959). If you have questions for the committee, contact the Chief Ethics Officer, Office of Research Ethics, at 1-519-888-4567 ext. 36005 or ore-ceo@uwaterloo.ca.

For all other questions contact Celia Huang at celia.huang@uwaterloo.ca.

With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

YES NO

I agree to have my interview audio recorded.

YES NO

I agree to the use of anonymous quotations in any thesis or publication that comes of this research.

YES NO

Participant Name: _____ (Please print)

Participant Signature: _____

Witness Name: _____ (Please print)

Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Name and ID Code

Name of Participant

ID code

Name of Alters	ID code
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	

Appendix D: Survey for Chinese Immigrants

ID code of Participant:

Date:

You may decline to answer any of the questions. You may also decide to end the interview at any time without any negative consequences by advising the interviewer. The information that you provide will be used to generally describe study participants. This information will not be used to identify any participant.

Part One: Demographic Information Questionnaire

1. In which year were you born?	
2. Where were you born?	
3. What is your gender?	
4. What are the first three letters of your current postal code?	
5. How long have you lived in Canada?	
6. What is your current occupation?	
7. What are your parents' occupations?	Mother: Father:
8. What is your employment status?	a) Part-time b) Full-time c) Unemployed d) Other (specify)
9. What is your income range?	a) Under \$10,000 b) \$10,000 - \$25,000 c) \$26,000 - \$35,000 d) \$35,000 - \$75,000 e) \$76,000 - \$100,000 f) \$101,000 and over
10. What is your household income range?	a) Under \$15,000 b) \$16,000 - \$55,000 c) \$56,000 - \$75,000 d) \$76,000 - \$100,000 e) \$101,000 - \$150,000 f) \$150,000 and over
11. What is your highest level of education?	a) Some elementary school/elementary school b) High school diploma c) College diploma or equal d) University degree at the Bachelor's level or equal e) University degree at the Master's level or equal f) University degree at the Doctoral (PhD) level or equal

12. What is your first language(s)?	a) English b) French c) Mandarin d) Cantonese e) Other (specify)
13. What other languages do you know?	
14. Are you a Canadian citizen or permanent resident?	a) Canadian citizen b) Permanent resident c) Other (specify)
15. What is your ethnic background?	
16. Do you have experience with eating Chinese food?	a) Yes b) No
17. How often do you eat Chinese food? (Select the most accurate answer)	a) Daily b) Weekly c) Monthly d) Less frequent than monthly

Part Two: Generate Chinese-food-net

Please see a separate page.

Part Three: Alter-alter Questionnaire

Does Alter 1 know 2? If yes, please fill in “1”; if no, please fill in “0”, etc.

	Ego	Alter 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Ego	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Alter 1		1											
2			1										
3				1									
4					1								
5						1							
6							1						
7								1					
8									1				
9										1			
10											1		
11												1	
12													1

Part Two: Generate Chinese-food-net

Could you please list the people with whom you eat Chinese food (up to twelve people)?									
ID code	Relation	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Occupation	Location	Frequency	Type of food	Content of ties*
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									

*Example of content of ties: emotional support, practical information, and financial support

Appendix E: Interview Guide for First Generation Chinese Immigrants

YOU MAY DECLINE TO ANSWER ANY OF THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.

YOU MAY ALSO DECIDE TO END THE INTERVIEW AT ANY TIME WITHOUT ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES BY ADVISING THE INTERVIEWER. PSEUDONYMS WILL BE USED FOR YOUR NAME AND THOSE OF OTHERS YOU MENTION IN THE DISSERTATION AND ALL RELATED WORK.

1. Tell me about yourself and your experience in Canada
 - a. Why did you come to Canada?
 - b. What did you expect to achieve in Canada?
 - c. What do you like about Canada?
2. Do you still eat Chinese food regularly? Why or why not?
3. What is it that attracts you to Chinese food?
 - a. What do you often talk about when you have Chinese food together?
 - b. Have you talked to your friend about...?
4. What do you consider as good Chinese food?
5. What do you dislike about Chinese food?
6. What do you see as the relation between having Chinese food in Canada and “feeling at home”?
 - a. What does home mean for you?
 - b. Do you eat Chinese food when you miss home?
 - c. Do you make Chinese food at home?
 - d. Where do you buy groceries and materials for preparing meals?
7. What is your relationship to Chinese food and celebration?
8. Do you think Chinese food is connected to your sense of belonging and identity? Please explain.
 - a. Do you feel that you are Chinese, Canadian, or Chinese Canadian? Why?
9. What do you associate with having Chinese food in Canada? What associations do you have with Chinese food in China?
10. Have you tried any food other than Chinese food?
 - a. If yes, what kinds of food?
 - b. Do you prefer other kinds of food to Chinese food? Why or why not?
11. How would you feel about your life in Canada if you could not have Chinese food?
 - a. Does Chinese food play a role in helping you integrate into Canadian society?

12. What are some barriers you face in Canada?
- a. Do you regret your choice of moving to Canada? Why or why not?
 - b. What was different from what you expected when you first came to Canada?
 - c. What are some cultural values that you feel are different in Canada compared to China?
13. Are you a Canadian citizen? Why did you become a Canadian citizen or why not?
14. Is there anything else you think I should know to better understand your experiences in Canada?

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ANSWER MY QUESTIONS. I WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH A TRANSCRIPT OF YOUR ANSWERS FOR YOU TO REVIEW AND A SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY ONCE IT IS COMPLETED.

Appendix F: Interview Guide for Second Generation Chinese Immigrants

YOU MAY DECLINE TO ANSWER ANY OF THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.

YOU MAY ALSO DECIDE TO END THE INTERVIEW AT ANY TIME WITHOUT ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES BY ADVISING THE INTERVIEWER. PSEUDONYMS WILL BE USED FOR YOUR NAME AND THOSE OF OTHERS YOU MENTION IN THE DISSERTATION AND ALL RELATED WORK.

1. Tell me about yourself and your experience as a Chinese Canadian.
2. Do you eat Chinese food regularly? Why or why not?
3. What is it that attracts you to Chinese food?
 - a. What do you often talk about when you have Chinese food together?
 - b. Have you talked to your friend about...?
4. What do you consider as good Chinese food?
5. What do you dislike about Chinese food?
6. What do you see as the relation between having Chinese food in Canada and “feeling at home”?
 - a. What does home mean for you?
7. What is your relationship to Chinese food and celebration?
8. Do you think Chinese food is connected to your sense of belonging and identity? Please explain.
 - a. Do you feel that you are Chinese, Canadian, or Chinese Canadian? Why?
9. Have you visited China?
 - a. If yes, what do you think of the food there?
 - b. How does it compare with Chinese food in Canada?
 - c. Who did you visit in China?
10. Have you tried any food other than Chinese food?
 - a. If yes, what kinds of food?
 - b. Do you prefer other kinds of food to Chinese food? Why or why not?
11. How would you feel about your life in Canada if you could not have Chinese food?
12. What are some barriers you face as a result of your Chinese ethnicity?
 - a. What are some barriers you face with your Chinese parents?

13. Can you speak Chinese, Cantonese, Mandarin, or other Chinese language? How well can you speak Chinese?
14. Is there anything else you think I should know to better understand your experiences as a Chinese Canadian?

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ANSWER MY QUESTIONS. I WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH A TRANSCRIPT OF YOUR ANSWERS FOR YOU TO REVIEW AND A SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY ONCE IT IS COMPLETED.

Appendix G: Feedback Letter

University of Waterloo

Date

Dear *(Insert Name of Participant)*,

I would like to thank you for your participation in this study entitled “A Taste of Home in the Toronto Chinese Immigrant Community.” As a reminder, the purpose of this study is to create knowledge about how Chinese immigrants preserve a sense of “home” in multicultural Toronto by focusing on Chinese food as important cultural heritage and everyday practice with values and meanings shared in social relationships that shapes the identity of the Chinese Canadian community.

The data collected during interviews will contribute to a better understanding of the appropriate direction of future development in Chinese immigrants integration programs and produce knowledge on intangible cultural heritage for the development of a conversation among recent and long-time immigrants, native-born Canadian, interdisciplinary researchers and policy makers. What I am hoping to achieve in this study is to improve the well-being of not only the marginalized immigrants but also all Canadian citizens.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE#22959). If you have questions for the committee, contact the Chief Ethics Officer, Office of Research Ethics, at 1-519-888-4567 ext. 36005 or ore-ceo@uwaterloo.ca.

For all other questions contact Celia Huang by email as noted below.

Please remember that any data pertaining to you as an individual participant will be kept confidential. Once all the data are collected and analyzed for this project, I plan on sharing this information with the research community through seminars, conferences, presentations, and journal articles. If you are interested in receiving more information regarding the results of this study, or would like a summary of the results, please provide your email address, and when the study is completed, anticipated by August 31, 2019, I will send you the information. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact me by email or telephone as noted below. You may also contact my supervisor Professor Kieran Bonner at 1-519-888-4567 ext. 28242 or kieran.bonner@uwaterloo.ca.

Celia Huang
University of Waterloo
Department of Sociology and Legal Studies
celia.huang@uwaterloo.ca

Appendix H: Organization Information Letter

Department of Sociology and Legal Studies, University of Waterloo

Date

Dear Executive Director:

This letter is to provide information for the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter (CCNCTO) in regard to a project I am conducting as part of my PhD degree in the Department of Sociology and Legal Studies at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, under the supervision of Dr. Kieran Bonner. The title of my research project is “A Taste of Home in the Toronto Chinese Community.” This project explores how Chinese immigrants preserve a sense of “home” in multicultural Toronto by focusing on Chinese food as important cultural heritage and everyday practice with values and meanings shared in social relationships that shape the identity of the Chinese Canadian community.

The purpose of this study is to address the issues of social belonging, cross-cultural communication, and immigrant integration in today’s multicultural Canada. Building on the hypothesis that eating food is one way of reproducing home, the research will address the following research questions: What does home mean to Chinese immigrants in Canada? What are Chinese immigrants’ lived experiences with home? What is the relation between having Chinese food in Canada and “feeling at home”? What intangible elements of Chinese food are preserved in their social relationships? Why do Chinese immigrants eat Chinese food? What do the Chinese-food-nets (the personal networks that include a set of people with whom an individual shares Chinese food) look like for Chinese immigrants in Toronto? How do Chinese immigrants meaningfully participate in and sustain their Chinese-food-nets? Knowledge and information generated from this study will contribute to a better understanding of the appropriate direction of future development of Chinese immigrants’ integration programs. This study aims to open an on-going conversation among recent and long-time immigrants, native-born Canadian, interdisciplinary researchers and policy makers in regard to intangible heritage preservation and barriers faced by Chinese immigrants in Canada.

As we discussed, your participation would involve circulating recruitment information through your Facebook and Twitter pages, the organization’s newsletter, your project coordinators, and other partner Chinese agencies and organizations.

Participation of any participant is completely voluntary. Each participant will make their own independent decision as to whether or not they would like to be involved. All participants will be informed and reminded of their rights to participate or withdraw before any interview, or at any time in the study. Participants will receive an information letter including detailed information about this study, as well as informed consent forms. For your convenience, I have attached the information letter, which provides more details about the study and what will involve for interview participants.

To support the findings of this study, quotations and excerpts from the interviews will be used labelled with pseudonyms to protect the identity of the participants. Names of participants will not appear in the thesis or reports resulting from this study. Participants will not be identifiable, and only described by gender and as first or second generation Chinese immigrants.

I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE#22959). However, the final decision about participation belongs to the CCNCTO and the participants.

If you have any questions regarding this study or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about assisting with the recruitment of potential participants for this study, please contact me at 647-505-9961 or by celia.huang@uwaterloo.ca. You may also contact my supervisor, Dr. Kieran Bonner at 519-888-4567 ext. 28242 or by email kieran.bonner@uwaterloo.ca

I hope that the results of my study will be beneficial to the CCNCTO, to your members, and to the communities of Chinese immigrants across Canada, as well as the broader research community. I thank you in advance for your assistance with this project.

Yours sincerely,

Celia Huang
PhD Candidate
Department of Sociology and Legal Studies
University of Waterloo

Kieran Bonner
Professor
Department of Sociology and Legal Studies
St. Jerome's University
University of Waterloo

Appendix I: Public Recruitment Announcement

Research Study: A Taste of Home in the Toronto Chinese Immigrant Community

Department of Sociology and Legal Studies, University of Waterloo
Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter (CCNCTO)

Are you a Chinese immigrant living in Toronto? Do you eat Chinese food on a regular basis? We would love to learn about your experience with Chinese food and life in Toronto as an immigrant. This research study aims to understand the meanings of home from the perspectives of first and second generation Chinese immigrants with a particular focus on food as an important cultural heritage and everyday practice. The research findings will produce knowledge about Chinese Canadians to start a conversation among recent and long-time immigrants, native-born Canadian, interdisciplinary researchers, policy makers, and service organizations to increase cross-cultural understanding in order to provide better service to the marginalized immigrants and improve well-being to all Canadians in our diverse society.

Who is eligible?

1. You identify yourself as Chinese living in Toronto
2. You were born outside of Canada and speak Mandarin as your native language
OR
You were born in Canada with at least one parent born outside of Canada and speak English as your first language
3. You are 18 years old or above
4. You have experience with eating Chinese food, either at home or at restaurants

What will you be asked to do?

1. You will be asked to participate in a face-to-face interview at the location of your convenience during which you will be asked to fill out a short demographic survey (e.g. age, gender, occupation, income range, etc.) and to answer open-ended questions about your experience with Chinese food in relation to home in Toronto*
2. The interview will take approximately 90 minutes
3. In appreciation for your time, you will receive a \$15 gift card from Tim Hortons

For more information about this study, or to participate in this study, please contact:
Celia Huang at celia.huang@uwaterloo.ca

*Your participation in this study will be considered confidential.

This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee.