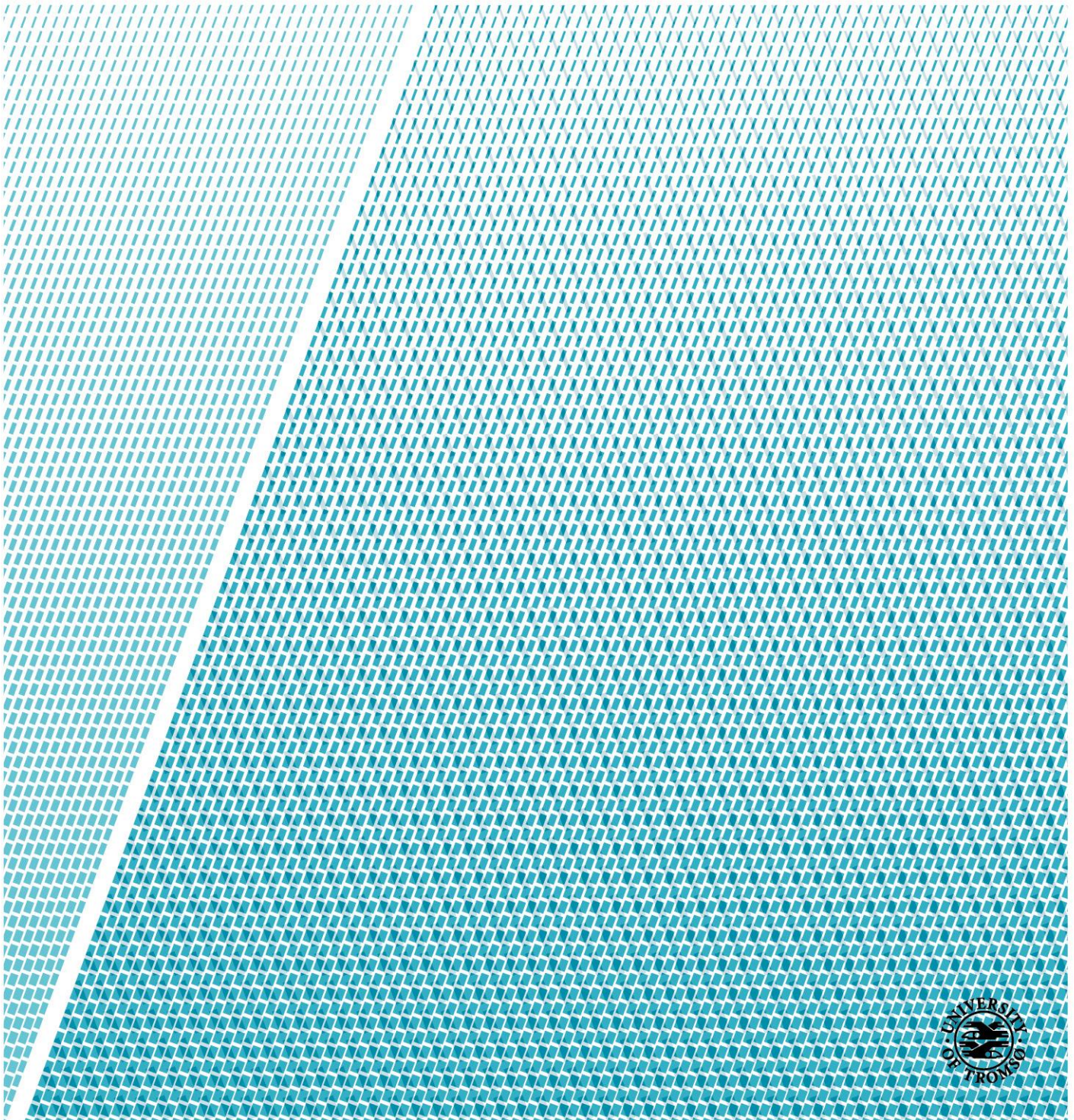


Culture and Souvenir Shopping

*How do Chinese Cultural Values Play a Role
in Outbound Chinese Tourists' Souvenir Shopping?*

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, with the rapid economic growth in China, Chinese cultural values are changing. More and more, modern cultural values and Western values can be identified alongside Chinese traditional cultural values based on Confucianism. This applies not only to Chinese people's way of living, but it is also strongly associated with souvenir shopping when Chinese people travel abroad. The major aim of the study that informs my thesis was to explore and understand how Chinese cultural values play a role in Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping.

A qualitative method was employed to explore Chinese tourists' attitudes and opinions. After finishing trips to North Cape in Northern Norway, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight Chinese tourists who were residents of Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. This qualitative approach allowed the participants to speak relatively freely using their own words, which provided detail and gave rich descriptions in order to explore the phenomenon of souvenir shopping in depth.

My study demonstrated how traditional Chinese cultural values still have a dominant status in people's social life in China. Yet these values can exist alongside modern and Western cultural values, which have gradually been absorbed into Chinese people's culture. Specifically, the analysis and findings show that by presenting souvenirs as gifts to establish and maintain relationships, Chinese people still cherish family values in traditional ways. Moreover, Chinese people are still trying to enhance and improve their social class by purchasing souvenirs, but they value the actual functions of the souvenirs rather than pay for the brand image. Chinese tourists' souvenir purchases do not necessarily decrease with their travel experiences since they always purchase gifts for others and some are collectors. Practical issues regarding souvenir shopping are provided. My study also suggests that it is important to reconsider the concept of the term, souvenir, as well as the definition of local products.

KEYWORDS: Chinese cultural values, outbound Chinese tourist, souvenir shopping, North Cape

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Did you know that today China is the world's largest source of outbound tourists? In 2017, Chinese tourists spent over 115 billion US dollars when they travelled abroad, and close to half of that spending was on shopping (Ctrip & China Tourism Academy, 2018). For some Chinese tourists, shopping is their only motivation to travel abroad (Xiang, 2013). In 2017, China's outbound tourism reached 130 million trips. With a population of 1.4 billion, there is huge potential for continuous growth in this large Chinese outbound travel market. Given these facts, together with Chinese tourists' enthusiasm for shopping abroad, makes it very interesting to study Chinese cultural values and souvenir shopping.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 My Interest in Chinese Cultural Values and Souvenir Shopping

Coming from Beijing, I am Chinese. As a tourist, in 2010, I came to Norway for the first time. My mom and I joined a package tour of four Scandinavian countries (Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Norway). The package tour itinerary scheduled a very short stay in Norway. We only visited Oslo for one day. For almost one year between 2011 to 2012, I had the opportunity to be an international exchange student studying in Oslo. Later on, I ended up in Northern Norway, in Alta, where I continued my studies. During my stay in Norway, I visited many Norwegian cities. During the 2016 Easter holiday, I travelled to North Cape for the first time. I purchased two handmade soaps with a Northern Lights and North Wind theme, a metal letter opener with a North Cape globe, a stuffed moose pencil case with North Cape logo and some postcards to send back home. The soaps and letter opener were for my personal use while the pencil case was for my young cousin in elementary school. Today, because of their beautiful patterns, these two handmade soaps are still displayed on my bookshelf instead of being used as normal soaps. The soaps often generate quite a few compliments from visitors. However, the letter opener, which also lies on the bookshelf is not appreciated so much by some of my Western friends. They accuse me of being old fashioned because I still own a letter opener and actually use it. Letter openers originated from Europe, and have a long history of usage there. In China, they are seldom seen or used, which for me, makes it an exotic souvenir. My Western friends' comments really influenced me to gaze at my souvenir choices. The comments also encouraged me to reflect on those choices, since I usually flatter myself as having good taste. Thus, this initiated my interest in exploring the association between souvenir shopping and different cultural backgrounds.

In the autumn of 2016, I joined a school trip to North Cape and in the winter, I accompanied a Norwegian friend who came from Southern Norway to North Cape. I do not recall making any souvenir purchases on those two trips to North Cape. My only purchase was one cup of hot chocolate, which I bought to warm myself up because it was a windy day. For a student, North Cape is defiantly an expensive place to shop, and my enthusiasm for my own souvenir shopping decreased after multiple visits to the same destination. It was still interesting to me to observe my classmates, my friends and other tourists around me, in how they seemed to search for, and discuss, which items to purchase. I found myself looking for what Chinese tourists chose to purchase. At this point, while my own shopping activity was low, I began to find the phenomenon increasingly interesting, and this interest has been carried with me into my education in tourism studies.

In both, the 2017 and 2018 summer seasons, I worked at the North Cape Souvenir Store as a sales assistant. During these periods in North Cape, I had the opportunity to observe many different nationalities of tourists and their souvenir shopping behaviors, especially Chinese tourists since I was able to talk with them. These many interactions at the gift shop between Chinese customers and me finally determined the focus of my study. There was one incident I would never forget. It involved a Chinese package tour visiting North Cape. On that day, a middle-aged Chinese couple from the group wanted to purchase a jacket. Before they paid, we discovered that the Internet connection was not working so it was not possible to print out the tax-refund form for them. The couple decided not to buy the jacket and left. This was reasonable since they could save money if we had have provided the tax-refund form. Later, they came back to me and told me that their whole group was not going to buy anything from this store since we could not print out the tax-refund forms. The husband explained to me that they only wanted to buy things that could be tax-refunded. At that moment, I was very surprised that he could actually speak on the behalf of the entire group of approximately 30 to 40 people. But later, I understood his role as the “opinion leader” in the Chinese culture. Later, his behavior became even more interesting, when a young man from the group came to the cashier with some postcards and magnets. As we were speaking while the young man was paying, the husband of the previously mentioned couple was very surprised and constantly interjected and reminded the young man that we could not provide the tax-refund form. The young man did not say anything back to him the whole time, I assume he was afraid and respected this “opinion leader”. I have experienced many of these kind of incidents with Chinese customers at work. Bearing in mind the latter, together with the Chinese people’s reputation and enthusiasm for shopping when abroad, finally made me settle on outbound Chinese tourists’ souvenir shopping for my Master’s thesis project. Specifically, I decided to conduct a study in order to explore how Chinese cultural values play a role in outbound Chinese tourists’ souvenir shopping.

1.1.2 Chinese Market

Chinese people have a long-standing habit of being gift givers. A gift is the physical representation of good will and hope. The giving of gifts stands as a symbol for courtesy, respect, appreciation and camaraderie (Mok & Defranco, 2000, p. 107; Yau, Chan, & Lau, 1999, p. 98). Although choosing the correct gift to present takes effort, it has to be financially, physically, culturally and socially accepted. During their overseas trips, Chinese people are still willing to invest their money, time and energy in order to select suitable souvenirs to bring home to family and friends. By 2015, China was the world's largest outbound tourism market with 117 million trips in total with a nine percent year-on-year increase. The formidable growth in the number of Chinese tourists in Norway is expected to continue (Visit Norway, 2015). In 2016, Chinese tourists were the biggest per capita spenders, and in the 12 months prior to 2015 their expenditure increased by 26% to reach 292 billion US dollars (UNWTO, 2016). In the first half of this year (2018), the number of China's outbound tourism trips has reached 71.31 million trips, there were up 15% over 2017. Further, earlier information released by the National Immigration Administration showed that in the first half of 2018, residents from Mainland China applied for 164.16 million passports for private purposes, a growth of 21% over the previous year (Travel China Guide, 2018). Due to rapid economic growth and huge population numbers, all of these statistics reveal that the Chinese market is expanding every year. And, there still exists enormous potential for further growth, which makes Chinese tourists and their shopping behaviors a very interesting area of study.

1.2 Research Question

My overarching research question for this Master's thesis was:

How do Chinese cultural values play a role in outbound Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping?

Throughout this thesis, I intend to explore and create a better understanding of how Chinese cultural values play a role in outbound Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping.

The relationship between Chinese culture and souvenir shopping is complex and multidimensional (Fan, 2000, p. 3)¹. Chinese culture is the beliefs, norms, customs shared by Chinese people, it influences a person's behavior towards family, friends, consumption and other important concept and processes, including souvenir shopping (Yau et al., 1999, p. 99). Souvenirs are regarded as one of the most significant materials, and tangible markers and mementos of travelling experiences and memories.

¹ In this thesis, I follow recent APA guidelines which encourage writers to provide the page number even the text was paraphrased.

Slightly different to the English word “souvenir”, the word souvenir in Chinese has two meanings: one means items with commemorative value, called *Ji Nian Pin*; the other means gifts, called *Ban Shou Li* (L. Lin, 2017). These two meanings indicate the concept of souvenir is inherently bound with Chinese cultural values. In this study, the souvenirs I study are the ones Chinese tourists purchased during their overseas trips, by the concept of the term souvenirs, I leave to participants to decide. Chinese tourists’ souvenir choices vary and are related to many reasons; however, this study does not aim to classify and present a general overview of souvenir shopping patterns and motivations. Instead my aim is to explore the complexities of Chinese tourists’ souvenir shopping processes, and to analyze tourists’ own accounts of their shopping in light of a knowledge of Chinese cultural values.

A qualitative methodology was employed in this study to explore the phenomenon of outbound Chinese tourists’ souvenir shopping. The empirical materials were provided via semi-structured online interviews conducted with Chinese tourists who had visited North Cape during the summer of 2017. Through such an approach, I was able to learn about Chinese tourists’ thoughts regarding their souvenir shopping experiences. This, in turn, helped me better understand how Chinese cultural values play a role in their souvenir shopping.

1.3 Structure of the Thesis

This first chapter presents my own background and experiences, which initiated my interest in this topic, as well as the facts that China is the world’s largest source of outbound tourists, and this source is still rapidly growing. Then, the research question was presented along with the objectives of my study.

Chapter 2 presents the literature review on the topic of Chinese cultural values and Chinese tourists’ souvenir shopping, which provides a theoretical framework for this study.

Chapter 3 presents my methodological approach. I explain the choice of research method, how I selected my participants and conducted the qualitative interviews along with a presentation of the analysis procedures, ethical issues and consideration of my role as the researcher.

Chapter 4 presents the findings and discussion. I analyze the empirical materials, and present them as the four different themes that I had developed.

Chapter 5 provides a general conclusion. I sum up the most important parts of my research along with a few practical and academic suggestions for further research. I explain how it was to explore and understand my research question, and how it will be valuable and helpful to others.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on the research question “*How does Chinese cultural values play a role in outbound Chinese tourists’ souvenir shopping?*”, relevant theories and literature that I used to prepare for my thesis are explained in this chapter. First of all, I link the two notions of culture and souvenir shopping together. Second, I consider the Chinese cultural values as defined by different researchers, and emphasize the values, which are fundamental for my study. I acknowledge that these values can vary. Third, I emphasize four points which are significant to understanding Chinese cultural values and outbound Chinese tourists’ souvenir shopping. I also discuss the concept of tourist shopping, especially focusing on souvenir shopping, and Chinese tourists’ souvenir shopping in particular.

2.1 Culture and Souvenir Shopping

“A culture is a group of people sharing common beliefs, norms and customs” (Yau et al., 1999, p. 99). “Culture is the social force of accumulation, inheritance and transmission of knowledge and artifacts” (Hunter, 2012, p. 82). Further, culture is also a collective experience because it is shared with people who live in and experience the same social environments (Martin & Nakayama, 2013, p. 94). A society’s culture offers a “dynamic blueprint” for people’s action (Arnould, Price, & Zinkhan, 2004, p. 74), people’s attitudes and behaviour regarding their families and friends, workplace, education, consumption are influence by their own culture (Yau et al., 1999, p. 99). When it comes to souvenir shopping, tourists’ own national, ethnic and cultural background impact their shopping experience and behaviour (Kim & Littrell, 2001; Tosun, Temizkan, Timothy, & Fyall, 2007). This is a central point in a project like mine, which focus on how cultural values play a role in souvenir shopping.

Culture, however, is not stationary but dynamic (Fan, 2000), and so are cultural values. Cultural values are likewise changing and shifting all the time because they generally have their “ecological and subsistent” foundation as well as “historical development” (Yau et al., 1999, p. 112). Different economic, social and cultural phenomena are also reflected in souvenirs (Collins-Kreiner & Zins, 2011, p. 17) and souvenir shopping. Studies show that a large number of souvenir shopping motivations and behaviors are influenced by each tourist’s various social custom and culture background (K. S. Park & Reisinger, 2009; M. K. Park, 2000). Therefore, if one wants to understand Chinese cultural values from the perspective of Chinese tourists, studying their souvenir shopping is the breakthrough point. Yet, the association between Chinese culture and souvenir shopping is complex and multidimensional (Fan, 2000, p. 3). Even if things are changing, however, there some cultural aspects that are relatively consistent over time. This means that when I look at souvenir shopping in a research project like this, it is at best – a snapshot. Everything is changing, and tomorrow the snapshot might look different.

2.2 Chinese Cultural Values

To better understand Chinese tourists and their shopping, a thorough understanding of Chinese cultural values is required. Consenting that culture is dynamic, the challenge is not only what Chinese cultural values are, but also where they apply. In 1988, Yau (1988, p. 56) admitted that the culture in Taiwan and Hong Kong already influenced by western thoughts and ideology at that time. However, he noted that Hong Kong's success with its unique economy was also due to *harmony* within traditional Chinese cultural values (Yau, 1988, p. 45). In 1997, Hong Kong reverted back to Chinese sovereignty as a Special Administrative Region of China. Even though there are great differences between the Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan due to the political and economic systems as well as historical reasons, Fan (2000, p. 3) argued Chinese people were still living under the influence of certain transitional Chinese cultural values wherever they live even outside Asia, and last for generations. It is the Chinese culture, which provides Chinese people their "basic identity", and five thousand years time-honored history and Chinese language casted the traditional Chinese cultural values to be "unique and consistent" (Fan, 2000, p. 4).

For my study, one of the most important frameworks for understanding cultural values comes from Hofstede's (1980), work entitled *Culture's Consequences* (first edition), which has been translated into seventeen languages, and later developed into many more editions. It is one of the most broadly cited and commonly practiced cultural theories for investigating Chinese tourists in association with Chinese culture (J. Li & Lu, 2016; Mok & Defranco, 2000). Specifically, his work has four cultural dimensions: 1) Power Distance; 2) Individualism versus Collectivism; 3) Masculinity versus Femininity; and 4) Uncertainty Avoidance.

In order to understand different Chinese cultural values in this study, it is necessary to explore Hofstede's (2001) different culture dimensions in details. First, he pointed that the *large-power-distance* situation that is evident in Chinese culture. That is, in the family, children are expected to be obedient towards their parents, neither family nor school would encourage children's independent behavior (Hofstede, 2001). As a personal experience, children would even receive punishment regarding such behaviors. Likewise, Lin and Fu's (1990) study shows that Chinese parents score high on both encouragement of independence and control in childrearing. Strong parental control indicates that child is bringing up to be obedient by her/his parents, therefore they are most likely growing up to be a loyal person (Kagitçibasi, 1996, p. 183). It is probably not surprising that research shows that compare with Western consumers, Chinese consumers generally are more loyal to brand (Yau, 1988, p. 53). According to Hofstede (2001, p. 99), children also learn respect by watching siblings, classmates and others showing it. Such respect for parents and elders lasts through Chinese people's entire life, which means as long as their parents are still alive, they need to show respect towards them, as well as children are

expected to take care of their parents when they are in old age (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 51). In addition, Chinese people are much more likely to be influenced by opinion leaders with respect to making purchase decisions, including their parents, elders and authoritarian types (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 233; Yau, 1988, p. 49), just like the husband I mentioned earlier in the Introduction Chapter. Authoritarian types in the souvenir shopping setting could be the tour leader or tour guide, thus, Chinese tourists generally would expect and appreciate recommendations and suggestions regarding shopping locations and special souvenirs worth purchasing from tour guides (Mok & Defranco, 2000, p. 106).

Second, Hofstede (2001) claimed that in a *collectivist* family which is dominated in Chinese culture, children were taught to learn to consider as “we” instead of “I”, and harmony should always be maintained within the group. One concept produced from a collectivist family is *face* (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005), this is a Chinese concept which does not exist in English language. When a person loses face, which means his face is harmed, so she/he is being humiliated and a sense of shame arises (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 89), and save each other’s face is one of the important ways to maintain harmony of interpersonal relationship. I will explore this issue in greater detail in the following section.

In Hofstede and Hofstede’s (2005) study, China ranked relatively medium to high on *masculinity* and medium to low on *uncertainty avoidance*, which do not go strongly to each direction. Hence, we will see Chinese tourists behave dually on these two perspectives as will be demonstrated in later chapters. In *masculine* cultures, when it comes to shopping in general, status purchases are generally more frequent (Hofstede, 2001, p. 311). According to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005, p. 140), people in masculine cultures would purchase more expensive and luxury-class products, they tend to care more about their car brand and how much power the engine has; they often discover that foreign goods are far more attractive than domestic brand products and when people go on leisure trips, they would purchase tickets to fly in business class. Last not the least, the notion of *uncertainty avoidance* defined by Hofstede (1980) is not the same as risk avoidance, which means people have the tendency to avoid the activities or events with unknown outcomes, but not necessarily risk. With respect to shopping, weak uncertainty avoidance societies tend to shop for convenience, such as purchase secondhand cars and DIY in wallpapering or home painting. On the contrary, strong uncertainty avoidance culture would like to purchase new car and use specialists at home (Hofstede, 2001, p. 170).

Even though Hofstede’s framework is significant to my study, it is important to know that it has received some valid criticisms. Specifically, the sample of Hofstede’s (1980) study did not include any participants from Mainland China (J. Li & Lu, 2016, p. 120), the survey participants come from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore. Furthermore, there is concern regarding Hofstede’s (1980) four dimensions of cultural values in that they may be culturally constrained since they were developed using Western world perspectives (The Chinese Culture Connection, 1987). Subsequently, the Chinese value

survey (CVS) was constructed to search for dimensions of values by creating an Eastern instrument based on Chinese tradition (The Chinese Culture Connection, 1987). Results demonstrate that values overlapped and strongly interrelated with Hofstede's (1980) dimensions. However, one dimension *Confucian work dynamism*, did not correlate with any of the Hofstede's (1980) dimensions. It is a particularly important factor since this dimension locates the Japan and Four (economic) Asian Tigers of Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea and Singapore at the top end of the scale (The Chinese Culture Connection, 1987). As a consequence, researchers should be aware of the different perspectives of the East and West and how matters are analyzed and considered. Subsequently, for this thesis and its related research, my Chinese identity is especially useful.

Later, Hofstede (2001) added a fifth dimension *short-term orientation versus long-term orientation* to his earlier ones. Mainland China was ranked at the top of long-term-oriented cultures, followed by Hong Kong and Taiwan in second and third place. This ranking implies Chinese people exhibit "persistence and thrift to personal stability and respect for tradition" (p. 351). However, this fifth dimension has been criticized that "its utility is limited since it treated two interrelated values as opponent parts of a spectrum" (J. Li & Lu, 2016, p. 121). Likewise, I also think that some so-called long-term orientation performances in China is neither accurate nor still applicable today, as rapid economic growth has changed Chinese people's way of living. For instance, Hofstede (2001) stated that long-term oriented people think leisure time is not so important, but China's booming tourism market says otherwise. It might have been true at the time of Hofstede's writing, but now more and more Chinese people want to invest in leisure. I will discuss this further in the following section. That being said, the foundation of this dimension is crucial, for it is based on items reminiscent of the teaching of Confucius (Hofstede, 2001). Confucianism "has served as the cornerstone of traditional Chinese culture" (Fu, Cai, & Lehto, 2015, p. 182). It is undisputedly the most influential thought, and today, still provides guidelines for proper behavior in Chinese life (Fan, 2000; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Mok & Defranco, 2000; Qian, Razzaque, & Ah Keng, 2007).

In addition, Yau (1988) noted that Confucianism is the foundation of Chinese cultural values, therefore, most of the traditional Chinese cultural values are developed from "interpersonal relationships and social orientations" (p. 45). Therefore, in order to describe Chinese culture in the most suitable way, Yau (1988) adopted the value-orientation model of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961). Yau (1988, p. 46) classified Chinese cultural values into five dimensions: man-nature orientation (harmony with the nature, *Yuarn*), man-himself orientation (abasement and situation-orientation), relational orientation (respect for authority, interdependence, group-orientation and face), time orientation (continuity and past-time orientation), and personal activity orientation (the doctrine of the mean and harmony with others). In his classification, Yau (1988) borrowed some Chinese words to describe the Chinese cultural values, such as *yuarn*, *lien* and *mien-tsu*, because an English term can have a different meaning in a Chinese situation.

In China, the reform and opening-up policy started in 1978 not only had a great impact on Chinese economic and social development and people's lives, but also reshaped the Chinese cultural values (Fan, 2000; Mok & Defranco, 2000). Besides traditional culture and communist ideology, Fan (2000) indicated that there was another major Chinese cultural element in contemporary China, which is Western values. Likewise, Zhou, Zhang, and Edelman (2013) argued that Chinese people's current level of understanding traditional Chinese culture was dropping and that people were becoming more and more apathetic to traditional culture. This had also proved to be the case in some other rapidly developing countries (Zhou et al., 2013, p. 107). Nevertheless, in the 1980s, Yau (1988) believed that some traditional Chinese values were still held by young Chinese. Instead of searching for individualism and independence, Winter (2009) proffered that tourism in contemporary Asia is still constrained in its "collective identities and communal affinities" (p. 109).

In more recent studies, Hsu and Huang (2016) tried to examine contemporary predominant cultural values in China and provided a timely update version of Chinese cultural values. They indicated that cultural values that exist in contemporary China could be divided into two groups, which is traditional cultural values and modern cultural values. These values can be also classified items into instrumental values, terminal values and interpersonal values. Among Hsu and Huang's (2016) 40 Chinese cultural values, 15 of them are identified as modern values: confidence, competitiveness and competence, respect for legal practices, convenience, easy and comfortable, fame and fortune, fashion, indulgence, leisure, liberation, live in the moment, ostentation, quality of life, self-interest and worship foreign cultures. On the contrary to Winter (2009), their finding suggests Chinese people's pursuit of life are becoming "less collectivistic and more individualistic" (Hsu & Huang, 2016, p. 240).

This section has provided a review of different concepts and theories regarding Chinese cultural values from different time periods. It also highlighted the withstanding and changing nature of Chinese cultural values. However, as culture changes, so do cultural values. In fact, nowadays, Chinese cultural values have undergone rapid change. Current Chinese cultural values are a snapshot of today's Chinese society. Chinese culture is moving forward while also staying the same. Researchers need to follow and stay in tune with such changes, in order to further understand the dynamics of Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping.

2.2.1 Self and Other

To better understand Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping, first researchers need to know about the concept of self and other in Chinese culture. Self-concept varies both cross-culturally and historically, and so the self is configured diversely in different cultures (Arnould et al., 2004). In contrast to the Chinese self, Euro-American self that strives for a high degree of self-reliance and independence; its

characteristics are “individualism, autonomy and self-assertion, and doing your own thing” (Arnould et al., 2004, p. 419). The traditional Chinese self, however, would prioritize significant others and their interest before individuals (Arnould et al., 2004, p. 419). The self is seen as *interdependent* in the Chinese culture, a person’s identity is formed around family, the professional and in social relationships, and is also found in the culture itself that people learn and immerse themselves into.

To the contrary of the Euro-American independent self, Markus and Kitayama (1991, p. 227) claimed that the Chinese interdependent self is meaningful and complete when it is presented in the appropriate social relationship. As a consequence, interdependent self would act principally according to the predicted expectations of others and unspoken rules of the society, instead of acting on their own wishes or personal attributes (Yang, 1981). Figure 1 reveals the interdependent view of the Chinese self. According to Markus and Kitayama (1991, p. 227), the relationship between interdependent self and others makes each individual very close and more connected to each other, thus, people would naturally look for a way to fit in with significant others within their social context in order to become a part of the interpersonal relationships and try their best to maintain harmony between each personal and social element.

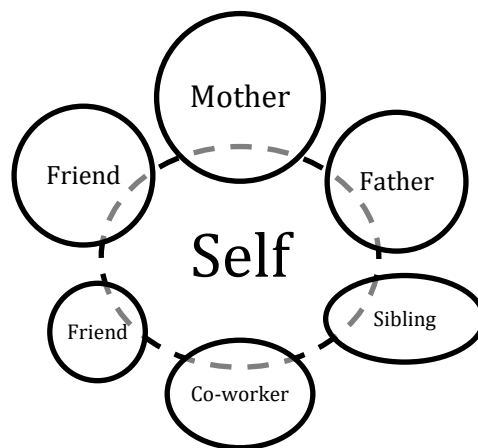


Figure 1 Interdependent View of Self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991)

In an interdependent view, more than merely embracing others into the definition of self-concept, as a matter of fact, the other is much more importance and carry more weight which profoundly influences individual’s own behavior (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 229). Additionally, according to Markus and Kitayama (1991, p. 229), the interdependent self actually has the ability and is willing to consider other people’ feeling and thoughts, they are capable of absorbing the information without being told, in order to satisfy others and achieve their goals. Likewise, Mok and Defranco (2000, p. 108) also indicated that Chinese people determine their identities with reference to others around them, therefore, Chinese individuals would employ group goals and beliefs as one’s own in order to receive reciprocity and

mutual benefit, as well as to maintain harmony within the group. This characteristic is commonly defined as *group orientation* as one of the Chinese cultural values.

Moreover, the interdependent self-concept also affects individual with respect to decision-making (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). For instance, Sparks and Pan (2009) point out that Chinese tourists are more likely to join the activity when other people like friends, family, co-workers or travel agents think it is a positive thing to do. In addition, Jinkins (2016) claims that Chinese people would observe other's possession of material, such as properties, cars, clothes, food and so on, all kinds of visible part of their consumption, in order to establish their judgment on other people. Since Chinese people care about other people's opinions, especially from the ones are the same age or have same social class; they will take other people's beliefs into consideration when comes to money spending, especially on conspicuous consumption.

The interdependent version of self and other concepts provides us with a fundamental understanding of Chinese cultural values, as well as a prospect for the next section on relationships. As I conducted my study of human beings and their cultural backgrounds, it became important to understand the development of people through their upbringing, which is colored by society. Knowing this will assist in understanding people's souvenir shopping in adult life.

2.2.2 Relationships

To better understand how Chinese cultural values play a role in Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping, there are several factors of Chinese cultural values, which have to be emphasized. First of all, many researchers indicate the significance of relationships among all the Chinese cultural values (Fan, 2000; Hsu & Huang, 2016; Mok & Defranco, 2000; Qian et al., 2007; Yau, 1988; Yau et al., 1999). Relationship translates into Chinese as *Guanxi*, which contains two Chinese characters which are *guan* and *xi* that mean "relating" and "bonding" respectively. Hence, as a major dynamic force in the Chinese society, *guanxi* practically refers to the social relationship between two people under a specific bonding (Yau et al., 1999, p. 101). Furthermore, Confucius defined five basic human relationships and principles for each relationship, called *Wulun*: sovereign and subject, father and son, husband and wife, elder and younger brothers, friend and friend (Fan, 2000; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Mok & Defranco, 2000). Chinese people observe other people's behaviour in the society and act according to the norm prescribed for each bond, and these bonds have guided Chinese people's social behavior within the family, at school and at work for generations (Yau et al., 1999, p. 102). For instance, a traditional Chinese male would consider himself and act as a father, a son, a husband, a brother, but rarely as myself (Arnould et al., 2004, p. 419). Furthermore, according to Confucius, the family is the prototype of all social organizations (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005), and usually when refers to family in Chinese, it means more

than just a father, a mother and children, it goes beyond immediate family members. For Chinese people, family welfare is of more importance than individual welfare (Lowe & Corkindale, 1998, p. 846), and Chinese children were taught that sometimes one's personal interest has to be sacrificed if benefit is meant for the welfare of the entire group (Lowe & Corkindale, 1998; Yau, 1988, p. 52). In other words, a person is not primarily an individual; rather, she or he is a member of a family (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 209). It is important for Chinese people to spend quality time and communicate with parents regularly, which are ways to fulfill the role of daughter or son, in order to cultivate relationships within family members (Fu et al., 2015, p. 189).

The importance of relationships expresses the importance of interdependence, and the value of interdependence is particularly meaningful to the study of souvenir shopping as the purpose of gift giving (Yau, 1988, p. 52). According to Joy (2001, p. 234), the souvenir Chinese tourists purchased from a trip meant to giving to others is a maintenance gift which is often used to show care, respect and build network. As I was interested in how Chinese cultural values play a role in Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping, relationships—one of the most essential and fundamental Chinese cultural values, perfectly linked with souvenir shopping because the purchase of gifts for others establishes or maintains relationships. For Chinese people, gift giving is one of the common ways to build up relationships with friends, which is explained in the next section.

2.2.3 Gift Consumption

Tourism as an arena creates an endless range of possibilities for souvenir development that also functions well as gifts (Arnould et al., 2004, p. 696). As I mentioned in the Introduction chapter, the word souvenir in Chinese has two meanings. One of them is called *Ban Shou Li*, which specifically means the souvenir gifts that are given to the family and friends upon returning from a vacation. Gift-giving for family and friends is one of the important motivations for Chinese tourists to make souvenirs purchases (F. Li & Ryan, 2018). Along with being the most common object of establishing and maintaining relationships with others, it is natural that when we are studying souvenirs in a Chinese context, gifts have significant status. Thus, gift purchasing and giving is one of the most frequently mentioned and studied social activities amidst Chinese people (Yau et al., 1999).

According to Appadurai (1986, p. 11), “gifts, and the spirit of reciprocity, sociability and spontaneity in which they are typically exchanges, usually are starkly opposed to the profit-oriented, self-centered, and calculated spirit that fires the circulation of commodities” (p. 11). The term, gift, is mainly defined as the circulation of products of different categories that is meant to promote relationships, and the bonding between people (Joy, 2001, p. 239). Establishing and maintain relationship via gift giving would take time and space, and includes giving, receiving, and reciprocating three different phases (Joy, 2001). Gift

giving encourages giving back, which in turn stimulates further giving because of the “norm of reciprocity” (Arnould et al., 2004, p. 690). Therefore, Joy (2001) indicated that the relationship is not established or enhanced until the gift recipient returns an appropriate gift back to the giver.

In accordance with different cultural norms, gift giving is like a series of actions in a set order that often represent the symbolic meanings and connections people share (Arnould et al., 2004, p. 688; Belk, 1995). Although gift giving is universal, the language and rituals associated with gift giving are culturally specific (Arnould et al., 2004, p. 689). According to Qian et al. (2007, p. 222), the choice of gift not only depends on personal values and motivations for gift-giving, it is also a function of cultural values. Xu and McGehee’s (2012) study shows that purchasing gifts for family and friends is not only an important motivation to shop abroad for Chinese people, but also a cultural norm in Eastern cultures. It is considered impolite if a tourist does not bring back any food specialty to share with colleagues when returning to work after travel in both Japan and South Korea, because they feel a moral obligation toward colleagues and superiors who know about their vacation (M. K. Park, 2000). Similarly, tourists would feel guilt and shame if they do not give any gifts to their family and friends (M. K. Park, 2000). According to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005, p. 55), Japan, South Korea and China are all classified as *large-power-distance* countries, thus, in the workplaces, the inequality between a superior and subordinate is higher. This inequality also exists as a system of hierarchy (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Hence, not unexpectedly, buying souvenirs for either superior or normal colleagues after travelling assists in maintaining harmony in working environments. In addition, since Chinese culture regards parents as superior to children in both gift-giving roles (givers and receivers), when parents receive gifts from their children who is already adults at any occasions, they do not have to reciprocate (Joy, 2001).

Timothy (2005, p. 109) pointed out that tourists tend to buy larger and more expensive souvenirs for themselves but cheaper souvenirs for their family and friends at home in general. Nevertheless, differing from Western societies, Yau (1988, p. 52) indicated that Chinese people believe that the price of the gift should be at least high enough to accord to the giver’s level of income in order to show her/his sincerity, so that the giver is considered *giving face* to the recipient and *gain face* in the meantime. On the other hand, the recipient is expected to receive gifts that match their level of income and social status, because gift is also a symbol of the givers’ understanding of the recipients’ social status in China (Yau et al., 1999). Therefore, gift does not only indicate the image and intention of the giver her/himself, but also those who receive the gift (Yau et al., 1999, p. 105). According to Lowe and Corkindale (1998, p. 850), Chinese people would rather spend more money on a socially accepted gift, to be able to follow the existing social norms. However, the most expensive gift is not always the most appropriate gift since offering an expensive gift usually places pressure on the recipient to return (Joy, 2001, p. 250). If one is presenting a gift at a workplace or in a business setting, it could raise suspicions around the purpose of the gift as it may be considered a bribe. In addition, Yau et al. (1999, p. 98) noted that it is significant

that gift givers select the most appropriate presents. When someone does you a favor, the person performing it should be compensated materially, though what weighs the most is the symbol of thoughtfulness rather than the monetary value of the gift. Therefore, the *appropriateness as a gift* is identified as one of the major criteria for Chinese to purchase a souvenir in terms of a particular relationship (M. Li & Cai, 2008). On the other hand, when it comes to buying a gift for close friend, it seems that either facework or financial equivalence is not so essential; yet, “an expensive gift either communicates the feelings of the giver, exceeds an earlier gift, or reflects the closeness of the relationship between giver and receiver” (Joy, 2001, p. 246). Therefore, it is not hard to imagine that the gift giver often experiences relief after buying the gift since it is so difficult to find the correct gift (Joy, 2001).

Nowadays, even though the number of outbound tourists from China is growing, only quite a few of the entire population have the opportunity to travel abroad (Guo, Kim, & Timothy, 2007, p. 322). Therefore, when someone is able to travel abroad, she/he often ends up purchasing many souvenirs for their extended network of family and friends. Souvenirs are particularly important for Chinese not only do souvenirs legitimize their visit but also souvenirs help to enhance their social relationships (Wong & Cheng, 2014).

Finally, the concept of self-gifts has been focused on in some related tourism research in the Western world (Belk, 1995). Many Euro-Americans give themselves presents or rewards, that is, they think of certain purchases or consumption activities as gifts for themselves. However, such self-gift behavior does not seem to be recognized in China (Arnould et al., 2004, pp. 408, 694) due to the different understanding of self-concept in Chinese culture and whether it is appropriate to be pursuing individual happiness in the traditional way of thinking. However, such circumstance is not documented does not necessarily means that it is not exist among Chinese people exposed to modernization and globalization. All of the above are very helpful to understand Chinese tourists souvenir shopping choices when it comes to shopping for either themselves or others for gifts.

2.2.4 Materialism and Conspicuous Consumption

In the previously mentioned Hsu and Huang’s (2016) Chinese cultural values system, *thrift* and *ostentation*, two very opposite values are both defined as Chinese cultural values. While thrift is a traditional Chinese value; ostentation is a modern Chinese value. *Ostentation and materialism* seem very abnormal to be Chinese cultural values since people are educated to be thrifty, and conspicuous consumption is even a taboo according to Confucius (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Relatedly, studies reveal that the growing number in consumer spending and economic power in Asian societies, are highly

related with their consumers' cultural background (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Podoshen, Li, & Zhang, 2011).

According to Arnould et al. (2004), materialism is “a terminal value defined as the importance a consumer attaches to worldly possessions or as a consumption-based orientation to happiness seeking” (p. 86). Generally, materialism has been seen as a Western trait that achieved an elevated place with the development of industrial and postindustrial life (Arnould et al., 2004). Some research also shows a high level of materialism in urban samples in non-Western cultures (Guo et al., 2007; K. S. Park & Reisinger, 2009; Podoshen et al., 2011; Prayag, Cohen, & Yan, 2015). Conspicuous consumption of status symbols by customers is a frequent by-product of economic development, it is customers possessing and strutting expensive luxury goods and services in order to demonstrate their purchasing power (Arnould et al., 2004, p. 93). As materialism is also seeking for happiness, when it comes to purchasing luxury goods while travelling, Asian tourists actually value the pleasure much more than the actual material products obtained (K. S. Park & Reisinger, 2009).

Alarmingly, the rapid economic growth is changing the traditional cultural values in China, it is especially reflected on the attitudes of materialistic and the practice on conspicuous consumption (Podoshen et al., 2011). Podoshen et al. (2011) found that young Chinese adults scored higher in both materialism and conspicuous consumption than young American adult consumers, and it appears both materialism and conspicuous consumption are on the rise amidst urban Chinese consumers which indicates the Confucian way of life in China could face some major challenges in the future. Therefore, Podoshen et al. (2011) expressed concern regarding who will provide and take care of Chinese elders when their children have spent their savings on conspicuous consumer goods. However, Kagitçibasi (1996, p. 185) argued that it probably will not turn into a huge issue in the short term, since cultural lag may slow down the process of change. Chinese children are taught to respect parents and by law, they have the responsibility to take care of their parents when they are in their old age both physically and financially, thus, they should always save and have spare money for their parents. Apart from their doubts, Podoshen et al. (2011, p. 23) also believed it might be possible for Chinese families to simultaneously become consumers who love possession of luxury products as well as respect their family traditions because traditional Chinese values could run parallel to materialism and conspicuous consumption. While Podoshen et al. (2011) struggled as to whether materialism and conspicuous consumption would sabotage, facilitate or just run parallel to the traditional Chinese values, Hsu and Huang (2016) identified *Ostentation*, *Self-interest* and *Quality of life* as modern Chinese cultural values.

On the other hand, Podoshen et al. (2011) saw the continued outpouring in materialism and conspicuous consumption in Chinese culture was actually developed by interdependent Chinese culture because Chinese people may feel that they have to engage in this type of behavior in order to maintain status in

the community. Likewise, Chen and Aung (2003) noted that the concept of face, collectivism, power distance and competitiveness are Chinese cultural orientations that motivate conspicuous consumption among Chinese consumers. In addition, Chen, Aung, Zhou, and Kanetkar (2005, p. 125) also found that it is Chinese culture which engaged Chinese customers to be ostentatious and materialistic, and they strongly prefer status-orientated products, such as luxury brands. Even more interesting, their results reveal that a higher usage of the English language and a higher exposure to English mass media would decrease Chinese identification and conspicuous consumption (Chen et al., 2005). Therefore, they concluded that there is an extremely strong correlation between Chinese identification and conspicuous consumption. Furthermore, Podoshen et al. (2011) worried that with the interdependent perspective of the Chinese self-concept on the national scale, it is highly possible that more and more materialistic values would spring up on Chinese people. Their concern is not so surprising since conspicuous consumption seems already to have had a consecutive history in China. The San Da Jian, translated into English as “three big items”, which are usually the symbols of their owner’s social status and evidence of economic strength. During the 1960s and 1970s, they were watches, bicycles, and sewing machines. In the 1980s, they were color televisions, refrigerators, and washing machines. When we reached the 1990s, the three big items were telephones, air conditioners, and VCRs (Yan, 1997). With the rapidly growing economy in China, conspicuous consumption merchandise may escalate from only common household whitegoods to various kinds of luxury brand products.

This section has demonstrated a divisive description of Chinese tourists’ souvenir shopping behaviors, which evidences cultural values are indeed dynamic and China is changing rapidly. Therefore, despite the collectivist nature of Chinese culture, it is essential to understand that not every Chinese tourist behaves in the same way when it comes to souvenir shopping.

2.3 Tourist Shopping

Shopping is one of the oldest activities associated with travel, and one of the most common events and essential elements during travel (Tosun et al., 2007). Shopping offers tourists an opportunity to be able to encounter with cultural items and symbols closely and intimately, which is considered a relaxed leisure activity for tourists during the trip (Timothy, 2005, p. 104). Meanwhile, tourists can use shopping as a tool and channel to adopt to the new culture and improve their capability to deal with it (Timothy, 2005, p. 105). Shopping is also a preferred activity to kill time so that tourists have something to do when they are bored, or when there is bad weather at the destination (Timothy, 2005, pp. 83-84).

For many tourists, the trip is not complete without the purchase of souvenirs, whether they are shopping for themselves or as gifts for family and friends back home; sometimes, shopping is their major and only motivation to visit certain destinations (Goss, 2004; Timothy, 2005; Xiang, 2013). Tourists spend

their time on shopping during travelling is not only searching for a tangible proof of their trip, but also use the objects as way to enhance and complete their intangible tourism experience (Ferdinand & Williams, 2010, p. 207). A well-managed tourist shopping experience would leave a deep impression on tourists, in order to create a better image of the destination as a whole (Tosun et al., 2007). It is crucial for many destinations like North Cape, they only have one-time chance to build relationship between tourists and themselves since most of the tourists are only visiting such type of destination once in their entire life, which once again reveals the significance of studying tourists shopping for tourism studies. If one wants to understand Chinese cultural values through Chinese tourists, studying their shopping is a breakthrough point.

2.3.1 Souvenir Shopping

Souvenir is considered as “one of the most significant materials, and tangible markers and mementos of travelling experiences and memories, they play a significant role in mediating cultural interaction between tourists and host people” (H. Y. Park, 2014, p. 73). Tourists cannot hold on to the unordinary experience by nature, but they can grasp the souvenir which captures and freezes it (Gordon, 1986). Furthermore, the souvenir not only provides tourists a reminder of their extraordinary experiences during the trip but also a tangible evidence of where they have been, which makes the intangible experiences tangible to extend or to exhibit their tourism experiences (Gordon, 1986; Hitchcock, 2000; Kong & Chang, 2016; Morgan & Pritchard, 2005; Swanson & Horridge, 2006; Timothy, 2005).

Souvenirs are as vital to tourists as to tourist destinations. For tourists, during their trip, the most common place to purchase souvenirs is at a souvenir store or a gift shop. According to Matheusik (2001), many destination managers recognize the importance of having a gift shop at the destination. Gift shop as one integral part of the whole destination, would keep tourists spending more time at the destination by providing them with an opportunity to purchase souvenirs, thus, it is an important source of profits and a unique selling point to distinguish one location from another.

To better understanding souvenir shopping, a basic knowledge of a souvenir is required. Morgan and Pritchard (2005) believe that souvenirs are signifiers of self, touchstones of memory, material transformations and trajectories. Likewise, Goss (2004, p. 333) pointed out that souvenirs not only evoke tourists’ memories of a particular destination they visited, but also evoke a collective memories of the fascination of the world. A good souvenir is not only creative and promotes the destination, but it also has the culture well preserved (Hunter, 2012), and that is where their educational function comes in. For instance, the products selling at the Viking market could educate both tourists and local Norwegians in their own history, craftsmanship, and culture (Halewood & Hannam, 2001, p. 577). Shan Jixiang (curator of the Palace Museum, Beijing, China) also said that cultural and creative souvenirs can “serve

as a carrier to transmit knowledge to the younger generation and make it easier for them to understand the culture and history” (L. Li, 2014). This means souvenirs can be multifunctional; they serve each tourist with her/his own individual purpose.

Gordon (1986, pp. 140-144) identified five types of souvenirs. The first are *pictorial images*, which are the most common type of contemporary souvenir, like postcards, photographs and books. The second are *piece-of-the-rock* souvenirs, they are usually natural material or objects saved from a natural environment, such as rocks, shells, plants, wood, fossils and pinecones. *Symbolic shorthand* souvenirs are the third type. They usually are manufactured items that represent images of the place where they are purchased, such as replicas of famous attractions and miniature images. *Markers* are souvenirs that in themselves have no reference to a particular place or event, but are marked with words and logos indicated the purchased place and time. For instance, coffee mugs, key chains, T-shirts and so on. The last are *local product* souvenirs, such as indigenous food and drink products, utensils, regional clothing and handicrafts. Furthermore, there are many situations tourists had to shop for utilitarian purpose which should not be considered as souvenirs (Timothy, 2005, p. 83). For instance, tourists purchase toothpaste or had to buy a new jacket when the weather is colder than predicted; or tourists want to make such purchases simply because it is cheaper than home (Timothy, 2005, p. 83).

However, the difference between what is and what is not a souvenir is not a clear cut one. For instance, there are items which not only serve a functional need during the trip but can also be considered as souvenirs—either during the trip, or tourists realize it is a souvenir after they return home. For instance, when a tourist had to buy a jacket during the trip, she/he would choose to go to the souvenir store to make such a purchase. In this case, a tourist is perhaps consciously aware of the function of the jacket as a souvenir, in addition to the functional need it serves during the trip. Furthermore, the idea of what a souvenir is, is not static. Collins-Kreiner and Zins (2011) noted that souvenirs are dynamic and the definition changes and varies over time. Therefore, the concept of souvenir must be expanded to “include not only objects that belong to the souvenir typologies existing today but also more ordinary objects that begin functioning as souvenirs later, after the tourist return home” (Collins-Kreiner & Zins, 2011, p. 26). In this study, the souvenirs I study are the ones Chinese tourists purchased during their trip, by the concept of souvenirs, I leave to participants to decide.

Additionally, Bowie and Chang (2005) conducted a study on a mixed-nationality tour of Scandinavian destinations, which showed that regardless of nationality, most of the tour participants regarded shopping and taking photos as significant and enjoyable activities on the tour since purchasing souvenirs and gifts for family and friends and showing photos are a key part of the post-tour enjoyment. Studies show that even for tourists who usually do not like shopping would actually participate in shopping activities when they are on vacation (Timothy, 2005, p. 72). Gordon (1986) was quite critical about

tourist shopping on vacation, he pointed out that tourists can “throw away or waste” what they usually care about, and spend money on small “junk” and “foolish” items because it is an extraordinary occasion (p. 139), which is defined as “peak consumer” (Wang, 2002). For many people, shopping is both a tiresome but functional task that must be done to meet personal and familial needs (Timothy, 2005, p. 12), which can be commonly seen in Chinese tourists’ souvenir shopping. Vacationers likely buy “junk” of this sort precisely because they are on vacation. It is a time when they are not working, not serious, not responsible, and not thrifty.

This section has presented a relatively comprehensive review of different concepts and theories regarding souvenir and souvenir shopping universally, which highlights various souvenir shopping choices and behaviors. Tourist would shop according to whim and plan. Sometimes, they do not make any souvenir purchases while sometimes unplanned, they do. Souvenir shopping is a complex phenomenon on its own influenced by all kinds of elements, while Chinese cultural values can act as one of the instruments to shed some light in the next section, to better understand their relationships.

2.4 Chinese Tourists’ Souvenir Shopping

One of the reasons that I am particularly interested in outbound Chinese tourists’ souvenir shopping is that Chinese (or Asian) people are famous for their shopping enthusiasm abroad, and cultural background including nationally, race, ethnicity and traditions is one of the primary intrinsic elements of a shopper (Timothy, 2005, p. 13). Shopping studies illustrate that compare with North American and European tourists, Asian tourists would spend most of their money on shopping, which indicates that there are cultural differences in spending patterns (Timothy, 2005, p. 72).

It is important to acknowledge that souvenir shopping is especially important for Chinese tourists because of their unique cultural characteristics (M. Li & Cai, 2008). Chinese tourists regard shopping as a crucial part of tourism activity (Xiang, 2013). Chinese tourists would usually buy souvenirs for families, friends, colleagues, even neighbors as gifts. Many studies indicate that Chinese tourists employ souvenir as an instrument to measure their social class or enhance their social status. Doorne, Ateljevic, and Bai (2003) found that Chinese tourists purchased the Dali marble in Yunnan because the marble have assumed the role of a memento or trophy for display as an implicit statement about arrival in a middle-class lifestyle. Moreover, Morgan and Pritchard (2005, p. 39) also noted that souvenirs are significant symbols of tourists’ travel experiences, so that many Chinese tourists are keen on collecting and displaying souvenirs in order to preserve and exhibit their travel experiences. Additionally, as mentioned above, the value of goods can also reveal their owner’s status and prestige; hence, Chinese tourists like to purchase expensive luxury souvenirs (Guo et al., 2007; K. S. Park & Reisinger, 2009).

Much research identify Asian tourists' souvenir shopping preferences and purchasing patterns being dual. Some research has shown that Chinese tourists like to purchase cheap, small, modern and mass-manufactured souvenirs, while others have indicated that Chinese tourists spend a great deal of money on luxury products. This will be discussed in the following section. Winter (2008) found that tourists from Korea, Taiwan and China who visited Cambodia would purchase modern, mass-manufactured souvenirs instead of traditional, locally crafted products, because the fear of modernization and commercialization that pervaded in the West was absent (p. 109). Likewise, a study by du Cros and Liu (2013) conducted among Chinese youth tourists showed that the most common type of souvenir purchased by Chinese youth tourists was also something small, cheap and made of plastic, for instance, fridge magnets and food items with elaborate packaging. Others who had economic considerations to make would just simply take their own photographs as souvenirs, such as photographs of food, architecture or streets, and people going about their daily life (du Cros & Liu, 2013). Furthermore, in a study of World Heritage-themed souvenirs for Asian tourists in Macau, du Cros (2013) also showed that small, inexpensive, and mass-produced souvenirs, such as fridge magnets, postcards, key rings and casino chips were very popular among Chinese tourists since they were cheap, cute and easy to transport. In addition, Chinese cakes, rolls, biscuits and tarts, which heavily use the World Heritage Sites image are also popular for tourists from Mainland China, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong. There are several reasons why these souvenirs are popular: they are highly popular gifts, they are often requested by friends/relatives as a gift, and also the shopping bags with World Heritage Sites images can be kept and reused. This demonstrates that Chinese tourists who like to purchase low-cost and mass-produced souvenirs do so for many varied reasons, but not only because of financial concerns.

Studies have also shown that Asian tourists, including Chinese, have an interest in purchasing more expensive souvenirs while travelling abroad since this is linked to a strong need to improve status in society. They also like to shop for luxury goods as gifts for those who are left behind at home (K. S. Park & Reisinger, 2009). In particular, electronics and international well-known brand merchandise are popular souvenirs for Chinese tourists because their high prices give their owners status and prestige (Guo et al., 2007). This does not mean that money is not an issue when tourists make decisions about souvenir shopping. For instance, both Prayag et al. (2015) and Guo et al. (2007) studies demonstrated that Chinese outbound tourists were interested in purchasing luxury products because they were cheaper in overseas destinations than in Mainland China. Alternately, interest, in purchasing such items, was a consequence of those luxury goods either not being available for sale or being sold out in the Chinese market. These studies demonstrate that Chinese tourists are not solely interested in luxury goods.

Furthermore, some researchers have discussed Chinese tourists' interests in Western goods, and this is also relevant for a study like mine. Podoshen et al. (2011) noted there is a rapid increase in the consumption and purchase of Western goods among the Chinese people. They were doing this because

they were looking for a different lifestyle more accord with the rest of the modern Western world. influenced by Western films, television programs, commercial advertisements and so on (Podoshen et al., 2011). Like mentioned above, Zhou et al. (2013) pointed out that with industrialization and westernization of rapidly the developing countries like China, Chinese people's current level of understanding traditional Chinese culture was dropping; instead Chinese people tended to worship advanced Western cultures and modern lifestyles but ignoring traditional culture. According to Arnould et al. (2004, p. 93), more than just Chinese people, consumers in many transitional or developing societies would use goods to symbolize modernity or their ability to participate in global consumer society. As a result, Hsu and Huang (2016) identify *Worship foreign culture* as one of the modern Chinese cultural values.

Importantly, some scholars have identified Chinese tourists' different souvenir shopping motivations and attitudes. For instance, Chang, Wall, and Hung (2012) commented that Taiwanese tourists bought famous glass beads, a local souvenir at a destination, both in order to show their friends but also in order to have some contact with local cultures. Many of them bought these glass beads as gifts, for curiosity and out of personal interest and for a personal collection (Chang et al., 2012). Furthermore, M. Li and Cai (2008) identified five major criteria used by Chinese tourists in their decision to purchase a particular type of souvenir. These were the souvenir's cultural expression, appropriateness as a gift, overall quality, workmanship, and its appropriateness as a representational symbol of the attraction. Additionally, five factors of souvenir shopping attitudes were identified: collectability, display characteristics, store attributes, value, and functionality (M. Li & Cai, 2008). This research indicated that reasons for souvenir shopping could be quite complex.

This section's literature and theories on Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping articulates that although Chinese tourists mainly buy cheaper souvenir's for friends, family and themselves; souvenir shopping is related to many reasons like usefulness, connection to destination, status and so on. Chinese tourists also influenced by modernization and Western culture in their shopping purchases.

This chapter has shown that there is a great deal of variety in terms of the type of items Chinese tourists purchase as souvenirs and that there are many different criteria that Chinese tourists use in souvenir shopping settings. In my research, I am less interested in classifying and giving an overview of souvenir shopping patterns and motivations. I am more interested in exploring the complexities of Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping processes. Even so, the previously mentioned patterns and classifications of Chinese cultural values in this chapter represent a relevant backdrop for my study, in which I am primarily interested in how such values play a role in Chinese souvenir shopping.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

The goal of my research was to explore how Chinese culture values plays a part in Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping. This chapter outlines my methodological approach, including the methods I used to produce empirical material related to my research question, as well as my analytical framework. The chapter is divided into five sections. First, I present the qualitative nature of my research since I am interested in providing a deeper understanding of a social phenomenon. In this section, I explain my method for data collection: semi-structured interviews, and the process for finding research participants. Second, I explain how the interview guide was developed and discuss the conduct of the semi-structured interviews. Third, I focus on relevant ethical issues, and fourth, I reflect on my role as a researcher. Finally, I discuss the limitations of this specific research project.

3.1 Qualitative Research

As my study set out to explore how Chinese cultural values play a role in Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping, a qualitative research design was fruitful. Qualitative approaches work particularly well when it comes to better understanding the complexities and dynamics of a phenomenon. Therefore, a qualitative methodology was selected in this study in order to understand the phenomenon and search for a deeper meaning related to Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping activities. Furthermore, “[A] qualitative methodology is associated with the holistic-inductive paradigm” (Jennings, 2010, p. 127), which “stud[ies] the whole phenomenon and all its complexity rather than breaking the phenomenon into component parts” (Jennings, 2010, p. 124). In order to help me better understand the cultural dimensions of Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping, this methodology approach was fitting.

Since qualitative methods are designed to describe and explain a pattern of relationship (Huberman & Miles, 1998), I chose to conduct qualitative research for my project. According to Jennings (2012), “qualitative research is a well-established approach to researching phenomena in the social sciences” (p. 309). In the field of tourism studies, qualitative method is also widely accepted because of its capability of “provid[ing] a rich, in-depth knowledge” from various viewpoints (Jennings, 2012, p. 309) in order to understand the phenomena as a whole. Since I was interested in exploring how Chinese culture's values play a role in Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping, qualitative approach offers me a conduit to explore the “how” and “why” regarding my research question and potential new ideas.

3.1.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

Qualitative methods underline the need to understand world from the perspective of its participants (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004, p. 4), and interview is “one of the most common and most powerful ways” employed “to try to understand our fellow human beings” (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 361). There are various types and technique of interviews, ranging from structured interview with standardized and closed questions, to in-depth unstructured interviews through open-ended conversations (McGehee, 2012, p. 365). According to Jennings (2005), interviews can be used in different ways, depending on the overall research process, then the methodology could be either quantitative or qualitative; “structured interviews are [often] associated with a quantitative approach” while “semi-structured and unstructured interviews” are commonly used methods of “a qualitative methodology” (p. 100). In this study, I conducted the conversation-like style semi-structured interviews to create interactions between me and Chinese tourists. In this way, Chinese tourists would be able to talk about their experiences and opinions “in their own words” (McGehee, 2012, p. 365).

Instead of unstructured interviews without a set of questions but “just a theme”, semi-structured interviews which “have a flexible agenda or list of themes to focus” on (Jennings, 2005, p. 104) were chosen for my research, in order to better understand the complex souvenir shopping phenomenon. For a research project like mine, where I am interested in understanding how Chinese cultural values play a role for Chinese tourists’ souvenir shopping, this method for data collection allowed for a dialogue-like interaction with participants, where they could speak relatively freely regarding their trip and souvenir shopping experiences and where participants could provide detail and give rich descriptions of their souvenir shopping, using their own words, as well as bringing out aspects they themselves saw as relevant and interesting.

In order to guide my participants toward my research topic, I created an interview guide with general questions regarding participants’ trips, then followed with three chronological themes: pre-trip, actual shopping and post-trip experience. And yet there was flexibility to allow both participants and me to switch between each theme at liberty. This will be discussed in the following sections.

3.1.2 Research Participants

Even though some of the study elements could shift and change during the qualitative studies which requires refocusing and rewriting, there still existing some requirement of selecting participants (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 30). The participants who I choose to interview would have a huge effect on my study, thus, selection of participants is extremely crucial (McGehee, 2012, p. 371). The selected participants had to have relevance to what the research question focuses on, to which this is

referred as purposive sampling (Jennings, 2012, p. 316). Therefore, my research question helped me to set my attentions and the boundaries for making selection decision.

As mentioned in the Introduction Chapter, in the summer of 2017, I was working as a sales assistant in the gift shop at North Cape. Living for over two months on the North Cape plateau, offered me a unique opportunity to search for potential participants. Featured as the most northern point in Europe, North Cape lays around 71 degrees north and approximately 2,000 km from the North Pole. The plateau itself rises 307 meters almost straight up from the Arctic Sea, but is flat on top which provided an extraordinary view of midnight sun from the middle of May until the end of July (Jacobsen, 1997, p. 352). Lonely Planet Norway compares North Cape in Northern Norway with the Eiffel Tower in Paris, “the one attraction everyone seems to visit even if it is a tourist trap” (Ham & Roddis, 2005, p. 330), and with famous visitors such as royal families and other celebrities that enhanced the fame of North Cape (Jacobsen, 1997, p. 348). Therefore, annually, North Cape attracts a great deal of tourists, particularly with increasing numbers from China, South Korea and Thailand. According to Radio Nordkapp (Elde, 2018), in 2017, there were 278,855 people who visited North Cape plateau. During the 2017 summer season, while I worked as a sales assistant at North Cape, I decided to look for potential participants there. Thus, my interviews were conducted with select respondents, that is, Chinese-speaking tourists who visited North Cape in the 2017 summer. While tourists were hanging around at North Cape or at the gift shop, I scanned them to see and hear if they were Chinese. When I was positive a person was Chinese, I put a big smile on my face, then approached every one of the potential participants personally and presented my identity as both a souvenir sales assistant and a student who was doing research for my Master’s thesis. I also provided them with a sheet with printed information about my research project that they could take home, which also contained my supervisor’s contact information and mine. Then, I asked them if they were willing to participate in my research and to be interviewed later. If they agreed, I immediately added them on either Facebook or Wechat (Chinese Chatting App), making sure that I would be able to make contact with them later in the research process.

Most of the Chinese tourists who visited North Cape in the 2107 summer were dependent tourists who joined a package tour, which means they were on a tight schedule on-site with little time for anything else. Due to this fact, they were quite rushed, and it was difficult to have a conversation with them about participation in my study. Instead, I had more luck when I approach independent tourists. They were unlike independent tourists, who decided their own itinerary and time schedule. Their independence made it possible for them to spare some time for me at North Cape. Some of the Chinese independent tourists even expressed that they felt happy and special that they got to meet another Chinese “at the end of the world”, so that the conversation just carried on smoothly. Subsequently, when I was at North Cape, I approached approximately 30 Chinese tourists; 10 of them agreed to participant in an interview later on. My initial plan was to complete interviews with all ten tourists via skype/videophone after they

had returned home from their trip. But due to time differences between me (in Norway) and the participants and their busy life, eventually I was able to complete interviews with only eight participants. Since it was impossible for me to go back to North Cape to access more participants, I decided to go ahead with the study despite a slightly lower number of participants than I had originally planned.

Among the participants, I had Chinese tourists who were residents of Mainland China, and also tourists from Hong Kong and Taiwan. Six of them were males and two were females. Five of them bought souvenirs at North Cape. Three of them did not make any souvenir purchase there, but they had made purchases in other parts of their trip to Norway. All of the participants were independent tourists who were able to communicate in English and had a certain level of travel experience. Some of them had travelled in Norway before but all of them were visiting North Cape for the first time. An overview of the participants can be found in Table 1.

Table 1 Information of Participants

Name	Gender	Age group	Residence	Purch. at North Cape
Andrew²	Male	40-50	Guangzhou	Yes
Amanda²	Female	40-50	Guangzhou	Yes
Bill³	Male	50-60	Kunming	No
Betty³	Female	50-60	Kunming	No
Charlie	Male	30-40	Shenzhen	Yes
Daniel	Male	20-30	New Taipei City	Yes
Eason	Male	20-30	Hong Kong	Yes
Frank	Male	30-40	Shenzhen	No

3.1.3 The Interview Guide

The interview guide was first prepared in English, which made it possible to discuss the questions with my supervisor. Later, I translated it into Chinese, so that I would be able to interview the Chinese tourists in Chinese. I conducted several pilot-interviews with members of my families and friends. This helped

² Andrew and Amanda were interviewed together, they were a married couple.

³ Bill and Betty were interviewed together, they were a married couple.

me improve the quality of the interview guide, specifically it helped me adjust the language of the translated interview guide and thus made sure the questions would be interpreted as accurately as possible.

Based on my preparation and my pilot interview, I ended up designing 21 questions for the interviews, and some potential and optional follow-up questions to get the full stories (see APPENDIX I). F. Li and Ryan (2018, p. 145) noted that researcher need to avoid leading the agendas, interview participants must be able to have their unpromoted voices heard without being directed. Therefore, it is essential to have good questions. Hence, for the most part, I prepared open-ended questions, to allow the participants to include more information, attitudes, opinions and their understanding of the topic. This also provided better access to the participants' descriptions and reflections on their feelings on the issue which was useful when explaining how Chinese cultural values play a role in my participants' souvenir shopping.

3.1.4 Conducting the Interviews

Originally, I had planned and prepared to do individual in-depth interviews, however, due to some of my participants requesting to do interviews together, I had to make some adjustments. As a result, there were two paired interviews and four individual interviews. Both of the paired interviews were conducted with married couples. Each of the interviews lasted for approximately one hour, and they were conducted online through either Facebook or Wechat video chat (face to face) in November 2017. After I sent them the sheet of "Request for participation in research project" and agreed on the interview time, I asked them to spend a little time to recall their trip in Norway, especially their shopping behaviors in North Cape since some time had already passed. All the interviews were conducted in Mandarin (Chinese), except one was in English since the participant came from Hong Kong and his first language was Cantonese (Chinese). I asked him whether he was more comfortable with English or Mandarin, then we conducted the interview in English as he wished.

At the beginning of the interviews, I asked participants' permission to record our conversations. I informed them again that their identity would not be recognizable in the thesis and the recording would be deleted immediately after the project completed according to Norwegian law. All the participants agreed to be recorded. Mason (2014) suggested that "the recorder should be small and placed discreetly away from the direct gaze" (p. 173) of the participants so that they would feel relaxed and talk more naturally, perhaps it could also create some trust between me and the participants. During my interviews, all the informants could not see the recorder from the computer camera since I had placed it next to the speaker of the computer. Meanwhile, I prepared a notebook in front of me, I wrote down key points that the participants had made during the interview as a reminder for myself and used my body language to show participants that I am interested in what they are talking about, which would also leave the

impression of being professional in order to “provoke a better response and high quality answers” (Mason, 2014, p. 174).

In order to break the ice, I started with relatively straightforward factual questions, moving gradually from general questions to more specific ones. I asked the participants to talk about their summer trip in Norway. For instance, how long did they travel and where did they go, and with whom they travelled. The interview was divided into three parts along the trip timeline. The first topic was the Pre-trip. Participants were asked to talk about their decision to travel to North Cape and their shopping plans if there were any. Then, the second topic concerned their actual shopping in North Cape. They were asked to talk about their purchases and reasons behind them, and their shopping experiences. The last topic was Post the trip. I asked their opinion regarding North Cape and their satisfaction with their purchases, their general shopping behavior and if they have anything else that they wanted to share or if they wanted to ask any questions. I particularly think the last part was very valuable since it had been a couple of months since they had visited North Cape. The time gap offers tourists an opportunity not only repeating their souvenir shopping to me, but also a reflection comes from themselves, which leads to a better and deeper understanding of the research question. At the end of the interview, all the participants were asked about their opinion on how Chinese cultural values affected their shopping behavior in North Cape or in general. It was difficult for some participants to understand or answer the question since they did not believe that their cultural background had any impacts on their shopping behavior.

The significance of listening during the interviews has been emphasized by many researchers (Jennings, 2005; Mason, 2014; McGehee, 2012). Listening during the interview requires the researcher to listen on three levels: active listening, interpretive listening and process listening (Jennings, 2005, pp. 105-106; Mason, 2014, p. 171). Similarly, McGehee (2012) defined the role of researcher as active listener, who is “interview focused, supportive but non-interruptive, non-judgment, accepting of difference, allowing for and listen to the importance of silences, and resisting the need to ‘fill in the blanks’ by putting words into the informant’s mouth” (p. 372). It is easier said than done, and it was much easier to feel comfortable about silences when I did my pilot study with families and friends since I knew them very well. However, when I did the first couple of interviews with the informants, I unconsciously started to talk during the “awkward” silences. Then when I listened to the recording of myself afterwards, I realized the problem. Therefore, in the following interviews, I tried my best to accept their reflection time. It was much easier to read participants facial expression, knowing that they were recalling and thinking when we were video chatting. Moreover, they could also see me nodding and talking notes while they were talking, which indicated that I was still listening and interested. However, when there was bad Internet connection, we had to switch from video chatting into audio chatting. It was much more difficult to wait without seeing them. In addition, it is difficult to know if I had their full attention

while I used audio chat. As a matter of fact, I sensed from the voice of one of the participants that the person was doing something else on the computer while being interviewed.

Mason (2014, p. 171) suggests that the inexperienced researcher should always have the interview guide present during the interview with all the questions written down in full, as semi-structured interviews are supposed to contain more details compared to unstructured interviews (Veal, 2011, p. 241). Having such a schedule, I was able to look at my set of questions and bring the interview back to my original topics when “the interview took an unexpected turn” (Mason, 2014, p. 171). It was often the case that when participants answered my open-ended questions, they started to give some information relating to questions I planned to ask in a later section. When this happened, then I had to be flexible and follow the flow, switch the order of the questions because I had to enter to the world of the participants and try to share and understand the concerns from their perspectives as has been encouraged by Fontana and Frey (1994, p. 371). Therefore, I had to make myself very familiar with all the questions I had since a semi-structure interview is supposed to be “fluid in nature and follow the thinking of the participants” (Jennings, 2010, p. 174). Furthermore, as a researcher, I must show respect to the participants (McGehee, 2012, p. 372). Since most of the participants were older than me, in Chinese culture this meant that they had my unconditional respect. In addition, they were quite experienced travelers, and thus confidently expressed their opinions. Still, some participants were afraid that they would not be able to provide much help, therefore, I assured them again that anything they said would be helpful.

3.2 Analysis Procedures

According to Huberman and Miles (1998), empirical materials analysis contains three aspects: “data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification” (p. 180). Data reduction can be described as “distillation of rich empirical materials into identifiable categories, themes and concepts as data displays are the ideographic presentation of the categories, themes and concepts” (Jennings, 2010, p. 206). Inspired by this, I transcribed all the recorded interviews into texts, which helped me to remember and memorize each participant’s answer. I repeatedly read the transcripts carefully, became familiar with the text and started to identify themes by marking different souvenir shopping with different color pens. When their shopping fell into the same categories these were marked with the same color, for instance, purchasing a souvenir as gift.

During the data analysis process, researchers need to be open to the data to ensure that they do not force the interpretations since they should have the ability to tolerate confusion and regression (Glaser, 1999). Moreover, it is important that the researcher “stay close to the participant’s account of their experiences, and representing their experiences in a way which is true to the participant’s understandings” (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 181). For my project, I am interested in Chinese cultural values, hence, among all the

marked content above related to Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping in the Chapter 2, the ones related to cultural values were highlighted whereas other reasons such as financial consideration were put into another category, which will be discussed within a different theme.

The next procedure at the analysis is to extract meaning from the empirical material that has been produced so far (Huberman & Miles, 1998, p. 181). The range of tactics used appears to be large, I chose to note the patterns and themes of Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping. Miles et al. (2014, p. 86) suggested researcher should look for "thread that tie together bits of data" (p. 86). By reading through participants' texts, I was trying to pull their souvenir shopping and different Chinese cultural values mentioned in the literature review together. "I loosely held chunks of meaning" instead of immediately install a pattern, as later the meaning may could reform in a different way (Miles et al., 2014, p. 87) in consideration of the complexity of Chinese cultural values. Meanwhile, as Braun and Clarke (2013, p. 181) suggested, while trying to understand things from participant's perspectives, I also tried to assimilate the empirical material critically.

3.3 Ethical Issues

Ethical behaviour is important in tourism research, as in any other field of human activities. Even though the objects could be human, animals or physical environment, the basic principles of research ethics are universal, ethics concern things such as "respect for the rights of individuals" (Veal, 2011, p. 101). When it comes to interview, human beings are the objects being studied, thus, researcher must take extreme care to avoid any harm to them (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 372). Other than the matters as honesty and plagiarism apply on all the research fields, ethical considerations also have revolved around the topics of informant consent, rights to privacy, free choice and protection from harm including physical harm, psychological harm, legal harm (Fontana & Frey, 1994; Jennings, 2010; Veal, 2011) and ethics is along with the entire research process from research design until storing data after the project (Veal, 2011, p. 104). Rallis and Rossman (2009) proffered that "ethical dilemmas are not solvable but" could be "reasoned out through moral principles" (p. 274).

In my study, ethical factors were important before, during and after the actual interview work. In the real world, the need for ethics is not just for participating tourists but also "for other members of the community or social setting" (Jennings, 2010, p. 102). In this study, approval for me to approach tourists was given by the destination's North Cape Hall (operating by Scandic). This meant that I was able to talk to tourists in order to collect data for my study. Therefore, while I was in North Cape gathering data, I had to be ethical as per the behaviors mentioned above. My behaviors aimed to ensure that tourists would not feel hassled, and as a consequence, North Cape would not lose customers.

It could be a sort of relief that in general, physical harm is not a huge concern in leisure and tourism studies (Veal, 2011, p. 112), but psychological harm must be minimized or eliminated. When approaching Chinese tourists in North Cape, it turned out to be much easier to gain consent for participation from Chinese tourists who purchased souvenirs at North Cape compared to those who did not. With regard to the latter, some Chinese tourists felt that they had no qualification to be interviewed since they had not bought anything or were afraid that what they would say would be wrong. Anxiety and embarrassment might have arisen at this moment. When this was the case, I politely accepted the rejection and appreciated their time because voluntary participation is one of the key ethical principles. Furthermore, anxiety or stresses may have also arisen if I asked tourists who had a tight on-site schedule, for instance, the package tourists. As I mentioned previously, package tourists usually arrive at North Cape a couple of hours before midnight and leave right after seeing the mid-night sun. Those “collective gazers” (Urry & Larsen, 2011, p. 202) spent their limited time on shopping in the souvenir store, writing a couple of postcards, watching the panorama film, standing in the toilet line and taking pictures especially when there was good weather. Subsequently, their behaviors were restricted by possible performances and conventions. Therefore, it would be unethical to bother tourists, who have a constrained schedule. Thus, as I mentioned above, I chose to ask tourists who had a flexible timetable. In addition, one perspective is particularly interesting with respect to Chinese tourists. Because of the Chinese cultural values of maintaining harmony, they might have agreed to participate in the study when the researcher asked them face-to-face, but would turn it down after they returned home since rejecting a person face-to-face would generate anxiety and embarrassment.

Several of the Chinese tourists were willing to participate in the study because they wanted to help a Chinese student who was studying abroad and doing research on our own culture. Some of them have still kept in touch with me after the interview was conducted and we are getting to know each other personally. As a researcher, I must to be ethical to protect their rights and their privacy. By doing so, before the interviews, a consent letter was sent to them via email. The English version of the consent letter (APPENDIX II) was translated into Chinese for the participants to read. They were informed that they had the rights to refuse to answer any questions with which they were not comfortable, as well as the right to withdraw from the research at any time, and that their personal information would be treated confidentially. The participants would be “offended and suffer stress if their affairs are made public or divulged to certain third parties” (Veal, 2011, p. 114). Therefore, the names displayed in my study are aliases randomly chosen by me, only the age group and residency are provided. The latter two cannot be used to identify or trace back to anyone; and the data was only used for my Master’s thesis.

Furthermore, I have reported and registered this research project to NSD (Data Protection Official for Research), the project number is 57327. A notification form was created with a written consent letter and interview guide attached. The consent letter stated that it was voluntary to participate in the project,

and that at any time, participants could choose to withdraw their consent without stating any reason. All the personal data and files would be treated confidentially, and that it was impossible to identify any one individually. The data was stored in my personal laptop protected by password and not transferred through e-mail or Internet.

3.4 My Role as the Researcher

Qualitative research require researchers to be aware of the values of self brought into the studies, including their own moral understanding and opinions, personal objectives and capability (Greenbank, 2003). In other word, researchers should be self-conscious regarding their conceptions and knowledges of truth, validity and reliability (Richardson, 1998, p. 359). As a Chinese person, I started this qualitative study as a member of the study group and an insider, which has its advantages and difficulties.

The researcher is a component of the “setting, context, and culture [that one] is trying to understand and represent” (Altheide & Johnson, 1998, p. 285). Jennings (2012) indicated that “qualitative researchers [should] constantly question themselves” regarding the data they have been produced, their interpretations of the data, and their “reflections of reflexivity” throughout the entire research process (p. 317). Reflexivity was especially important during my research process since I am a Chinese and my topic dealt with Chinese cultural values. It is quite difficult to be sensitive and conscious of your own culture because we mostly just take it for granted. The literature review process involving other studies was very helpful to establish my self-conciseness regarding the Chinese culture values, especially the ones written from Western perspectives as these increased my awareness of my own culture and enabled me to observe my own culture from a distance, so that I was able to be relatively more impartial during the field work, as well as to better understand and interpret the empirical data.

In addition, the value of reciprocity is not widely recognized in the Western world. Most of the Western researchers are more critical regarding with reciprocity, and would question the purpose of participation—whether the tourists simply need the payment or gifts or if they are actually interested in the studies (Jennings, 2010, 2012). Nevertheless, in China, it is actually quite common that research participants receive small gifts from researchers, or some researchers would use payment or incentives as an approach to attract participants. For instance, J. Xu and Chan (2010) offered a pair of traditional Chinese bamboo chopsticks decorated with well-known Chinese characters and landmarks as a gift to each American tourist participant. While in Norway, it seemed abnormal and unnecessary. Consequently, I did not plan a budget for gift giving yet it is actually important in Chinese culture, and the study was conducted with Chinese tourists. Some tourists even asked whether I have small gifts prepared for them. Hence, in order to adjust to this aspect, I offered them a short tour in North Cape Hall and provided some practical information about North Cape area or whatever they wanted to know,

as a return/favor. Furthermore, as I mentioned in the previous chapter, respect for elders is a basic and lifelong virtue in Chinese culture. Since most of the participants in the study were older than me, naturally, it questioned my legitimacy to poke around into their personal lives and ask certain questions. Yet, my knowledge of this important cultural aspect also helped me word the interview questions cautiously in order to show my manners.

3.5 Limitations

All studies must be understood in light of thesis particular limitations, also mine. Firstly, the participants in this study were all experienced Chinese independent tourists, they either travelled in small groups with family and friends, or they travelled alone. As I mentioned previously, package tourists' behaviors have been restricted by possible performances and conventions. The physical conditions made it almost impossible to continue a conversation on-site with those package tour tourists even though some of them were eager to participate. Furthermore, there were more male participants than female that agreed to participate. These mentioned elements were essential to my study since gender and travel party type have a great impact on souvenir spending for Chinese tourists (M. Li & Cai, 2008).

Secondly, only a limited number of Chinese tourists were interviewed. As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, only eight of ten Chinese tourists were still interested in participating in the study after they returned home. While it is not the purpose to generalize their perspectives to every Chinese tourist, a few more interviews could have provided an even richer basis for exploring Chinese cultural values and souvenir shopping.

Thirdly, all the Chinese tourists in this study visited Norway and had set North Cape as one of their destinations during their trips. Most of participants talked about their souvenir shopping in Norway, and some had purchased in other European countries. Awareness of context is key for a study like mine. Therefore, the fact that destination of North Cape, Norway and Europe were selected is an aspect that should be kept in mind when reading about my research

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter contains a comprehensive analysis of the primary data collected through semi-structured interviews, in order to explore how Chinese cultural values play a role in outbound Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping. I first provide an overview of each participants' purchases during their trip, based on information that they provided in the interviews. The following content are organized into four themes. Firstly, the importance of relationship as one the basic and essential is investigated through souvenir gift giving. Secondly, souvenir shopping is better explored as one way of improving social class in Chinese culture. Next, I explain Chinese experienced tourists are not necessarily make less souvenir purchases. Last, I try to say something about what I learn through this study regarding practical issues in souvenir shopping, less or more about culture.

4.1 Information about Purchased Souvenirs

In this study, all of the participants told me that they had made souvenir purchase during their trip, either for themselves or family members and friends back in China. Some of them bought the souvenirs in Norway, while others bought gifts in other countries.

Table 2 Information about Purchased Souvenirs

Name	Purch. at North Cape	Purch. in Norway	Purch. in other countries
Andrew	Softshell jacket	Norwegian cuisine book, Postcards	Starbucks city mug, Alcohol, Postcards
Amada	Postcard		Chocolate, Lapland knitting book, Cosmetics (Finland)
Bill	×	Dresses, Shoes, Woolen underwear, Kitchenware	×
Betty	×	LED key ring, Fish oil, Caviar, Calcium tablet, Vacuum cleaner	×
Charlie	Moose leather wallet	×	Saffron crocus, Fish oil, Medicinal materials (Iran)
Daniel	Certificate, Postcard	×	Designer purse (France)
Eason	Postcard	Postcard	Blue Lagoon hand cream (Iceland)
Frank	×	×	Designer handbags (France)

Based on information that the participants provided in interviews, Table 2 provides an overview of each participant's purchases during their trip. The combined box indicates that item(s) were purchased together.

4.2 Are Relationships Everything?

The Importance of Souvenir Gift Giving

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the gift-giving phenomenon is quite complex in China since giving thoughtful and appropriate gifts is an important way to establish relationships (Mok & Defranco, 2000). When purchasing souvenirs for others, many factors have to be taken into account. In my study, the participants explained their gifts giving choices. For instance, Frank explained me his standard of gifts purchasing when travelling:

When I travel to France, the best choice is designer bags (...) Designer bags and scarves are the best, tasty food as well (...) those are good to give, the size is perfect, not too big, but appropriate with high quality and exquisite appearance.

Frank's word of 'good to give' represents his opinion of what is a good souvenir, and it clearly shows that the importance of a gift's scale being both value and size appropriate. The presentation of gifts are regarded as a form of *Li*, which means propriety in Chinese (Yau, 1988, p. 50). Just as Yau et al. (1999) point out, there are symbolic meanings of accepting or rejecting a gift. Generally, "if someone presents another one with a gift, the receiver is expected to reciprocate in kind or through a favor" (Yau et al., 1999, p. 98). Therefore, there is a skill of balance that needs to be mastered by the gift giver. If the presents are too expensive, the recipient may not want to be in the giver's debt, which she/he cannot return; or if the present is too cheap, the recipient would feel there is no need to establish a relationship with the giver (Yau et al., 1999, p. 98). Therefore, when recipient accepted the gift, it signifies she/he "becomes indebted to the giver" (Yau et al., 1999, p. 99). In addition, Mok and Defranco (2000) believed that Chinese people always memorize "who owes them favors and who do they owe favors to" (p. 107). Subsequently, presenting souvenirs as gifts to others after travelling offers Chinese people a perfect chance to pay for their debts. Therefore, for Frank, to be able to give an appropriate gift, its value and size are essential so that the recipient can accept with pleasure instead of any kind of pressure, which achieves the aim of establishing and maintaining the relationships. Meanwhile, Frank also mentioned another standard of choosing gifts, he said:

I would not buy shoes, it comes with different sizes, I do not know if it would fit.

This means that not only is the size and the value of the gift is essential, but also what the gift is. Shoes, clothes and products comes with different sizes are not considered as good gifts by Frank since there is no way that the recipient can use the gift if the size is wrong, even if it is accepted. Consequently, the relationship will not be established or maintained. However, gifts like handbags and scarves with one size are not confront with such a problem. Additionally, there is no way to exchange the gift since it is a souvenir from another place, not to mention that gift exchange is not available in China and considered impolite. In other words, selecting an appropriate gift is universally recognized, there exists more terms when it comes to purchasing a gift and what is considered appropriate in Chinese culture.

Several other participants mentioned that they purchased food as a souvenir to give to others. “Hunger breeds discontentment”, is an old Chinese saying which can also translated as “Food is the paramount necessity of the people.” That shows the significance of food in Chinese culture. Many studies show that Chinese tourists like to purchase food souvenirs when they are travelling abroad (du Cros, 2013; du Cros & Liu, 2013; L. Lin, 2017; L. Lin & Mao, 2015), and that the main motivation of food souvenir purchasing is gift giving (L. Lin, 2017). Most outbound Chinese tourists purchased food souvenirs such as cookies and confections in their overseas trips, because they are not only relatively cheap, lightweight, portable and utility but also easy to share with different age groups (L. Lin, 2017, p. 446; L. Lin & Mao, 2015, p. 22). One of my participants Amanda bought chocolate to bring back to China. In explaining her purchases, she said:

We usually shop for others at the last couple of days, we normally don't make many purchases in the middle of the trip (...) We bought chocolate for others (...) food souvenir like chocolate, they are tasty and cheap overseas (...) both quality and price attractive.

Amanda revealed that they would only shop for others almost at the end of their trip, and price seems to be one of her biggest concerns when they do shop for others, which supports that Joy's (2001, p. 246) theory that giving chocolates is one way of giving and receiving pleasure, but it usually does not express deep feelings since chocolate is a gift meant to be shared with others.

Food is classified as local product souvenirs (Gordon, 1986) because is it fully and clearly linked to the local environment, local people's way of living and their culture (L. Lin, 2017, p. 450). Chinese tourists like to shop for tasty food souvenirs in order to share with others, however, there is also a risk of purchasing distasteful food. One of the participants in my study, Bill, spoke about an experience with one of his purchases of food as a souvenir. Bill bought Norwegian caviar to give families and friends since his daughter who currently lives in Norway recommended it. He said:

But I don't think Chinese people like it, I don't know why. I asked for some feedback from families and friends, none of them like it, I guess it doesn't suit our Chinese people's taste.

The quotation from Bill shows that the Norwegian food souvenir was not really appreciated by the recipients, because it was not suitable with Chinese dietary habits or went well with Chinese food. It seems like the relationships were not established or well-maintained between Bill and the caviar receivers, since none of the receivers were able to enjoy the food gift. However, whether the food souvenirs suit receiver's taste or not is a determinant factor of being a good souvenir. More than building up or maintaining the relationship, food souvenirs are purchased and shared by Chinese tourists in order to express their love and concern. When giving food souvenirs to family members, it is a way to demonstrate giver's love to them and the giver was thinking about them even she/he is on vacation. When presenting food souvenirs to colleagues, it is one way to "thank colleagues for tolerating possibly increased workloads and inconveniences caused by the giver's travel abroad" (L. Lin, 2017, p. 450). After all, just as the old Chinese saying indicates, "it's not the gift itself that counts, but the thoughts behind it."

Gift giving is a way to maintain a good relationship with different people in one's life, especially purchasing souvenirs when travelling. This point was also evident from Frank's perspective. Frank explained:

Nowadays you can purchase everything on Taobao⁴, anything you wish for. Then why do we buy souvenirs when travelling? Because it is Chinese tradition and Chinese people's habit, we always buy gifts for others.

As Frank rightfully says, nowadays, within the rapid development of logistics industries around the world, many souvenirs stores are opening online store. Physically, tourists do not have to buy souvenirs at destinations. Especially with the low-cost shipping within China, many destination souvenir stores in China provide shipping services, which save tourists' the trouble of carrying gifts when travelling. In some cases, those gifts may even arrive home before the tourists do. Even so, there still are tourists like Frank, for instance, who are willing to contribute their time and energy while travelling, meticulously selecting gifts for people about whom they care. Furthermore, Frank offered another opinion regarding gift giving:

And it is inappropriate to buy only for one person, you must buy for everyone.

As has already been repetitively mentioned, *harmony* is one of the key Chinese cultural values. For Frank, purchasing souvenirs for everyone is his way of remaining in harmony with others, which also helps to maintain peaceful relationships. Interestingly, the point of maintaining harmony and peaceful

⁴ One of the world's biggest e-commerce websites.

relationships with others is not only associated with recognizing when to purchase for others, but also when not to. When it came to people asking her to bring some souvenirs back for them, Amanda said:

We do not ask others to bring souvenirs for us, then others will not come to bother us.

Charlie did not like to buy souvenirs for friends either:

I told my friends not to ask me to buy souvenirs for them. If I agree to help one person, then I have to help everyone, it is too exhausting.

Kinship system in one of the most elementary relationships for Chinese people (Yau, 1988, p. 51). Among the five basic human relations defined by Confucius (sovereign and subject; father and son; husband and wife; elder and younger brothers; friend and friend), it is not difficult to find that three of them are family relations, which clearly show the significance of family in Chinese culture (Fan, 2000). According to Yau (1988, p. 45), family is the source constantly spreads cultural influences on Chinese people throughout their entire lives. It is possible that some Chinese people might spurn traditional Chinese cultural values at some time in their lives, but they would always be “assimilated again by their Chinese culture” (Yau, 1988, p. 45).

Many of the participants mentioned they purchased souvenirs specifically for their close family members. Daniel, from Taiwan sent his mom a postcard from North Cape, and Eason, from Hong Kong, bought Blue Lagoon hand cream from Iceland for his mom. These two young adults did not make many purchases during their trip, yet half of them were to be given to their parents. This would reduce the Chinese parents worries concerning their children spending their money on conspicuous consumer goods thereby leaving no money to take care of their parents (Podoshen et al., 2011). Although both Daniel and Eason mentioned that price was one of their biggest concerns when it came to souvenir shopping, they still chose to spend some of their budget on gifts for parents to show their desire to be filial children. Thus, it can be seen that traditional Chinese cultural value of the family still heavily influences young Chinese no matter where they live. Frank explained in detailed how he reflected on souvenir shopping for families. He said he normally would not buy anything for himself during the trip, but:

I always buy gifts for my families. I buy gifts for my parents, I want to show my respect and Xiaojing (filial obedience) (...) I also buy gifts for my wife and daughter, sometimes just something small. For instance, I bought a cup for my daughter in Germany, but my wife accidentally broke it, so when I went to Australia, I bought a new one for her. It doesn't have to be something of commemorative significance.

The Chinese word *Xiaojing* could be translated into English as filial obedience, which contains two Chinese characters which are *xiao* and *jing* that mean “filiality” and “esteem” respectively. On the other hand, *Xiaojing* is also a verb that is used to describe an action in Chinese, which is “give presents”. Frank’s explanation is in line with the Confucian statement that “filial piety is the most important of all virtues”, which is still emphasized by Chinese people. Although Hsu and Huang (2016) argue that “nowadays Chinese people care for the next generation much more than they do for the seniors” (p. 238). From Frank’s quotation, it is not possible to identify who he values more, yet he did talk about buying gift for his parents first. Likewise, during interviews, participants Bill and Betty constantly used the phrase “*elderlies in the family*” when referring as to whom they bought gifts. Even though Bill and Betty are already in their retirement age, and their children are settled and old enough to buy gifts for them to show their gratitude to Bill and Betty for their parenting, it is still important for Bill and Betty to show their parents *Xiaojing*. Therefore, bonding with family for Chinese tourists through souvenir shopping is not relevant to their age. These quotes demonstrate how the participants used the opportunity to give gifts brought back from foreign places to their parents and other elders, as a way to show respect and filial piety (Hsu & Huang, 2016; Mok & Defranco, 2000). In doing so, they were thus able to maintain good relationships with their families.

Joy (2001) indicated that Chinese parents often would like to discuss with their friends the gifts they received from their children, since “the drive to save social face has imbued a gift with extraordinary social implications for the family” (p. 247). Hence, gifts for parents is not only just for children to show their filial piety to their parents, but also supposed to help their parents to gain face. Meanwhile, it is not only the face of the parents, which is saved but also the children’s, since expensive gifts for parents usually represent a well-paid job and good financial conditions. Being willing to spend money on their parents signifies that their parents have educated them well, especially when children are able to give parents expensive souvenirs from their overseas trips.

To maintain relationships not only happened amongst family members, friends and colleagues, but also among romantic relationships. In the early stages of a romantic relationship, men are expected to take the lead and give several small gifts in China since gift giving is the fundamental way to show cares and wants to maintain the relationship (Joy, 2001), and the value and size of the gift is usually associated with his degree of recognition of the romantic relationship judged by women. In this study, Daniel bought a designer purse for his girlfriend when he was travelling in Paris:

I sort of bought it on my own will. I had no choice (laugh), but I have to tell you that I did it on my own will.

Daniel's words tell us it is not easy to maintain a relationship, people have to constantly be aware of others and focusing on others' requirements, wishes, and goals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 229). Some people may actively work to fulfill the others' goals on their own will, while there are some people like Daniel may passively do it since there are other people monitoring his behaviour. Subsequently, by adjusting himself to meet his girlfriend's requirements, their relationship gets to well-maintained as Daniel wishes. Therefore, Markus and Kitayama (1991, p. 229) concluded that in Chinese culture, maintaining the relationship is actually one way to achieve their own goal rather than realize other people's goal.

Chinese people who live in the interdependent culture show relatively high levels of need for socially oriented achievement, as it is an ultimate goal, which associates with a desire to meet expectations of significant others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 240). However, there are some exceptions. According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), "not all people who are part of an independent culture will thus characterize themselves as independent, nor will all those who live as part of interdependent culture claim to be interdependent" (p. 230). For instance, when Amada was asked whether she thought her shopping behavior had anything to do with her cultural background; she answered in a confused manner:

Does it relate? We are not affected by those traditional concepts. I would buy gifts for friends, but not everyone. If I saw something fits this person precisely, I would make the purchase. This is my personality; I do not think this is influenced by Chinese culture.

Gift giving is a common way for Chinese to establish and maintain relationships - one of the most basic and essential Chinese cultural values. Food, with its important status in Chinese culture, therefore becomes one of the popular souvenirs to gift to others after travelling. Food is slightly different to other types of souvenirs for which the latter, the giver has to consider the value and size of the gift and its appropriateness for the receiver. Food souvenirs express love, concern and gratitude that usually could be shared within any relationships with anyone. Among all the relationships, family is the most significant one in Chinese culture, thus family members would always receive priority when Chinese tourists shop for souvenir gifts.

4.3 A Classy Act?

Souvenir Shopping as a Way of Improving Social Class

Many previous studies of souvenir shopping emphasize Chinese people's demands for enhancing and improving their social status by purchasing souvenirs (Doorne et al., 2003; Guo et al., 2007; M. Li & Cai, 2008; K. S. Park & Reisinger, 2009). With China integrated into the world in various aspects under the influence of globalization and its continuing efforts in opening-up and modernization, Hsu and

Huang (2016) identify *Ostentation* and *Materialism* as two of the modern Chinese cultural values. As mentioned in Chapter 2, souvenirs are significant symbols of tourists' travel experiences, so that many Chinese tourists are keen on collecting and displaying souvenirs in order to preserve and exhibit their travel experiences (Morgan & Pritchard, 2005, p. 39). In this study, two participants, Andrew and Amanda have a world map hanging on the wall of their home, they have pinned all the destinations to which they have been on the map in order to show where they had visited, which they happily and proudly showed to me during the interview. This seemed a very direct way to “show off” their travel experiences, and offered the tourists themselves a sense of achievement.

In my study, most of the participants purchased various kinds of souvenirs, which proved their travel experiences, helped them memorize their trip, which can be easily showed to others. For instance, Andrew and Amanda said that they usually would buy a Starbucks city mug wherever they go and have them displayed in their living room. This becomes another way of showing their experience. However, when they were traveling in Norway this time, they did not find a Starbucks to purchase a city mug, they did find some other souvenirs to display. Amanda said:

We like to buy local recipes, local books. For instance, we bought one Norwegian cook book and one knitting pattern book from Lapland in Finland.

While Amanda and Andrew did not find any Starbucks city mugs from Norway to display in their living room, somehow it was still important for them to display something. Cook books and knitting books are not exactly typical souvenirs for most of the tourists, but for Amanda and Andrew, they were local, and it could only be purchased in the specific country, which served to indicate where they had travelled.

Also, not only souvenirs can be displayed on living room shelves to evidence travelling, but also what they wear every day. Andrew bought a softshell jacket when he was at North Cape, he commented:

It has a patch of the Norwegian map; North Cape is pointed out on the map with its latitude. It is a North Cape souvenir.

Andrew bought the softshell jacket because he valued the destination logo on the jacket. The jacket evidences his trip, whenever he wears the jacket; he—intentionally or not—displays his trip to others. Another participant Betty, who also bought clothes while she was in Norway, had her very own reason for making her purchase. She reflected that:

I bought Norwegian brand dresses (...) when I went to US, I bought American brand stuff; when I travelled to UK, I purchased British brand stuff. When I came back home and people could see me wearing it or using them, then I can tell them where I bought them.

Betty is open about how she expects people around her to notice her appearance, and that therefore she can start to talk about her travel experiences. Those souvenirs then demonstrate her travel experience in their own way. The Chinese interdependent self-concept indicate that “self is defined in terms of others, and behavior is regulated by group norms” (Chen et al., 2005, p. 118). Part of the reason Betty made her shopping choices was because of her aim to be recognized by others. Hence, tourists use souvenir shopping as a way to gain *face*. A person’s face often represented by symbols of prestige or reputation gained through the expectation of her/his social achievement, such as wealth, talents, social status, and scholarship, and impression on others (Mok & Defranco, 2000, p. 108; Podoshen et al., 2011, p. 18).

By reading the quotation from Betty thoroughly again, it is clear that she had done this before, multiple times. People around her must keep providing positive feedback on either her choice of souvenir or her travel experience, which in turn keeps her continuing to do so. Thus, it is possible to estimate that others would have an impression of seeing new clothes on Betty after her Norwegian trip. If she did not make any purchase of this kind, which failed to fulfill the expectations of others, she would lose face around families, friends and colleagues. She created her own shopping pattern, which was bidirectional.

General speaking, there are various ways of displaying tourists souvenirs other than just putting them on the living room shelf. In fact, these other ways make the souvenirs more accessible and visible by others, as is the Chinese tourists’ wish. Instead of visiting their home to see, others can just look at the person. Furthermore, Hsu and Huang (2016) proffered that nowadays, the pattern of Chinese tourists are trying to “keep up with the Joneses” (p. 236). This starts a shift from buying luxury goods, which cost a fortune to sharing travel experiences with friends on social media. The latter enable Chinese tourists to impress people or brag to their friends about the places they have visited and food they have enjoyed. Certainly, every one of the participants in my study posted their travel experiences on social media regardless of their age; but at the same time, they were the same as others again. *Competitiveness*, as one of Chinese cultural values, means Chinese tourists need something unique to be exceptional. Here souvenirs serve as a tool to help them enhance their social class. One of the participants, Andrew, was very satisfied with his North Cape jacket due to its uniqueness. He reflected that:

I tried to search the jacket on Taobao⁵ (after I got home), but I did not find it. You can take this as a reference, things you can buy there but not on Taobao are definitely unique. (If I know it does not sell on Taobao,) I would have bought more (laugh).

⁵ As Frank mentioned earlier, Chinese people seem to believe everything is sold on this website.

Andrew explained his definition of a unique souvenir, as being something that cannot be purchased online at home—tourists have to go to a specific location to buy the souvenir. Therefore, a souvenir being “local” is essential to Chinese tourists. Frank bought French handbags in France; Andrew bought a Lapland knitting book in Finland, and a Norwegian cuisine book in Norway; and Betty bought Norwegian brand dress in Norway. However, souvenirs that are only sold locally or local brand products do not necessary indicate that they are made locally. Timothy (2005, p. 114) commented that tourists could be less satisfied when they purchased foreign-made souvenirs, but that was not the case with some of the participants in my study. For instance, as mentioned above, one of the participants, Betty, liked to purchase local brand products as souvenirs, she said:

I bought some Norwegian brand dresses (...) I care whether they are local brand, but not necessary where it was made (...) Even though they were made in China, I never saw those in China, then I made my purchase.

Likewise, Betty’s husband, Bill had a similar opinion; he reflected that:

I never consider where it was made when I am shopping. I mainly concern if it is sold in China. If I can buy this in China, I will see, which one’s quality is better.

For Bill, the souvenir itself is far more important than where it was made. Additionally, the same point was also mentioned by Andrew when he was talking about the Starbucks city mugs, he said:

Most of the Starbucks city mugs are made in China, but I will not avoid the purchase because of that.

In fact, most of the participants in my study were not concerned with whether souvenirs were being produced locally or not. That is, the fact that they may have been made in China did not affect how my participants evaluated their souvenir choices. Amanda and Andrew thought that whether a souvenir can be only purchased locally was important, while Betty and Frank recognized local brands as a significant factor to be a good souvenir. These participants’ points of view certainly challenge the traditional perspectives of a souvenir as a local product (Gordon, 1986). For Chinese tourists, the symbolic values of souvenir is at least as important as its functional values (Mok & Defranco, 2000, p. 108). Those so-called local souvenirs are the perfect evidence of their overseas travel, which contains a strong social symbol. Even though these souvenirs are not luxury products, possession of such materials are also one way for Chinese tourists to gain face and enhance their social status.

Different to shopping for souvenirs for others is when purchase motivations are for self-use. Here, researcher show that Chinese tourists may adopt a rather more down-to-earth approach, pay attention to the physical functions and convenience attributes of the souvenirs (L. Lin, 2017; Lowe & Corkindale,

1998). In other words, Chinese tourists might not be so mindful of the packaging and brand when it comes to purchasing souvenirs to themselves, instead reasonable price and quality would be the main principles for purchase (L. Lin, 2017; Lowe & Corkindale, 1998). Betty admitted that she was not interested in artwork, which can be only displayed but interested in the souvenirs, which can be used on daily basis that have a utilitarian value, she commented:

I bought some Norwegian brand dresses (...) I also bought pepper cellar, pans and some other stuff.

Betty's souvenir purchases without touristic natures, again challenges the tradition definition of souvenir. Smith and Olson (2001) indicated that more experience the tourists have, the more functional souvenirs they would shop for. Moreover, as Collins-Kreiner and Zins (2011) pointed out souvenir is dynamic, and its definition changes and varies over time. They believed that any products related to the trip could be a potential souvenir (Collins-Kreiner & Zins, 2011). Betty is one of thousands of Chinese tourists who purchase this type of souvenirs. For instance, it is not unusual for Chinese tourists to travel to Japan to purchase toilet seats and rice cookers, and to buy milk powder in Australia and New Zealand, which indicates that there is a need to develop the concept of souvenir, challenging how it is currently employed in the literature.

Furthermore, Betty noted that being a Chinese, determined her souvenir shopping choices in three ways:

First is conformity, I will buy brand products, for sure. Secondly, when I arrives in the destination, I will buy local brand (...) something to wear and use (...) it is a souvenir and daily necessities. Then the third one is utility (...) I mostly buy living supplies, like clothes, shoes and others.

Betty's viewpoint reveals at least one more of the Chinese cultural values: *down-to-earthness*, in addition to what has been discussed above. What can be seen in Table 2 is that Betty and her husband, Bill, together as a couple shopped the most among all the participants. But when looking at the actual souvenirs they purchased, they were all daily necessities just like Betty stated. Bill also cherished the utility of the souvenirs, as well as the cultural expression. While he was in Norway, he bought some LED zip clips with the Norwegian national flag, yet he used them in his own ways,

I put it on my key ring, whenever it's hard for me to find the key hole, I can turn it on. Whenever I drop something in the dark, I can use it to find it. I don't always have a flashlight with me, but I always carry keys, it's very useful for elders.

Both Betty and Bill are very concerned with the utility and quality of their purchases. Bill even bought a vacuum cleaner from Norway, he explained:

There are so many fake, low-quality, cheap copy products in China. Even the stuff I bought in Norway is made in China, at least they are genuine because it has to go through the export check, thus guaranteeing the quality (...) Even though there is the same brand in China, I am afraid they are fake.

Bill's concern regarding counterfeit and shoddy products in China is not an exception. Hsu and Huang (2016) also mentioned in their studies that many Chinese people expressed their "distrust toward merchants, which was triggered by a series of infamous food safety scandal in China in recent years" (p. 234). As a consequence, more and more Chinese people have started to attach great importance on food quality even more than before since it will affect their health with conviction. According to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), in a collectivist society like China, only a small share of "both private and public income is spent on health care" compared with individualist society (p. 97). Certainly, China does not have the same welfare system that Norway has, but Chinese people have always been concerned with their health since "a healthy body is the capital of revolution" as Chairman Mao stated. In my study, some participants bought health-related souvenirs during their trips. Bill also said he bought some fish oil and calcium tablet in Norway:

I bought some fish oil and calcium tablet when I travelled in Norway for the first time in 2014. I gave them to families and friends; everyone said the effect is good after using them. So, I bought them again this time, me and my wife are also using them. Quality is good, and they are not fake, I can feel the Norwegian calcium tablet are better than Chinese one, it can be absorbed easily.

And Charlie also expressed his enthusiasm for health products,

I always buy health-related products. For instance, I bought saffron crocus, fish oil and medicinal materials in Iran. I wanted to buy fish oil from Norway, but it was too much to bring, so I did not buy it.

At the same time, he described his ambition for travelling and collecting around the world,

After I finished travelling around the world, I will visit the place I like again, and start to shop. At then, I will make a collection of distinctive products from all over the world, or sell them. Now I am running a Chinese medical center, I already start to collect some medicinal materials and food.

For Chinese, the number of travel times taken during a year speaks volumes regarding a Chinese person's vacation time, which usually reveals their financial position and social class. The actual amount of money spent on souvenirs when travelling does not necessary directly indicates social status. From

this section, nowadays, it is possible to identify that Chinese people are still trying to enhance their social status. But more than purchasing luxury good to be displayed or to be used, or sharing their travel experience on social media, more and more people are concerned with their actual quality of life and their health. Therefore, the choice of souvenir is shifting from the traditional conception of a souvenir into regular objects, including “local” product, daily necessities and health-related products, which also suggests “a fading distinction” between the two (Collins-Kreiner & Zins, 2011, p. 25) and challenge the traditional view of a souvenir as a local product.

4.4 More Experience, Less Souvenirs?

Among leisure tourists, Kim and Littrell’s (2001) research showed the more experience the tourists had, the less symbolic marker souvenirs they would purchase, such as T-shirts, mugs or keychains which have an image or text printed on. According to Timothy (2005), more experienced tourists would have less interest in novelty but pay much more attention to details of the souvenir, and invest more time and money into the shopping experience than the “beginner” tourists (p. 105). That is—as we as people change, our souvenir shopping changes. Another reason could be that more experienced tourists have had more negative experiences of being tricked when making souvenir purchases. One of the participants, Frank, shared two stories of when he was fooled by vendors:

There was once in Italy, I spend RMB 5000 (around NOK 6000) on three pieces of clothes, I asked the vender specially whether they are made in China. He said no, so I did not look myself. After I come home, I saw they were all made in China, then I did not wear them so much. Because I do not like the idea that I went abroad but purchased things that are made in China, it feels weird.

There was once in Egypt. When I visited the Pharaoh's Tomb, I bought many figures of Pharaoh. The vender told me it is made of stone, it looks very beautiful, then I bought a lot even though they are very heavy. When I was on my way home, at airport in Israel, the security check took me almost one hour since it is one of the strictest security examination airports worldwide. After I came home and opened my luggage; they were all broken. The worst part was it turned out they were all made of plaster. I was totally ripped off. I was so tired to carry them all the time, and they all ended up into pieces. Since then, I rarely buy anything (souvenirs).

These two incidents that happened to Frank were truly a tragedy, it is within reason that he does not have more enthusiasm to purchase souvenirs. Frank does not like to wear those clothes anymore, it does not necessarily mean he does not like products that are made in China, but it did evoke a strong

unpleasant memory. Moreover, Frank revealed another reason that he seldom bought souvenirs nowadays:

I used to like purchasing souvenirs when I just started travelling, but after a couple of times, I realized few of them were practical, it all turned out to be trash in the end (...) but it not possible to throw them away either. I do not know what I should do with them.

Frank's quotation reconfirms that people are changing, the souvenirs he liked so much when he was travelling, just turned into trash for him in the end. He wants to get rid of them, but it is not that easy. Frank's opinion regarding souvenir shopping is quite natural since the enthusiasm of purchasing souvenirs decreases with time, and tourists feel less of a need to bring beautiful things into their possession. Additionally, "having many souvenirs from past trips decreases the value of each souvenir" (Collins-Kreiner & Zins, 2011, p. 22). Frank's experience is an example of how souvenirs that were cherished by tourists during the trips could turned out to be meaningless and hard to be satisfied with after they returned home. Subsequently, Collins-Kreiner and Zins (2011, p. 23) believed that tourists' experiences could reduce their enthusiasm for souvenir shopping in general.

From Frank's quote, it is not difficult to tell that Frank is definitely an experienced Chinese tourist based on his travel experiences so far. After so many years of travelling, he almost stops buying any souvenirs for himself, but he continues to buy souvenirs for his parents, wife and daughter. He noted:

I bought designer handbags in Paris, how cliché! (laugh) They are for families, for my wife (...) Chinese people would always purchase souvenir for others as gifts, I already went out (travelling), it is not necessary to buy for myself anymore.

"How cliché!"—one short sentence actually reveals many interesting aspects. First, it shows that when abroad, purchasing designer handbags in Paris has already turned into one of Chinese tourists' routines. Second, Frank himself seemed not to approve of such a souvenir choice, or at least had a negative attitude about it. Although, this did not affect his actual souvenir choices as gifts for others. This is because using souvenirs to maintain relationships and receiver's satisfaction are far more important than his opinions. According to Yau (1988), Chinese people are taught that sometimes one's personal interest has to be sacrificed if benefit is meant for the welfare of the entire group since they are children. Frank certainly has to set his own personal (dis)interest aside when shopping for souvenirs. Frank's souvenir shopping for others supports that Chinese tourists would purchase souvenirs for those at home (K. S. Park & Reisinger, 2009), especially family members, as they are the most basic and essential relations in Chinese culture.

Likewise, Bill continued to buy fish oil and calcium tablets from Norway for his families and friends, even though they did not necessarily use these items. He noted:

When I travelled in Norway for the first time in 2014, I gave them to families and friends; everyone said the effect was good after using them. So, I bought them again this time (for families and friends).

The examples of Frank and Bill demonstrated that even though there might be some negative experiences with souvenir shopping, this did not stop them from buying souvenirs for others as gifts. This underscores the importance of giving gifts in Chinese culture.

Andrew and Amanda tell another story, as their unceasing souvenir shopping was not for others but for themselves. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Andrew and Amanda liked to collect Starbucks city mugs from their trips. They said that they also liked to buy local books, and:

If it is possible, we also buy local postage stamps, a year set of stamp booklet.

The aspect of collecting was important to them. Amanda and Andrew were two tourists who collected, and the value of a souvenir had to do with the collectability of it. Their travel experiences were not going to prevent them from shopping for souvenirs for themselves. In fact, they were collectors who probably wanted to possess a whole collection. Collections can not only remind tourists of their trips, the place they went and the people they met just like souvenirs do, but can also legitimize materialism for tourists and bring them hedonic pleasure (Arnould et al., 2004). These latter are two other modern Chinese cultural values. Another important purpose of collecting is to display the special items so that others can appreciate them.

Additionally, I had a question regarding the practice and convenience of shopping for such specific kind of souvenirs – since mugs and hard cover books were usually heavy to carry when travelling, and mugs are a fragile product. Amanda replied:

Indeed, they are heavy, but it doesn't matter, we would like to have them because they are local and unique, and they can be kept for a long time.

This was very interesting since Amanda said she would usually purchase gifts for others at the last stop earlier, because she did not want to carry them all the way. But when she made purchases for her own collections, none of that was a problem. Their collecting was so important that she ignored the impracticalities of carrying heavy stuff. Also, she showed how there might be quite different logic at play when tourists buy souvenirs for themselves and others, which seldom they would like to admit.

In the previous section, I mentioned one of the participants, Charlie's ambition of travelling and collecting around the world. To reiterate, he said:

After I finished travelling around the world, I will visit the places I like again, and start to shop. Then, I will make a collection of distinctive products from all over the world, or sell them. Now I am running a Chinese medical center, I already start to collect some medicinal materials and food.

When looking at the same quote here, it is not difficult to realize that Charlie is also a collector, or at least he is going to be. The more he travels, the more he is going to buy.

It is almost impossible to avoid a couple of unpleasant souvenir experiences among the many trips my participants have taken. However, none of this stops the Chinese tourists I have interviewed from continuing to bring souvenir gifts back home for their families and friends. Collections, just as souvenirs, bring Chinese tourists the legitimization for materialism and enhancement of their social class.

4.5 The Impacts of Practical Issues?

During the interviews, I realized there were many practical factors affecting Chinese tourists souvenir shopping behavior, which is also essential to consider. Even though they are just a matter of practicality, it really impacts the purchase of souvenirs. Some of those practical issues are actually generated by Chinese cultural values. In this study, all of the participants purchased gifts for either families or friends back in China during their trips. Some of them bought gifts in Norway; some bought gifts in other countries. Practical issues were an aspect many brought up. One of my participants Charlie, who travelled as a backpacker in this trip, he said:

It is a long trip this time. After travelling in Europe, I went to India, and then Iran. I bought many souvenirs in Iran, because it is the last stop before I return to home (...) Whenever I buy gifts for families and friends, I always do it at the last stop of my trip (...) When I was in North Cape, I wanted to buy a small troll statue, very distinctive. Yet, when I thought about the long trip afterward, I gave up the idea because it would take too much space.

Therefore, it is not only the gift itself or even the place matter, but practical aspects like weight, or how long the tourist would have to carry the souvenirs, there were important decision-making about what to buy and where to buy it. Similarly, another participant, Daniel explained his reflections regarding such matters. He commented:

I was a backpacker at that time; I didn't have space for that. However, if I was travelling on the package tour, I would buy a lot at the last destination, since the suitcase would be shipped back home, then I don't need to travel together with it anymore.

Also, Andrew and Amada spoke of similar considerations, due to the practical consideration of convenience, they said that they bought gifts at their last stop during their North European trip in Finland, Amanda recalled:

We bought chocolate for others. Neither likes alcohol as it has quotas; nor buying too many cosmetic, Customs would suspect you are going to sell them later in China. But not food souvenirs like chocolate, they are tasty and cheap overseas (...) I believe if our last stop is Norway, I would buy something similar, both quality and price attractive.

Amanda's quote indicated that there are many different aspects being balanced in souvenir shopping. They have some personal preferences for things that they do not want to buy, regarding the quality, price, customs and so on. And it seems pointing out another reason that food souvenir is popular for Chinese tourists beside its low-cost and convenience, it also will not cause any trouble at the customs. Thus, another practical issue was identified when tourists travel internationally and purchase large amount of souvenirs to bring home for families and friends: they also need to be mindful about the customs laws.

A study on Chinese youth tourists by du Cros and Liu (2013, p. 201) showed that some Chinese tourists stated that they would not buy any souvenirs for themselves, maybe only gifts for others. Some of them admitted that because they had economic considerations, thus photographs and memories could replace the souvenirs. For instance, university student Daniel, travelled almost around the entirety of Europe during the summer, but he only bought one North Cape Certificate and a postcard from North Cape to send to his mom back home:

I planned to buy the certificate before I went to North Cape since I knew I probably won't come to North Cape again, I even checked the price (laugh) online before I came; and I also planned to buy a postcard because of the North Cape special stamp. I didn't plan to buy anything else since I spent all the money on travelling.

Daniel already decided on what he would buy before he went on this trip, the preparation was made with great care. I was very surprised when he told me that he even knew the price of North Cape certificate which really shows that he planned his trip in great detail. It is almost impossible for tourists like Daniel to suddenly conduct any impose shopping during the trip, yet it is understandable since

Daniel is a university student does have economic considerations. Then I asked him whether he usually bought gifts for friends when he was travelling, he said:

There is no way I would buy gifts for friends, but maybe I help my friends to make a purchase with Daigou (in Chinese) fee. All my money goes into travelling, there is no place left for gifts.

Once again, Daniel demonstrated that young students like him may not have a strong purchasing power. Meanwhile, his other statement is really worth mentioning. *Daigou* can be understood as an overseas personal shopper, it means a person outside China purchases commodities for a customer in Mainland China (Wikipedia, 2018). When Chinese people plan to travel abroad, some of their family members or friends may have some request to buy something on their behalf, usually are luxury good considered the higher price in Mainland China. It is naturally to “provide the service” free of charge for your family and close friends, but people would charge the service fee to their acquaintances. Today, many Chinese tourists, especially young tourists would spare some of their vacation time to purchase on behalf of other Chinese people who lived in Mainland China, in order to earn some extra cash. Therefore, it is worth noting that Chinese tourists not only shop souvenirs for themselves and for others as gifts, but also shop for others as a favor or for business.

In addition, both Andrew and Amanda admitted that they did not purchase many souvenirs in Norway due to the high prices, especially in North Cape. Betty commented that she bought most souvenirs when they were on sale; these good prices made it affordable. Eason, a young student, stated that price was the most important factor, which he considered when shopping for souvenirs for both himself and others when he was in North Cape.

Furthermore, Timothy (2005, p. 69) indicated that tax-free shopping store is usually very attractive for tourists. In some cases, tax-free shopping service is determining factor for Chinese tourists’ souvenir shopping, and is especially important in Norway since the prices of commodities are quite high compared to worldwide prices. However, for some tourists’ tax-refund resulted in a negative experience, when they did not get their money back after all. Then, the option was neither attractive nor an important factor influencing souvenir shopping anymore. For example, both Amanda and Frank described their negative experiences with tax-refund. Amanda reported:

When we were in Greece, our application was already approved, but we never received the money back. So, I really did not pay attention on that anymore, since we did not buy any luxury products, it was really a very small amount of money.

And Frank concluded:

It would be the best if it's an option, but the process is complicated and takes a long time, and I do not even know whether I will get the money back or not. I did not get my refund when I was in Italy.

Both Amada and Frank's incidents again show the negative experiences decrease tourists' enthusiasm with souvenir shopping.

There are moments tourists make a purchase plan and they accomplish it, while there are also some times that tourists make unexpected purchase because they have to. One of the participants, Charlie bought a moose leather wallet at North Cape, in fact—I was the person who sold him the wallet at the gift shop. He did however not plan to buy any souvenirs at North Cape initially. He said:

I did not have Norwegian krone with me then. I paid for the bus coming to North Cape with euro, the bus driver accepted it. But I was leaving North Cape, the bus driver did not accept euro. That was why I came back in the gift shop, to exchange some Norwegian krone. That was the main reason I bought that wallet, another reason is because I saw the North Cape logo on the wallet, it can be a memento. I am using the wallet now.

Charlie's story could happen to any tourist, as there are many situations where tourists must shop for a utilitarian purpose (Timothy, 2005, p. 83). It is probably even more common in a destination like North Cape, which has unstable and unpredictable Arctic climates all year around. Tourists find themselves caught by surprise by the weather they can face—especially in the summer, when it can be quite windy and cold. In such situations, they have to rush into the gift shop to look for a hat, a scarf, a pair of gloves, or even a jacket. It is possible they do not see the items as souvenirs at the moment they purchased them, but even so they might turn into one once they arrive at home and it always remind them of North Cape. This further strengthens the need to develop the concept of souvenir as it is employed in the literature today. In addition, it is not much of an exaggeration to say that the extreme weather could generate the souvenir shopping at North Cape sometimes. I experienced many times that tourists had to purchase a beautiful North Cape postcard in the souvenir store to get an image of North Cape and kept it as memento or evidence of the trip, since the dense fog had covered everything, and strong wind made it is almost impossible to even try to step outside the building.

This section demonstrated that there are some practical factors involved with outbound Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping. Chinese cultural values and Chinese people's way of living in society today generate some of these practical issues. Culture is important, but culture is not all.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

The unprecedented number of Chinese tourists' arrivals in world tourist destinations and their enthusiasm for shopping triggered my curiosity regarding Chinese tourists' shopping and cultural values. Also, being a Chinese, a repeat visitor to North Cape and a sales assistant at North Cape gift shop, all strengthened my interest to explore how Chinese cultural values play a role in outbound Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping. Broadly, this chapter presents my key findings regarding how Chinese cultural values play a role in Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping.

In my study, Hofstede's (1980) four cultural dimensions, developed using a Western point of view, together with Confucianism, which provides guidelines for proper behavior in Chinese life, assisted me in forming a fundamental understanding of traditional Chinese cultural values. Yet, China's rapid economic growth has changed Chinese consumers' economic lives, including Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping abroad. Such changes challenge traditional cultural values, however, some traditional Chinese cultural values are still active. In addition, extant literature has also identified that besides all the traditional cultural values, modern and Western cultural values have been added into contemporary Chinese cultural values. Researchers believe that cultural values can influence and explain a variety of individual and collective consumer behaviors (Arnould et al., 2004). Due to the nature of the word "souvenir" in the Chinese language, as both a memento and gift, when Chinese tourists travel abroad, they shop not only for themselves, but also for families and friends. Their souvenir choices vary from low-cost mass-produced souvenirs to exclusive luxury goods. Additionally, there has been a rapid increase in the purchase of Western goods. My findings suggest that during trips, Chinese tourists are also likely to purchase non-touristic functional products that have utility value as souvenirs, such as daily necessities and health-related products. I also proffered that purchased products with a utilitarian nature could turn out to become a souvenir once tourists arrived home. This can occur even if, initially, this was not part of the purpose for making the purchase. Both of these points indicate that there is a need to develop the concept of souvenir. Today, the way the concept is employed in extant literature is often based on qualities of the item. But my research underscores the importance of context when considering what is and what is not a souvenir, and the process of how an ordinary object can turn into a souvenir or for souvenirs to turn into meaningless objects.

Most research on souvenir shopping uses quantitative questionnaire surveys as a tool to understand Chinese tourists' shopping behaviors. In my study, qualitative methods were employed. Such an approach works well for exploring and understanding Chinese tourists' attitudes and perceptions on such a complex issue as souvenir shopping. My empirical materials emerged during semi-structured interviews with Chinese tourists. Such interviews allowed for a dialogue-like interaction with participants. Participants could speak relatively freely regarding their trip and about their souvenir

shopping experiences. As a consequence, participants could provide details and give rich descriptions of their souvenir shopping using their own words, as well as bring out aspects they themselves saw as relevant and interesting.

Chinese tourists like to purchase souvenir as gifts to others since gift giving is one of the most common ways for Chinese tourists to establish and maintain relationships - one of the most basic and essential Chinese cultural values. As a matter of fact, presenting souvenirs to others, as a gift, is the embodiment of Chinese culture. Among all the relationships, family is the most significant in Chinese culture. Thus, family members would always receive priority when Chinese people are shopping for souvenir gifts. Presenting souvenirs to parents is a way for Chinese children to show their filial obedience towards their parents. Despite that, in order to maintain relationships in Chinese cultures, when souvenir-shopping, Chinese tourists need to consider a gift's value and size as well as appropriateness for the receiver. To that end, my study shows that food souvenirs are popular for Chinese tourists because of the low-cost and convenience of such items. Food has its importance and special status in Chinese culture, food souvenirs are meant to express love, concern and gratitude. Food souvenirs are also suitable for young and old, close family members and colleagues at work. Therefore, food has become a popular souvenir gift to give others upon returning home, which again evidences the importance of maintaining all kinds of relationships in Chinese culture.

Some literature shows Chinese tourists like to purchase luxury goods and that souvenirs can be bought for display at home. Due to the interdependent self-concept of self in Chinese culture, many share their travel experiences on social media in order to show their social class or enhance their social status. However, my findings show many other souvenirs can serve the same purpose. For example, jackets with local markers, local brand products, products that can be only purchased locally, daily necessities and health-related products, can all provide evidence of an overseas trip. Instead of purchasing souvenirs that can only be displayed, Chinese tourists are interested in souvenirs that have utility. Meanwhile, wearing and using what they bought during a trip is also a way to put souvenirs on display. The number of times travelled during a year speaks volumes on its own, it reveals much about a person's financial position and social class. Therefore, the price of souvenirs is no longer a critical element to determine a Chinese person's social class. My findings show that Chinese tourists purchase local books, local brand products, and products that can be only purchased at a destination as local products, even if they were made in China. From a Chinese tourist's perspective, those so-called local products and souvenirs truly challenge the traditional concept of local products and souvenirs. This further strengthens the need to develop the concept of souvenirs as I suggested.

For experienced Chinese tourists, who have had many travel experiences, it is almost impossible to avoid a couple of unpleasant experiences. In the future, such disturbing memories can ruin a tourist's

interest in purchasing souvenirs. Literature shows that a tourist's experiences can reduce a tourist's enthusiasm for souvenir shopping (Collins-Kreiner & Zins, 2011). However, such literature fails to consider the situation that purchased souvenirs are meant to be gifts to others. That being said, my findings show that with the unique Chinese cultural values, Chinese tourists continue bringing souvenir gifts back home to their families and friends. Not to mention, Chinese tourists who are collectors, and for whom the buying of a souvenir fits perfectly with collecting, and consequently legitimized materialism, and simultaneously enhances their social class. This is an example of how Chinese cultural values play a role in Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping.

Chinese cultural values play an important role in Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping, but it is not all that matters. Cultural values could generate some practical issues. During interviews, I learned that there were some practical considerations Chinese tourists thought about during their trips when they were shopping for souvenirs. Most of the Chinese tourists would consider the price and the portability of souvenirs, especially young tourists and backpackers. And there were situations where a purchase was made for a utilitarian purpose, but it turned out to be a souvenir once the tourist arrived home. This further strengthens my suggestion for the need to explore and understand the process of items becoming a souvenir.

The association between Chinese cultural values and Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping is relatively complex. The differences in attitudes and perceptions towards souvenir shopping were associated with Chinese cultural values. However, the cultural values, which influence attitudes and perceptions towards souvenir shopping, are more complex than just differences in cultural values.

In future research, it is worth scrutinizing how Chinese cultural values play a part in Chinese dependent-tourists and inexperienced tourists' souvenir shopping, and it would be interesting to investigate different genders' impacts.

Cultural knowledge is essential in tourism research, especially when it comes to cross-cultural situations, since it helps to minimize misunderstandings between cultures (Kim & Littrell, 2001). Subsequently, my study is useful for both tourism researchers and tourism marketers, as well as helpful in understanding Chinese people's social lives. My study revealed that Chinese cultural values play an important role in outbound Chinese tourists' souvenir shopping. The study also showed how traditional Chinese cultural values still have a dominant status in people's social life in China. Yet, these values can and do exist alongside modern and Western cultural values, which have gradually been absorbed into Chinese people's culture.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I Interview Guide⁶

1. General Question

- 1.1 Which cities or parts of Norway did you visit this summer?
- 1.2 How long did you stay in Norway? How long did you stay in North Cape?
- 1.3 Did you travel with a group tour, by yourself, or did you travel with someone?

2. Pre-trip

- 2.1 How do you decide North Cape to be your destination?
Where did you get the information? Family & friends / magazines / social media?
- 2.2 What did you know about North Cape before you come? What do you think of NK now?
Did it fit your expectation?
- 2.3 Did you plan to buy anything in Norway/North Cape, for you or others?
(If not, did you know anyone else in your group/your friend has a shopping plan?)
Do you have a wish list?
Did someone ask you to buy anything?
Some examples? How did you make shopping plan?
Do you usually plan to buy specific items in specific place? Any preference?
- 2.4 How did the price affect your choice?
How did Global blue affect your choice?
Did you save up to shop during travel? For how long?
Did you avoid shopping at home so that you can shop during travel?

3. Shopping

- 3.1 What did you buy when you were in North Cape? What did you buy in Norway? What did you buy during your trip? *(What did your group members/friends buy?)*
Did you purchase anything in your shopping list? For you or others?
Did you buy certificate? Wish it is in Chinese?
Were you looking for something specific? Was there anything surprised you? Did you see

⁶ Questions written in italic format are optional follow-up questions.

anything, but you didn't buy eventually? Why not?

3.2 What factors did you consider when you purchase ... for yourself in North Cape?

3.3 What factors did you consider when you buy ... for others in North Cape?

Why do you buy this to this person?

3.4 Were there any different considerations when you shop for others in North Cape? If yes, what and why?

3.5 What did you enjoy the most about souvenir shopping in North Cape? What did you like the least about souvenir shopping in North Cape?

3.6 How did you feel about the shopping time in North Cape?

Was there enough time?

3.7 Did you go souvenir shopping with others?

Does their opinions helpful?

Do you prefer to shop with others or alone? Why?

3.8 What do you think of the things in North Cape?

What's your opinion regarding many of the souvenirs in North Cape are made in China?

Is there any impact on your shopping choice? What and why?

4. Post the Trip

4.1 Are you satisfied with souvenir choices? Why or why not?

What did you buy in Norway? What did you buy during the trip?

4.2 Do you think you would come back to North Cape again in the future? Why or why not?

4.3 Do you think you would recommended North Cape to others? Why or why not?

Do you think you would recommended others to buy anything in NK? Why or why not?

4.4 Do you consider yourself as a person that likes shopping? Is what you did in NK your typical souvenir shopping behaviour?

4.5 How did Chinese cultural value affect your shopping behaviour in NK or in general?

4.6 Would you like to share anything else? Suggestions?

APPENDIX II Consent letter

Request for participation in research project

How do Chinese cultural values play a role in Chinese outbound tourists souvenir shopping?

Background and Purpose

This is a master project in UiT The Arctic University of Norway. The purpose of the study is to better understand how Chinese culture values affect Chinese outbound tourists souvenir shopping. Your answers will be of utmost importance to my study. They will also help North Cape make improvements. You are invited to participate in the project because you are one of the Chinese outbound tourists who visited North Cape, Norway in 2017 summer as the target group of this project.

What does participation in the project imply?

The data collection requires personal interviews. The interview will be audio recorded in order to insure accuracy of detail in recording your responses. The recording file will be erased immediately after your responses have been transcribed. If you feel uncomfortable with the questions asked during the interview, you may choose not to answer a particular question or withdraw from the interview.

In anticipation of the interview that we have planned, I would like to reflect on your travel experiences, your shopping experiences and the souvenirs or mementos that you purchased in North Cape in 2017 summer.

What will happen to the information about you?

All personal data will be treated confidentially. Only the interviewer and supervisor would have access to the data. The name in the data/recording would be anonymized. The data would be stored in personal laptop protected by password.

The participant would not be recognized in the thesis. The project is scheduled for completion by November 2018.

Voluntary participation

It is voluntary to participate in the project, and you can at any time choose to withdraw your consent without stating any reason. If you decide to withdraw, all your personal data will be made confidentially.

If you would like to participate or if you have any questions concerning the project, please contact Peiyi Han (pha043@post.uit.no) or Associate Professor Trine Kvidal-Røvik (trine.kvidal@uit.no). The study has been notified to the Data Protection Official for Research, NSD - Norwegian Centre for Research Data.

Consent for participation in the study

I have received information about the project and am willing to participate

(Signed by participant, date)