Balancing on Borderlines:

Printmaking pathways into multi-faceted identities of Australian-born Chinese

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BVA (Hons) First Class

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Declaration:

I hereby declare that the work herein, now submitted as an exegesis for partial requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by practice-based research of Charles Darwin University, is the result of my own investigations, and all references to ideas and work of other researchers have been specifically acknowledged. I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis has not already been accepted in substance for any degree, and is not being currently submitted in candidature for any other degree.

Signed:

__________________________________

Glynis Lee

Date:
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Abstract:

In this globalised world where people of different cultures are interspersing at an increasing rate, many individuals of mixed cultural heritage are searching for a sense of belonging. While some are content to move from one culture to another, others find themselves on the borderlines or in-between cultures. Through visual art, some of these individuals have expressed their identity through a mix of cultural and other influences. As one of these individuals, I concentrate on these borderline or in-between cultural spaces in trying to understand this position of uncertainty.

This research project investigates multiple identity constructions of Australians with Chinese heritage, in particular, those born in Australia. My investigation is motivated by the following questions: How do influences on the diverse cultural identity constructions of Australian-born Chinese affect their sense of belonging, particularly in the borderlines between cultures? How can printmaking be used in innovative ways to express this diversity and represent the persistent search for a sense of place? The central premise is that many individuals oscillate amongst a variety of identity spaces, searching for balance on the borderlines of various cultures.

Through my studio practice I have created ‘hybrid’ or fusion artworks, merging different imagery of the Australian and Chinese landscapes through various media, exploring multiple roles of printmaking as a traditional as well as modern art-form. These works are informed by other contemporary Chinese-Australian visual artists. The results of this studio practice are realised in an installation exhibition entitled Balancing on Borderlines. The exegesis encompasses an interdisciplinary approach including history, cultural studies and visual arts. The historical and cultural studies frameworks provide a theoretical background for my studio practice. An explanation of the creative process and progression of studio work connects the theoretical background and conceptual framework with the body of artwork to explore ‘oscillation’ of identity.
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Preface

This doctoral research has at times been difficult due to the personal nature of the topic. In recent times I have felt that a part of me was missing culturally. The reasons for this stemmed from a rejection of my heritage culture during my formative years. There was a sense of loss of heritage culture because the White Australia policy had instilled in me a necessity to integrate into the broader “White” Anglo-Saxon culture that was dominant during my early years. This caused my siblings and me to reject our heritage language and culture to a large degree. We participated in some cultural activities namely Chinese New Year, dutifully visited our grandmothers, one of who could not speak English, and learnt how to thank her in her dialect. However, we thought of ourselves as Australian rather than Chinese. Initially, I shunned the Chinese side of myself, as the mentality that being Chinese was a negative thing, had been instilled in me from a young age. Later, I started to question this mentality and sought to find out more about our family and cultural heritage. It has been difficult, with questions largely going unanswered due to family members not wanting to dredge up the past and to concentrate on the Australian part of the family history. I felt a sense of sadness at the loss of this family history and heritage language and culture, which seemed to be slipping away as more family members passed away, taking their knowledge with them.

While growing up in a small town, which had a fairly multicultural population including Indigenous, Italian, Greek, Chinese, Maltese and Irish, I do not remember many incidents of discrimination due to having Chinese heritage, even though I was the only Asian-looking person in my class in the Catholic school I attended. I do, however, remember incidents of discrimination when visiting other places such as Sydney. My sister and I were told in the streets to “go back where you come from”. This incident is deeply entrenched in my memory. I remember being with some other ABC friends in Sydney and thinking that being in this group made me look more Chinese and hence, foreign. As my friends back home mostly had the appearance of belonging to the dominant culture, (even though, now thinking back, one was of Spanish descent and one had Maltese heritage), I strangely did not think of myself as Chinese. At first, I didn’t want to belong with this group of Chinese friends, but then I somehow developed a sense of belonging and an ability to be
camouflaged within this group. Perhaps I felt immune to acts of discrimination within this larger group.

For many years I have thought that I was on the fence line of the Australian and Chinese cultures. In some situations, I felt part of the dominant society and at other times I thought of myself as an outsider. Doing art at school and college, I experienced a Western grounding and sensibility. While trying to establish my art practice later in life, I began to be drawn more towards my family and heritage culture. I was compelled to explore my own sense of cultural belonging and to find contentment in the in-between spaces between cultures. I learnt that there were others who thought similarly and I became aware of a need to research this in-between area to help others also find a place of contentment there. It must have been difficult for my ancestors and others’ ancestors to come to a new land where they do not speak the language. My paternal grandfather who was born in Australia, moved to China as a child, returned to Australia to work, and travelled back and forth between the two countries to establish a family and finally bring them to Australia, must have felt a sense of displacement at times. With the increase in immigration numbers from a wider variety of cultures in Australia today, this question of where and how these new Australians and their subsequent generations to follow can find a sense of belonging culturally and individually, needs to be addressed.
Between Two Worlds

In former times sojourners came
The harsh environment to tame
Sought their fortunes, then some learned
Misfortune forced them to return
Black ink upon the page so white
Brushed aside and out of sight
Another generation’s born
To gaze upon vermillion’s dawn

Foreigner in my own land
It’s hard to know just where I stand
People look but they don’t see
What do they see when they see me

Fragments from a time gone by
Fused by bonds of silken sky
Colours of all different worlds
Printed forms turned into pearls
Cultures lost and words unknown
Exclusion from our land and home
Other voices echo through
Memories of homes we knew

Travelling between two worlds
contemplate how life unfurls
searching for our own home song
and places to belong

Foreign in my father’s land
It’s hard to know just where I stand
People look but they don’t see
What do they, what do they see

Glynis Lee
Chapter 1

Introduction
“Their [Australian-born Chinese] lived experiences - for example, the conflict between cultural maintenance and forms of accommodation, the task assigned them of making links between two worlds, or the unconscious mission to transgress the boundaries, and the possible blessing received from two worlds - provide the base on which their self-images are created…They also draw our attention to the constructedness of identity, underlining the necessity for people on the margins to create and assert their identities” (Shen 2001, p. 150)

*Balancing on Borderlines* is an investigation into visual representations of the continuous search for identity on the edges of cultures, examining the notion of difference and alienation, inclusion and exclusion within society and culture. At a time in Australia’s history when Asian migration remains a political issue, this PhD project focuses particularly on Australians of Chinese heritage. In the above quote, Shen (2001) emphasises the importance for Australian-born Chinese (ABCs) to give voice to their daily experiences relating to the constructions of their cultural identities. He highlights the need for those in the borderlines between the cultures to express and assert their identities to make links between two worlds. Through this practice-based research I have explored the multiple identity constructions of Chinese-Australians and the influences on these identity constructions. Through this work I seek to create and assert the ABC identity in a way that is communicated to a wider audience.

My research addressed two main questions. Firstly, how do influences on the diverse cultural identity constructions of Australian-born Chinese affect their sense of belonging, particularly in the borderlines between cultures? Secondly, how can printmaking be used in innovative ways to express this diversity and represent the persistent search for a sense of place? My premise for this thesis is that individuals continually oscillate amongst a variety of spaces between cultures, searching for the optimum balance on the borderlines of these cultures.

This doctoral thesis is comprised predominantly of studio work and is supported by a written exegesis. The culmination of my studio practice is an exhibition at Mayfair
on Harriet Gallery in Darwin. Studio practice was paramount to this thesis and emphasis was on the investigation process, amalgamation of techniques and qualities and effects of chosen materials. The exegesis provides a theoretical background to the concepts investigated in my studio practice, and an explanation of my studio work.

To explain the context, I need to provide some background. Chinese diasporic groups are located throughout the world. Chinese migrants have been travelling to Australia, including Darwin in the Northern Territory, since the late 1800s. Many remained in Australia and consequently have families of second, third and fourth generations of Australian-born descendants. It is clear that immigrants from all countries often have identity issues in the process of settling in the new country (Wilton 2004). However, subsequent Australian-born generations also frequently have issues with their sense of belonging. Australian-born Chinese, often referred to as ABCs, sometimes feel confused about their place within or between cultures, and are seeking a sense of place within multicultural Australia (Ngan, LL-S & Chan 2012). A century after discriminatory immigration and political policies such as the White Australia Policy, where a person’s identity is not now necessarily linked to their appearance as a representative of an ethnic or cultural group, it is imperative to address the imbalance of the long-lasting effects of these policies on subsequent generations. On the cusp of what is being termed the Asian Century (Henry 2012), the time is paramount for Australians not only to consider relations with Asian countries, but the generations of Australian-born descendants of the Asian diaspora within Australia. My research endeavours, through an emphasis on printmaking, to highlight the issues of cultural identity faced by ABCs, encourage empathy and greater understanding of the situation by those who view my work or read this exegesis.

As an ABC artist, my doctoral research focused on the cultural hybrid identities and spaces experienced by ABCs, highlighting the loss of heritage culture and language through the generations. While some of my studio work for this project reflects my current place and time of Darwin, the Northern Territory and Australia, it also encompasses past times and places of previous generations in China and Australia.
Aims
The main aims of this research project have been:

• to identify the qualities and concerns, that are important to ABCs regarding cultural identity construction positioning this within Australian society through historical and personal accounts;
• to investigate the influence of environmental and heritage cultures on these identity constructions, particularly focusing on the extent of heritage language retention through the generations.
• to explore ways in which individual experiences and beliefs can be expressed through visual arts, highlighting common themes of diaspora, language, cultural practices and inclusion/exclusion in the dominant culture.
• to express my Chineseness through new visual representations, drawing primarily on my printmaking background and extending this to new levels.

Artist as Researcher
As an artist, I have been constantly challenged to explore innovative visual representations of this search for self and place, which highlighted biological and environmental influences of culture, language, society and spirituality. The development of my art medium as a printmaker began with studies in textile printing, followed by undergraduate studies in a variety of printmaking techniques culminating in an internship and employment at the Northern Editions printmaking studio and gallery focusing on editioning printmaking. I was drawn to printmaking for its numerous possibilities of imagery through layering and repetition. My interest in creating three-dimensional works of print stemmed from my initial textile printing experience in my graduate work in 2006.

For this research project, I was interested in pushing the boundaries by combining two or more printmaking techniques in a single image and to create three-dimensional forms of printmaking. To achieve the latter, I sought to combine printmaking techniques with other media or to convert prints into three-dimensional forms through paper constructions.
My upbringing as an ABC has embedded an enquiring attitude towards identity, individuality, culture and sense of belonging and place, and a motivation towards identity issues facing others of similar circumstances. However, this sense of enquiry was often suppressed in an effort to conform with the dominant society. Upon embarking on this research project, I have been compelled to pursue this point of enquiry to confront my Chineseness through my visual arts practice.

My principle motivation was to find new visual representations combining elements of the Australian and Chinese cultures through imagery, technique and media. As a professional editioning printmaker, I was interested in extending my printmaking techniques as well as in creating multiples. However, as an artist, I was not concerned with creating exact multiples as in editioning, but in creating a series of individual works using multiples.

**Significance**

This research was of personal significance as an interrogation into self-identity, particularly investigating the spaces between cultures or being situated on the edge of cultures and the feeling of difference or not belonging. As an ABC with four generations of Australian family members, I ventured beyond this place of not belonging and situated myself as belonging within the in-between spaces of the Australian and Chinese cultures. In addition to this in-depth journey into ‘self,’ this research has enabled me to increase my knowledge of my family history, heritage culture and the Chinese language as well as expand my studio practice to include more traditional Chinese visual formats.

The cultural significance of this research is that it provides a visual experience in which other ABCs can interact and relate experiences about similar historical and cultural identity issues. This can be extended to others of mixed cultures who are similarly affected by these issues of cultural identity, difference, exclusion and inclusion. Highlighting these issues through visual representations can have the effect of increasing awareness in others in their relationships and dealings with individuals of mixed cultures. The importance of language in identity construction and the need to address the issue of heritage language retention is also highlighted.
Furthermore, this research is significant to visual arts in that it investigates new visual representations that combine imagery of Australian and Chinese cultures, as well as integrating various printmaking techniques into innovative visual expressions amalgamating printmaking with other media to three-dimensional forms. While a number of artists utilise prints into three-dimensional forms or installations and other artists create three-dimensional silk paper forms, little is known of artists who combine printmaking with hand-made silk paper forms. Within my works, I combine imagery of two cultural worlds. The Australian imagery I have chosen focuses on Northern Australia, particularly North Queensland and the Northern Territory, while the Chinese imagery I utilised is predominantly fragmented calligraphy and personal notions of home. Expressing the traditionally two-dimensional printmaking works in three-dimensional form particularly with silk paper, provides added challenges to established printmaking studio practice.

Methodology and Methods

The methodology for this visual arts research project was multi-focal, and consisted of the following approaches:

- conducting an extensive literature review of the Chinese diaspora in Australia, heritage language retention and the art practices of Asian-Australian artists;
- completing a survey and interviews;
- learning language and culture through travels to China;
- integrating learning from research in ongoing studio practice.

The literature review was multi-disciplinary comprising aspects of history, cultural studies, and visual arts. The impetus for my independent survey was to produce visual data for my studio practice and provide biographical data for my exegesis. My studio practice involved reflective practice wherein personal experience as an ABC and exploring Chineseness informed my studio work.
Literature Review

The literature review is composed of three sections:

1. the history of the Chinese diaspora in Australia
2. the retention of heritage language and culture in relation to ABCs
3. the art practices of Asian-Australian artists.

Historical methods were important to gather a timeline of facts and consider biographical incidents in relation to past and present social and political climates (D'Alleva 2005). As a basis for these investigations, I started with my own family history and viewed it in relation to a chronological timeline. This helped me understand how the cultural context affected my own family members. Hence, I was able to link these to the wider ABC art community. Historical research methods used included assessing books, journals, videos, government records, historical signage, field trips, oral accounts and museum displays. It was important to consider a wide range of data to include official and independent historical accounts (Ezzy 2002). I identified and analysed older and more recent literature through databases, digital media and library catalogues. I determined the broad field as well as the specific areas of literature for my research through a process of elimination. I then synthesised this literature through my studio practice to produce artworks.

In the first instance, I researched the literature on the history of the Chinese diaspora in Australia from the first immigrants and included some of my family members. I was interested in how these individuals encountered the Australian culture and environment, and their experiences in all aspects of their lives including work and social activities as these experiences helped to shape their identities and consequently had influences on their descendants and their identity constructions (Reeves & Mountford 2011; Wilton 2004). I was particularly fascinated in the Chinese in the Northern Territory as this was where my first paternal family members immigrated and is my present place of residence. Extending on the literature review, I visited the heritage site of Brock’s Creek gold mine in the Northern Territory where members of my paternal family lived. I photographed the environment where they lived and remnants of the activities in the township at that time. I was particularly keen to find Chinese pottery shards, as I was interested in using pottery or the Chinese ceramic shapes in my art practice. With respect to my
family history, while there were some written accounts, I had to rely on additional oral accounts from family members. These I recorded in my journals and in digital format.

The second part of the literature review involved researching the retention of heritage language and culture through the generations, particularly in relation to ABCs. I was interested in whether or not, my position as an ABC with limited heritage language and cultural knowledge was the ‘norm’. Therefore it was important to review studies conducted in this area of research in Australia and other countries, such as Tannenbaum (2003) and Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe (2009). I considered studies on heritage language retention in general as well as studies on the retention of Chinese languages as this addressed the broader scope as well as the Chinese language in particular. I also investigated environmental and inherent influences on cultural identity construction.

In the third area of the literature review, I researched the art practices of Asian-Australian artists to distinguish similar and dissimilar art practices and themes from my own. I then focused on artists of Chinese heritage who were born in or spent most of their lives in Australia in order to situate myself within this field. I concentrated on the themes of family and home, language, spiritualism and socio-political concerns as they affect individual identity construction. I researched these artists’ heritage backgrounds and artworks that addressed the above themes to evaluate the differences between theirs and my own art practice. I conducted this research through books, journals, exhibition catalogues and digital media.

Survey and Interviews
In 2010/11, I undertook a survey of ABCs to try to establish the extent to which Chinese language and cultural activities were being passed on through the generations and the effect of the White Australia Policy and discrimination. This was to gauge the effect of these issues on individual identity of participants. The survey was also used to compare my situation of limited heritage and culture against a selection of the ABC community. The eventual intention for this process was to integrate these interviews and questionnaires, including the stories and comments of participants, into my artwork. In order to conduct the survey, I undertook the
process of applying for ethics clearance from the Human Research Ethics Committee at Charles Darwin University. The ethical considerations taken into account in conducting this survey were the participants’ privacy and confidentiality and their emotional states in delving into memories or issues of discrimination.

The aim of qualitative research such as interviewing “is to allow the voice of the ‘other’...to inform the researcher (Ezzy 2002, p. 64). Although the study was informative to my studio practice, as Ngan (2008) found, there are some issues with undertaking such studies in ABCs in that some who did not identify with the Chinese culture or had limited knowledge or interest in the Chinese culture, felt they did not qualify to participate.

I chose three areas in which to concentrate my survey – Darwin, Innisfail and Brisbane/Gold Coast, as these were areas I knew had populations of Chinese immigrants and their descendants and were more easily assessable to me. The target group was ABCs who had at least one parent of Chinese heritage. The questionnaire consisted of a combination of closed and open questions in order to obtain statistical data as well as provide opportunities for participants to give more comprehensive explanations and biographical details (Kopac 1991). Examples of the questionnaires, consent forms and project details are in Appendix 2. The questionnaires were issued and received by post, hand delivery or electronically. Of the 48 questionnaires distributed, 19 were returned, giving a response rate of 39 percent. The data was analysed comparatively under the key criteria of generation of Australians¹, identity, language, cultural practices, religious beliefs and discrimination. Some participants also agreed to participate in a video interview. Eight interviews were conducted. Details and results are discussed in chapter five.

**Studio Practice**

**Studio**

An ongoing and major area of research throughout the duration of this project was practice-based investigation in the visual arts studio. This was paramount to applying my critical thinking and thus informing my arts practice to obtain results and resolve artworks. My work has been enlightened by the notion that while
maximum exploration can result in enormous possibilities in creative practice, maintaining balance is crucial in maintaining achievable outcomes. This equates with the Taoist philosophy of yin and yang through finding the balance in all things. Art practice as research “has the potential to make important contributions to contemporary art, culture and education in the broadest possible sense” (Sullivan 2010, p. 88). Hence, visual arts research was founded on an interdisciplinary framework that included critical theory, reflective practice and biography, but centred on the creative process in which experimentation was paramount. In the creative field, it is important to have a broad knowledge across disciplines to enhance creativity (Alvesson & Skolberg 2000). Stewart (2001) refers to this multidisciplinary framework of combining research processes and procedures as a bricolage where various knowledge bases come together to solve problems through practical means. “The construction changes and takes new forms as different tools; methods and techniques are added to the puzzle” (Stewart 2001, p. 5). Therefore, exploration and flexible methods were important in my studio practice as clearly described by Sullivan (2010, p. 99):

“the nature of art practice as research is that it is a creative and critical process that accepts that knowledge and understanding continually change, methods are flexible, and outcomes are often unanticipated, yet possibilities are opened up for revealing what we don’t know as a means to challenge what we do know”.

Reflective Practice

Much of my studio work was informed by personal experience. This involved participation and immersion in Chinese language and culture, in Australia and China, to determine the effects on self-identity and extend this to influence my art practice.

Learning Language and Culture
As a means of experimentation of self, I studied Chinese language (Putonghua) by undertaking units at Charles Darwin University and in China. My reason for this experimentation was to determine the effect, if any, of language on my cultural identity and the perception of my cultural identity by others. I also increased my knowledge of Chinese cultural activities by participating in some events linked to
these language classes such as Chinese calligraphy, cooking, music and exercises such as Tai Chi. My aim was to consider any changes to my level of Chineseness as a result of these language and cultural activities.

**Travel to China**

Extending on my exploration of individual identity construction, I undertook two trips to China. As mentioned above, my principle aim was to gauge the effect learning Chinese language and undertaking cultural activities and traditional Chinese visual arts research would have on how I viewed myself culturally and whether this form of research would increase my Chineseness to myself or others.

The first journey to China was to Haikou in Hainan Island for four weeks to study Chinese language. This was an organised intensive language unit through Charles Darwin University and informed my exploration of identity construction and how I approached my art. The second journey totalled four months and entailed two months in Hangzhou, Zhejian Province and two months in Haikou, Hainan Island. During these four months, I researched traditional Chinese woodblock printing and water-ink painting through an applied approach. The purpose of this research was to increase cultural knowledge through traditional art forms and integrate these techniques into my arts practice. My methods included undertaking a number of technical activities in printmaking and painting as well as calligraphy and the making of traditional printmaking tools. I also documented a daily written and photographic account of these activities as well as language, cultural, social and environmental encounters.

**Form and Imagery**

The literature review, the travel explorations, the survey and interviews, the language learning and art skill development all informed my practice. In my studio work, I concentrated on printmaking techniques with sculpture, painting and installation. I also used video animation. The printmaking techniques included etching, plate lithography, screenprint and Chinese woodcut as I sought to expand my established expertise in printmaking. I wanted to enhance this knowledge through incorporating the known and unknown. Therefore, I combined these printmaking skills with acrylic painting and Chinese water-ink painting to achieve
different effects. I also experimented with pottery shapes and writing calligraphy on ceramics. However, these did not convey the transitory and ephemeral concepts and aesthetics I was intending in this project, so were not included in my doctoral exhibition. I combined printmaking techniques with silk papermaking as these forms and medium extended on the concepts of exploring Chineseness in this research activity.

Chinese calligraphy played a large part in my studio practice. Chinese calligraphic characters were used extensively throughout my art practice, as language was an important element in exploring Chinese identity. The meditative nature of practising calligraphic strokes was also an important aspect of my methodology, emulating the repetitive nature of printmaking. Also, the importance of balance of strokes and characters in Chinese calligraphy mirrors the systematic process of finding balance in composition and aesthetic, which is one of the keystones of my studio practice, and reflects Taoist influence.

Much of the imagery used in my studio practice was sourced through photographs as I have a keen interest in photography and the editing process. It was also an expeditious method of collating imagery of natural and urban landscapes in certain lighting conditions. I photographed images of the Australian and Chinese environments on a digital camera and also used old family portrait photographs, as these images would best relate the concepts I was aiming to portray in this research project.

In my final artwork, as part of the survey I conducted as mentioned above, I took video footage of interviews and later combined these with animation of text from the questionnaires and other imagery. I undertook a steep learning curve in using video-editing and motion software to create this video animation work. I chose this method of studio work, as I wanted the voices of other ABCs to tell their own stories. My aim was to combine stories, comments and imagery of a selection of ABCs to portray the variety of identity constructions from the in-between spaces of the Australian and Chinese cultures.
**Documentation**

Another aspect of my studio practice was using journals to sketch images, collate and consolidate ideas on all areas of the art making process from the initial concept to the display possibilities. Note taking was also important to record the technical details of the various printmaking methods and to record colour proofing and editioning details. Documentation was recorded in visual art journals and in digital form on the computer.

**Experimentation**

This studio practice comprised combinations of experimenting with new techniques and media with those previously used in order to extend the boundaries of established art practice. I was particularly keen to combine printmaking techniques with three-dimensional forms or to transform completed two-dimensional prints into three-dimensional constructions. I combined screenprinting and woodblock printing with silk paper making or painting. These processes are described in more detail in chapter five. I also manipulated etched lino prints on paper into folded forms. Therefore, initial research was concerned with experimental projects to achieve the desired balance of imagery, form, colour, aesthetic, technique and media.

An exhibition of artworks has been the culmination of my studio practice, questioning and representing the cultural identity constructions of Australians with Chinese heritage, in particular, those born in Australia. Images of my family members in some of these works evoke the promise of a new life, the embracing of a new culture while retaining a little of the heritage culture. Their sometimes semi-transparent images portray the fading of the heritage culture into the new environment. Some of these works examine the importance of retaining heritage language and culture through the generations. Other works are concerned with the multiple identity constructions of Chinese-Australians, highlighting the spaces and intersections between the cultures.
Chapter Outline

Following this introduction, I explore the natural, social, economic and political environments, including forms of hardship and discrimination, encountered by the Chinese diaspora to Australia. In chapter two I access historical and biographical sources in order to assess how government policies and regulations as well as societal practices of exclusion and inclusion have shaped individual identity and determine the effect on on-going generations. This chapter contains an historical background of the beginnings of Chinese immigration and settlement in Australia particularly to the Northern Territory. In addition, the chapter examines some of the experiences of Chinese immigrants and their Australian and Chinese born descendants, including incidents of hardship and discrimination such as those described by Jones (2005; 2004). Included in this historical narrative are the stories of some of my ancestors.

Chapter three focuses on identity in relation to hybridity, cultural difference, multiple identity constructions and the importance of language and culture in the formation of identity as analysed by theorists such as Bhabha (1995), Hall (1996), Ang (2001), Chen (1998) and Chan (2000). In the exploration of these factors, which affect cultural identity construction, I focus on the multitude of identity constructions of Chinese-Australians, as these are essential to the conceptual underpinning of my work. I discuss a number of terms used to describe these multi-faceted identity constructions by theorists mentioned above such as ‘Other’ and ‘hybrid’ and the more descriptive Chinese terms of Wang Gungwu and Wang Lingchi (Chan, H 1999). Through this examination, language and culture are identified as influencing factors. Therefore, the importance of retaining heritage language and cultural practices through subsequent generations is also explored in this chapter. Theoretical frameworks including studies by Pink (2009); Tannenbaum (2003); Portes & Hao (1998); Luke & Luke (2000) are applied in analysis. I investigate the effects of negative social and political practices on heritage language retention from late nineteenth to twentieth century Australia (Tan, C 2003; Tannenbaum 2003).
In chapter four I discuss the artworks of some Asian-Australian artists, particularly a number of ABC artists such as Lindy Lee and William Yang, and those who have lived most of their lives in Australia. I locate my artwork beside the work of these artists in relation to similarities and differences. This chapter focuses on the themes that have been explored by these artists as related to my work. These include topics of Chinese migration, diaspora and cultural identity.

In chapter five I explain the progression of my studio practice. This chapter is comprised of three sections outlining a visual journey into the creative process of finding cultural ‘self’. The first section of chapter five details artworks that focus on my families’ stories of migration and integration into Australian society. These scroll works explore the Chinese diaspora in Australia from the sojourner to the settler and subsequent generations, and the influences of the heritage and new environments on cultural identity constructions. I also examine the multiple cultural identity constructions and the spaces in between cultures that these individuals may occupy through an installation work comprising screenprinted silk paper forms. This installation illustrates that individuals continually oscillate amongst the in-between spaces between cultures depending on different circumstances.

In the second section, I explain the development of the series of printed scrolls and the inter-relation between the ambience of Northern Territory landscapes and the meditative action of practising Chinese calligraphy and explore the concept of environmental and inherent influences on cultural identity construction. Through an assemblage of works, I consider personal experience in relation to the theoretical field discussed in chapter three. This investigation into self-identity through studying the Chinese language Putonghua and spending time in China on two occasions was necessary in measuring levels of change in my sense of Chineseness. The resultant works express the influences of Chinese art forms on my studio practice as well as explore multiple notions of ‘home’.

In the third section, I describe how my own study of ABCs informs my work, and discuss these findings in comparison to previous studies as examined in chapter three. In this comparison, I detail the process of my audio-visual work and discuss biographical information from this survey on a number of issues relating to identity
construction, heritage language and cultural practices, and participants’ stories relating to discrimination.

Chapter six, as the conclusion of my research, discusses key findings and recommendations based on literature review, survey and interviews and most importantly through my work in the studio. Through a focus on printmaking, I highlight the multitudinous variety of continuously changing positions from which ABCs project their individual cultural identities. I make recommendations on how to address some of the issues and concerns encountered in determining a sense of belonging from these positions and establish a basis for future works.

**Conclusion**

This doctoral practice-based research, *Balancing on Borderlines*, investigates the diverse cultural identity constructions of Australian-born Chinese and the struggle to find a sense of belonging in the borderlines between cultures, highlighting the loss of heritage language and culture through subsequent generations. My aim has been to express these concepts through studio practice. In addition, I expressed my Chineseness through new visual artworks, expanding on my printmaking practice to combine techniques, forms, imagery and media of Australian and Chinese cultures.

This research is of personal and broader cultural and national significance providing new visual representations of identity constructions of ABCs to which people in Australia can relate. Not only has it increased my knowledge of my family history, heritage language and culture and extended my studio practice, this work has also highlighted extensive issues concerning the cultural identity of ABCs and others of mixed heritage. Heritage language retention levels and points of inclusion and exclusion in social, political and employment situations are explained. This research has strongly reinforced the idea that there are a multitude of cultural identity constructions that continually change and move amongst the borderline spaces.
The methodology for this research project was predominantly studio practice underpinned by theory. My studio practice consisted of combining a number of printmaking techniques with other media to achieve two-dimensional and three-dimensional artworks. The survey of other ABCs provided valuable information for my studio practice through interviews and comments. Spending time in China provided significant input into my art practice, technically and aesthetically, as well as affording valuable perceptions into Chinese identity construction, self-identity, Chinese language, art and culture. It also presented an insight into the lives of my ancestors and the hardships they may have faced in China and in travelling to and from Australia, which I address in the following chapter.
Chapter One Notes

1 First, Second, Third Generation Australian

The terms first, second, third or fourth generation Australian can be difficult classifications to apply. The Australian Bureau of Statistics classifies a first generation Australian as one born overseas who has migrated to Australia and a second generation Australian as an individual with one or both parents born overseas (Pink 2009). However, these classifications do not take into account those who travelled backwards and forwards between countries where some Australian-born persons may have had children born overseas before returning with them to Australia. For example, my paternal great grandfather who migrated from China, would be classified a first generation Australian; my paternal grandfather who was born in Australia, but whose parents were born in China would be classified as a second generation Australian; my father who was born in Macau, immigrated when he was six years old and who’s mother was born in China, would be classified as a first generation Australian; my mother would be a second generation Australian; I would also be classified as a second generation Australian as my father was born in China. Therefore, three generations of our family would all be classified as second generation Australians although these individuals have lived all or most of their lives in Australia. Throughout my life, I have considered my siblings and myself as the third generation of my family to be born in Australia.
Chapter 2

My Story and History
As the above quote from Confucius (Ovenden 2007) states, it is necessary to review past occurrences in order to determine a future pathway. It is with this in mind that I begin my research by examining historical literature. In this chapter I explore forms of inclusion and exclusion and how these affect cultural identity. I focus on issues relating to language, cultural and societal assimilation in the period of Chinese immigration to Australia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries through historical, biographical and autobiographical accounts. In analysing these narratives, I argue that immigration policies, social regulations of exclusion and assimilation practices, enforced in nineteenth and twentieth century Australia, have had long-lasting effects on individual identity, spanning generations.

This chapter contains a brief outline of the history of Chinese diasporic movements to Australia, particularly to the Northern Territory. Interwoven with this history, I tell the stories of my family forebears. In constructing my family stories, I relied partially on oral accounts from surviving relatives as very little of their history is in written form. Therefore, names and details are accurate to the best of my knowledge.

The combination of my family story and historical accounts are important to my own identity construction and provide essential background support for my practice-based research into identity issues facing ABCs. In particular, images of my family members initially motivated the studio practice for this research project. These family portrait photographs and stories informed a number of artworks in this research, detailed in chapter seven. To provide a context for this work, I begin with the story of my great grandparents and their immigration to and settlement in Australia, the process of assimilation into Australian society for the Chinese and the affect this had on my family and others. Incidents of inclusion and exclusion are apparent in this history. Their lives are described in two areas in the north of Australia: North Queensland and the Top End of the Northern Territory.
The initial research was into my own family history. My paternal great-grandparents (Figure 1) and my maternal grandfather (Figure 4) came to Australia from China. Much of the information of their lives is unclear due to lack of records or communications surrounding their history. However, I have attempted to outline their stories and their place in the history of Chinese migration to Australia through my art practice as well as through this written account. (See Table 1 for timeline).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1810</td>
<td>First Chinese migrants to Australia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>Hong Kong established as British settlement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td>Maternal grandfather Charles Lee On is born in Canton, China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858/1860</td>
<td>Treaties enabling free movement between British territories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870s</td>
<td>Discovery of gold at Palmer River, North Queensland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>First Chinese migrants to Northern Territory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880s</td>
<td>Maternal great grandfather, Charles Lee On migrates to Cooktown, North Queensland in search of gold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890s</td>
<td>Paternal great grandparents, Lee In Lin and Lee Sieu King, migrate to Darwin Northern Territory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>Maternal grandmother, May Ah Moy is born in Darwin Northern Territory.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1901       | Introduction of the Immigration Restriction Act (1), later known as the White Australia Policy.  
Paternal great grandparents’ first child, Katie Lee (Ah Choy) is born. |
| 1903       | Paternal great grandparents’ second child, Charlie Lee (See Nam) is born |
| 1905       | Paternal grandfather, William Lee (See Yiu) is born at Brock’s Creek.   |
| 1908       | Maternal grandparents, Charles Lee On and May Kwong, formally Ah Moy marry. |
| 1909       | Paternal great grandparents’ fourth child, Clare Lee is born  
Paternal great grandmother dies. Great grandfather and three eldest children move to China. |
| 1913       | Paternal grandfather’s sister, Katie Lee (Ah Choy) returns to Australia through an arranged marriage with Leong See of Atherton, North Queensland. |
| 1919       | Paternal grandfather, William Lee (See Yiu) returned to Brock’s Creek.  
Paris Peace Conference – no support of racial equality within the League of Nations. |
| 1920       | Chinese population in Australia halved.  
Vestey’s meatworks in Northern Territory closed. |
| 1923       | Paternal grandfather, William Lee (See Yiu) returns to China to marry Wang Lieu Jang.  |
| 1924       | Paternal grandfather, William Lee (See Yiu) returns to Australia with brother Charlie Lee (See Nam), this time to Innisfail North Queensland. |
| 1931       | William Lee (See Yiu) and Charlie Lee (See Nam) buy a house in Macau for their families. |
| 1932       | My father, James Lee is born in Macau.  
My mother, Beryl Lee On is born in Innisfail. |
| 1934       | Australian immigration restrictions relaxed for wives and families.    |
| 1939       | My father (James) his mother (Lily) and brother, Neville migrate to Australia. |
| 1946       | Australian immigration request my father and uncle return to China.     |
A number of historical events led to the migration of my ancestors to Australia as summarised in Table 1. Chinese had been trading with coastal South East Asia or Nanyang (Southern Ocean), on a regular basis at least since the eleventh century (Wang 1992), and with northern Australia mainly through Makassa (now known as Ujang Padang) from around the middle of the seventeenth century (Ganter 2001). While there was some settlement of these Chinese traders to some countries in the Nanyang, the earliest records of Chinese migrants to Australia were in the late 1810s (Markus 2001). Produce such as tea, ginger, rice, silk and cane furniture was being imported from China and a few of Australia’s first Chinese immigrants were on these ships (Wilton 2004). The decline of the Chinese economy and rebellion contributed to an increase in Chinese migration. Following the success of the British in the “Opium War”, the establishment of Hong Kong as a British settlement in 1842 was the precursor to a number of treaties between Britain and China (Wang 1992).

In order to assist access to the Chinese opium trade, the British established treaties of Tientsin (1858) and Peking (1860), which provided for free movement between British territories and the treaty ports of China for all peoples (Fitzgerald 2007; Jones, TG 2005). In Australia, this resulted in increased migration mainly from Kwangtung Province to Victoria and New South Wales initially (Jones, TG 2005). In addition, as the transportation of British convicts had ceased by the early 1840s, indentured Chinese labourers were brought to these areas to fulfil the labour shortage on rural properties as shepherds, cooks, stockmen, hutkeepers, shearsers and labourers (Wilton 2004). Others were lured to the goldfields in New South Wales and Victoria, but discrimination and violence in these states, and the discovery of gold in the north, particularly at Palmer River, lured many to the north in the 1870s (Jones, TG 2005). My maternal grandfather, Charles Leeon, (who was born in Canton), was one of those who tried his luck on the goldfields in North Queensland. He arrived in Cooktown from China in the 1880s, but was not successful in his pursuit of gold.

The first Chinese to arrive in the Northern Territory in 1874 were from Singapore and neighbouring countries. Subsequent groups came from China, mainly from Fukien (Fujian) and Kwangtung (Guangdong) Provinces. According to Yee (2006), emigration at this time was considered illegal by the Chinese government. The
dialects of these Chinese were mainly Sam Yap, Sze Yap, Hakka and Heungsan. My paternal great-grandparents came to Australia from Toi San, See Yup district, Kwangtung Province in the late nineteenth century and spoke Sze Yap (See Yup) dialect. My great-grandfather (Lee In Lin) was a rice farmer. Like many of the Chinese diaspora, they were lured to the goldfields to earn a more profitable living than they could in their native country. My great-grandparents journeyed to the Zapopan Gold Mine near Pine Creek in the Northern Territory. My great-grandparents’ four children – Katie (Ah Choy), Charles (See Nam), William (See Yiu, my grandfather) and Clare - were born at Brock’s Creek.

The Brock’s Creek town consisted of stores, a hotel, tailor, living quarters for the miners, a Chinese temple, Chinese kiln, cemetery as well as the mines. The Brocks Creek Chinese temple (Figure 2) was built in honour of a great warrior statesman, Kwan Sing Di and the Goddess of Mercy, Kwan Yin (Government 2007).

![Figure 2](image)

Jones (2005) suggests that the temple was probably built between 1894-97 of a bush timber frame, clad and roofed with corrugated galvanised iron with concrete floor. Inside the temple were a large statue, tapestries, bamboo and decorations. Gold-
painted Chinese calligraphy, representing names of departed community members, adorned the walls. Two stone lions imported from China, guarded the entrance. The religions practised were Buddhism and Taoism, as are practised within the Chung Wah Society in present-day Darwin (Jones 2005).

However, the peaceful and hard-working life of the Chinese miners and their families was disrupted for a number of reasons. The success of the Chinese miners contributed to an Australia-wide discrimination towards Chinese (Yee 2006). In addition, the introduction of indentured Chinese miners from the 1870s resulted in their inability to hold mine leases. Violence often erupted on the minefields and the Chinese received no support from the authorities. In fact, pressure from “white” society fuelled the development of the draft Restriction Bill 1888 to halt immigration to “all coloured races” (ABC 2001). In addition, Commonwealth parliamentary Acts were introduced to limit Chinese business licences (Jones, TG 2005). Thus, with Federation in 1901, the introduction of the Immigration Restriction Act (1), later known as the White Australia Policy, was straightforward legislation. At the time, Professor Pearson stated "we are guarding the last part of the world in which the higher races can live and increase freely for the higher civilization" (Yee 2006, p. 24). This legislation and the cultural paradigm it reflects, had far-reaching effects on people already living in Australia.

Furthermore, the fluctuations in the mining industry from 1901 to 1910 were directly related to political uncertainty with South Australia wanting to hand the Northern Territory over to the Commonwealth. Much of the English investment in mining in the Northern Territory was fraught with problems ranging from insufficient capital to pay wages to incidents of fraud and superficial interest and installation of dilapidated machinery (Jones, TG 2005). Many Chinese started returning to China, resulting in a decline in the mining industry. In 1888, there were approximately 50,000 Chinese, but by 1901, there were 30,000 Chinese included in the 3.5 million Australians (ABC 2001; Hickey & Shackleford 2010). However, in the Northern Territory, the Chinese population of 2733 was triple that of Europeans (Langfield 2001).

Even so, the Brock’s Creek Mine was mined successfully by Chinese tributers, (where a lease owner rented his claim out for a percentage of the findings), until
1902 when creditors foreclosed (Jones, TG 2005). A local group of Territorians and Chinese bought the buildings and machinery and by 1905, the main shaft was taken over by Chinese tributers with the result of increased production. Further attempts to restrict Chinese working mines through legislation occurred from 1906 to 1909. However, the chief warden at the time warned "the majority of mines [were] being held by naturalised Chinese, and worked solely by their countrymen, principally under tribute agreements…To forbid this…would result in the closing down of nearly all our mines..."[Donovan (1988) as cited in Fletcher (2006, p. 45)]. This gave some reprieve to national policy pressures for people in the north.

When my paternal great-grandmother died in Brock’s Creek, my great-grandfather returned to China with the three eldest children, leaving two-year old, Clare, with the Chun Tie family who later moved to Townsville. The year was 1909 and my grandfather was four years old. On returning to Toi San, China (Figure 3), my great-grandfather remarried.

Figure 3 Gate to Toi San village. See Yup district, Kwangtung Province China, photograph, N. Lee collection.
Meanwhile in North Queensland, my maternal grandfather, Charles Lee On tried unsuccessfully to harvest corn on the Atherton Tablelands. In 1908 he married my maternal grandmother, May Kwong, formerly Ah Moy, who had been born in Darwin (Figure 4). They moved to Innisfail to become shopkeepers, living at the rear of their store. They had eight children- Daisy, Ruby, Claude, Henry, Tom, Eddie, Grace and Beryl (my mother). In 1919, at the age of 14, my paternal grandfather returned to Brock’s Creek. Because he was born in Australia, my grandfather was able to return to Australia without much difficulty. Later he worked in Darwin pushing a manual fan at a tailor’s college and eventually did a three-year apprenticeship as a tailor.
Throughout the early 20th century, the White Australia Policy was being aggressively pursued on a national and international level. The Japanese attempted to address this issue of racial discrimination on an international level through insisting on racial equality within the League of Nations at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. The Australian Prime Minister, Billy Hughes, would not support the racial equality proposal, as it would ultimately challenge the White Australia Policy. Although a majority vote favoured support of the Japanese proposal, it was not unanimous and consequently, was not passed (Hickey & Shackleford 2010). Consequently, Australia’s strict immigration policy persisted. By 1920, the Chinese population in Australia had halved since Federation (Langfield 2001). Some challenged the Government over the practicality of the immigration restrictions for northern Australia due to the difficulty of encouraging settlement of “whites” to these parts of Australia. While some states tried to restrict the movements of non-White populations into their states, the Commonwealth Immigration Act 1901 enabled free movements within Australia to existing residents (Jones, TG 2005). This capacity to move freely is shown in my family history. Firstly, the closing down of Vestey’s meatworks in the Northern Territory in 1920, forced mass movements of workers to other areas (Langfield 2001). These occurrences influenced my paternal grandfather’s decision to pursue employment opportunities in Queensland where there were relatives.
There was also free movement between Australia and China. In 1923, my paternal grandfather (Figure 5) returned to China from Darwin to marry Wang Lieu Jang, a girl his father had chosen. He stayed there a year and spent four months studying English in Hong Kong. In 1924, my grandfather and his brother travelled to Australia, leaving their wives with relatives. This time, my grandfather disembarked in Cairns and went to Innisfail where he became employed in a grocery store. His brother, however, had to continue on the ship to Sydney as The Department of Immigration thought he had false papers. They could not understand that someone born in Australia wasn’t able to speak English. He was later cleared. The two brothers saved their money and eventually bought their own grocery business.

Figure 5 Charles Lee (See Nam) and William Lee (See Yiu), photograph, B. Lee Collection
Meanwhile, they took it in turns to visit their wives in China. In 1931, they decided to buy a house in Macau for their wives and my grandfather’s first child. The following year, my father, James, was born in Macau. In 1939, when my father was six and his brother was ten, my grandfather and his brother were finally allowed by the Australian government to bring their families to Australia. My grandparents’ other four children were born in Australia.

Meanwhile, mass migration of Britons, followed by white Europeans, continued to be aggressively pursued in Australia, especially after the Japanese bombing of Darwin in 1942. During World War II, 6,000 Chinese refugees provided labour for Australia. However, they were forced to return to China after the war (Hickey & Shackleford 2010). One of the main workings of the Commonwealth Immigration Restriction Act 1901 was the introduction of a dictation test comprising scientific or complicated text. The test could be given in any European language to increase difficulty. The test was given to all “‘aboriginal inhabitants of Africa, Asia and Polynesia” unless otherwise exempted and other “undesirables” (ABC 2001). However, those of “White races” were exempted unless they came under the “undesirable” criteria. Also exempted were those who had previously lived in Australia (Jones, TG 2005). This enabled people such as my grandfather to travel between China and Australia.

Nonetheless, only those of good character were given an exemption certificate to return to Australia and Chinese had limits placed on the duration they could be away from Australia (Markus 2001). The contentious dictation test was removed in the Migration Act of 1958 (Jones, TG 2005). Even so, the White Australia policy continued to affect all Asians including the Chinese living in Australia throughout the first half of the twentieth century resulting in the suppression of language and culture. In order to discourage settlement by Chinese, the government restricted the immigration of wives and families. However, in the 1920s, immigrating merchants were exempted from this restriction, resulting in some Chinese-Australians travelling to China and returning as merchants (Markus 2001). The restriction on wives and families was relaxed a little after 1934 as the government wished to increase trade with China (Markus 2001). In addition, there were some concessions for students to be educated in Australia with the provision that they return to China on completion.
of their studies or until the age of 24, whichever came sooner (Markus 2001). Consequently, these government decisions enabled my paternal grandfather to bring his family to Australia.

In 1946, the Department of Immigration requested that my father and his older brother return to China on completion of their schooling. Throughout Queensland and Western Australia in the early 1900s, there were employment restrictions enforced on the Chinese (Markus 2001). One of these restrictions was that Asian employees could not work for non-Asian businesses (Lee, WSY 1984). Interestingly for my family, this meant that my grandfather who was born in Australia could not employ his two eldest children who were born in China. However, my grandfather found a Chinese-owned business where his sons could be employed. Subsequent generations of my family were born in Australia, mainly based in North Queensland where they continued as merchants. These restrictions and policies had long-term effects on how my ancestors lived and thrived in Australia.

Eighteen years ago, employment brought my husband and me to the Northern Territory. It seems fitting that my research into ABCs and my family occurred in the place where my family first began their lives as Australians. It was fortunate for my family that my ancestors migrated to Australia during a period in the late nineteenth century before immigration restrictions became enforced. It was also fortunate that most of their descendants were born in Australia, enabling those such as my grandfather, to return to Australia to settle. The immigration restrictions, however, delayed the relocation of his wife and children to Australia. The history of Australian immigration policies, gold mining and mining policies impacted my family members’ life stories, steering their lives, and consequently my own, in certain directions. Some family members were directly affected by immigration and employment policies, which excluded them from participating in Australian society to the maximum extent.

While I cannot speak from personal experience on the highs and lows of immigrating to Australia, the written and oral accounts of my family members and the photographs of family portraits, social and business interactions and encountering their new environment demonstrate some of these emotions and experiences. It is
these accounts and images, which have been critical in informing my studio practice for this research activity. These indicate their inclusion in limited circumstances, assimilation into Australian social and cultural ways, as well as exclusion of ethnicity, culture and language.

**Australian Society: Exclusion / Inclusion**

Chinese immigrants faced many barriers in settling into Australian society. One of these barriers was occupational discrimination. While those arriving in Australia as indentured labourers under the Master and Servants Act were guaranteed work for five years, their wages, movements, and occupational opportunities were strictly controlled by their employers (Darnell 2001). Those who came for the gold mining were often met with attacks, robbery and finally legislation restricting ownership of mining leases and employment options (Jones, D 1973; Jones, TG 2005; Wilton 2001). Many of the early immigrants suffered verbal, psychological or physical abuse, in social and employment situations, which were often supported by government legislation (Fitzgerald 2007). Although immigration policies after 1902 restricted women from joining their husbands in Australia, some Chinese families finally managed to be reunited. Other Chinese men married Australians (Fitzgerald 2007). However, discrimination continued through employment, education, legislation, the media and community life, “ensuring that Chinese immigrants and their descendants would, for a long time, be identified among ‘the other’ in Australian society (Wilton 2001, p. 94).

Much of the discrimination stemmed from fear of competition in industries such as mining and business (Jones, TG 2005; Yee 2006). Legislation such as the 1896 Factories and Shop Act (Couchman 2001) and the 1906 Northern Territory Mining Act (Fletcher 2006) were established to restrict and regulate Chinese success in these industries. Couchman (2001) outlines the story of Leong Har, a Melbourne banana merchant who tried to bring his son from China to take over his business. Leong Har managed to obtain a Certificate of Exemption from Dictation Test (CEDT) for his son initially for a year and further extensions for a total of four years. However, his
son was eventually deported. During the Depression, fear that Chinese would work for less money than Australians caused further discrimination. In the 1880s and 1890s, Chinese shearers were barred from furthering their union membership and pastoralists employing Chinese workers were banned from union membership (Wilton 2004). The Chinese were resourceful, however, and tried other forms of obtaining a living such as market gardening, crop farming, fishing, furniture making and storekeeping. Many of these were trades they had undertaken in China.

Tan (2003) examined Chinese-Australians during the time of the white Australia policy, and how they were considered and treated as different and inferior. Most examples were from those growing up in the 1920s to the 1950s. Tan (2003) found that for many Chinese-Australians at the time, racism was encountered in schools from both teachers and students, as society’s discriminating labels were mirrored. She deemed that racial discrimination was more intense towards the Chinese than Greeks or Italians because their appearance was markedly different to white society. In some examples, which Tan (2003) described, several Chinese-Australians viewed being Chinese as a negative thing due to the treatment they endured. In addition, speaking other languages was not permitted at schools and some individuals were punished for doing so. This heavily influenced the loss of Chinese languages. It also explained why many Chinese-Australians assimilated so well into white society, discarding their Chinese language and customs. Tan (2003) suggested that children of migrant parents found it more difficult to assimilate than later generations, as these parents were keen to continue the language and customs they had brought with them to Australia. In my own experience, although my father was keen for us to learn his language, we did not want to be different from our peers for fear of being discriminated against.
My own experiences resonated those of Joyce Cheong Chin when she described her life in Pine Creek, Northern Territory in the 1940s. Because her parents were in business, they were encouraged to assimilate into white society and not retain any Chinese language and customs (Tan, C 2003). Rather than celebrate any Chinese festivals, the Chin children attended Sunday school. Many others were encouraged by their parents to always dress well and be clean so as to dissuade the attitude towards them of being dirty and unkempt (see Figure 6). This is not unlike my own experience where we went to church, private school and always dressed well. Even so, there was exclusion in the Northern Territory. During the period of the White Australia Policy, Chinese were not allowed to become members of sporting clubs.
In addition, at the cinema in Darwin, Chinese along with local Indigenous people, were not permitted to be seated upstairs with ‘white’ patrons (Yee 2006). However, the Chinese formed their own recreational groups. My mother was part of a social group that travelled throughout North Queensland attending dances and picnics (Lee 2011). Photographs of my parents on picnics, at social gatherings, dressed for dances or playing in tennis tournaments informed my studio practice, demonstrating themes of assimilation alongside exclusion into Australian culture.

Despite this apparent fear of competition in industry and xenophobic attitude in social settings in relation to Chinese immigrants and workers, many British and European Australians embraced some Chinese products. Chinese food was seen as a positive difference by white society, who thought some of this food was interesting and exotic (Tan, C 2003; Yee 2006). Chinese tea was a staple for many Australians and until the late nineteenth century was the only tea available in Australia (Jack 2001).

Tan (2003, p. 108) considered that “no matter how 'Australian' Chinese-Australians may feel or see themselves to be, they continue to be positioned within white Australian society as 'perpetually foreign'.” While there are many white Australians who have lived and worked alongside Chinese-Australians and do not share this sentiment, there remain xenophobic attitudes within white culture. The recent concerns of illegal immigrants in the present political environment have fuelled divisive attitudes towards individuals of Asian appearance. Hence the exploration of ABC cultural identity remains topical.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has provided a historical and familial foundation for my studio work, linking past life experiences of the Chinese diaspora to Australia with government legislation and societal activities during these times. I have provided a timeline of events that demonstrate the accumulative effects of inclusion and exclusion of the dominant society on the cultural identity constructions of the Chinese diaspora.
through the generations of my family. It highlights the importance of these historical events on present and future directions in regards to cultural identity and readdressing exclusionary actions.

The historical literature examined in this chapter reveals that discrimination and assimilation policies and practices that escalated in the period of the White Australia Policy directly and indirectly affected the lives and cultural identities of many Chinese-Australians. It also reveals the compromises individuals were forced to undertake regarding their heritage language and culture and the cumulative effects that subsequent losses had on future generations. For some immigrants, their journey ended back in China. For others, the struggle to come to Australia, remain and earn a living was fraught with hardships of countering government policies and discriminatory social practices. However, there are now several generations of ABCs with experiences of both exclusion and inclusion within the white Australian culture. While government policies have changed, there remain xenophobic attitudes within white society, which perpetuate discriminatory and exclusionary actions.

My familial story concentrates on my paternal ancestors as it demonstrates the constant journeying between countries and cultures experienced by many of the Chinese diaspora. It explores the personal, economic and social hardships encountered in maintaining family ties across two worlds and the lengths individuals will go to provide a better life for their families. It also provides the underpinning of the in-between-ness that many Australian-Chinese and Chinese-Australians have come to experience, which is discussed in the following chapter.
1 The Zapopan Gold Mine was renamed the Brock’s Creek Gold Mines in the 1890s.

2 The Chinese were not the only ones affected by the White Australia Policy. Under the Pacific Islanders Labourers Act (2), 9000 of the 10000 Pacific Islander labourers were deported, some leaving behind wives and children (ABC 2001).
Chapter 3

Multi-faceted Identities
In chapter two I examined inclusion and exclusion as important factors in identity construction through history, biography and reflective practice. This background analysis of the impact of government policy and regulation and societal practices was critical in informing my studio practice. At this point I direct my attention to the complex question of identity construction focusing on ‘hybrid’ or multi-faceted cultural identity, difference, cultural borderlines and factors which affect these identity constructions such as language, cultural, social and individual. I consider these topics within a theoretical context.

An examination of these factors was important to my studio practice as my focus, in conceptual terms, was on the multi-faceted cultural identity constructions, issues affecting these identities and the process of situating self within cultural environments. Addressing these issues through contemporary art practice highlights the position of Australian-born descendants of immigrants facing identity conflict and loss of heritage language and cultural practices to a national or even global level.

In this chapter, I draw upon material from a range of cultural, racial and language theorists. The focal issues of hybridity, ‘otherness’ and cultural identity in relation to the Chinese diaspora are discussed with reference to key theorists. Using studies in Australia and the United States of America, the extent of the Chinese language retention and cultural practices within the group of Chinese-Australians is examined, particularly the generations born in Australia. I argue that heritage language or lack thereof is an important issue, which requires on-going investigation. This, in turn, influences my art practice particularly through the Territory Impressions series (Figures 37-40).

I discuss environmental and heritage cultural influences on identity construction. I also consider representations of “Other” in relation to identity construction through discourses that accentuate contemporary theories of empowerment and individuality as they relate to historical imperialist racialism. This leads to analysis of ‘hybrid’ cultural identity constructions in relation to Australians with mixed cultural backgrounds and consider the complexity of identity constructions of Australians with Chinese heritage. My intention here is to give a background to my practice-based research into ‘hybrid’ or multi-faceted identities of ABCs. My work Multi-
Faceted Identities (Figure 32) examines the multitude of identity constructions of mixed cultures and intimates the oscillating nature of individuals through the multitude of these cultural identity spaces.

‘Others’ in ‘Hybrid’ Spaces

The concept of ‘Otherness’ stems from Western philosophical discourse. In the process of defining the self, comparisons have been made throughout history with the other. Colonialism was based on Imperialist thought of domination by the Empire and subordination of the ‘Other’ for the purposes of occupation and exploitation (Young, RJC 1995). Postcolonial theorists have sought to critique this concept of ‘Othering’ as a counterpoint to imperialist rationale.

One of the main forces in highlighting the discrepancies of this Western Colonialist fabrication of cultural identity of the ‘East’ was Said’s book “Orientalism”. According to Said (1979, p. 332), the identity of the ‘Other’ is constructed, which is “subject to continuous interpretation and re-interpretation of their differences from ‘us’”. According to Hall (1996, p. 6), identities are constructed representations formed “from the place of the Other” and forced on the individual. Therefore, these identities constructed through intellectual discourses are inadequate descriptions of an individual. However, these categories have also been used in order to understand ‘us’ and to differentiate ‘us’ from ‘Others’. The previous chapter described many incidents of ‘Othering’, which occurred throughout Australia’s history, initiating as well as stemming from the White Australia Policy. Fitzgerald (2007) declared that discrimination against Chinese-Australians was continuously reiterated in daily life through the exclusion from the classification as ‘Australian’. For example, in the Northern Territory, Chinese births were recorded under “Northern Territory of Australia Aliens Index (Birth) 1888-1922 (Yee 2006). These discourses and experiences of ‘Othering’ have inspired my works such as Made in Australia where text, imagery and the voices of others express incidents of exclusion (Figure 63).
The notion of hybridity stems from Eurocentric anthropological debate on species and race, and the argument against inter-racial unions arising throughout the colonial era (Young, RJC 1995). Hierarchical systems of power were formed on the basis of much of these arguments of difference, whiteness and purity and so-called scientific claims, and remained the dominant discourse for over a century. While some discourses were used to argue the case for declaring certain ethnicities, such as Africans, as different species and therefore to be situated at a lower level than Europeans, others questioned the pureness of Europeans and the British, stating evidence of interracial mixing (Young, RJC 1995). In fact, the English heralded their Anglo-Saxon mixture of Celts, Saxons, Normans and Danes as an indication of national strength: “We English may be proud of the results to which a mongrel breed and a hybrid race have led us” (The London Review 16 Feb 1861 cited in Young, 1995). Ironically, this attitude is in conflict with the imperialist notion of pureness and in contrast to the fabric of the ‘White Australia Policy’. This strict immigration policy discussed in chapter two was constructed through fear of the ‘Other’ from descendants of a colonial power of already ‘hybrids’.

In contemporary society, more positive attitudes have been emerging. Homi Bhabha has been instrumental in formulating and developing notions of ‘hybridity’, which have been critically debated in postcolonial studies. Bhabha advocates that notions of hybridity and difference can be debated in an alternative plane he labels as the ‘third space’ where historical notions of cultural difference can be renegotiated in a more positive light. “Communities negotiate "difference" through a borderline process that reveals the hybridity of cultural identity: they create a sense of themselves to and through an other” (Bhabha 1995, p. 16). Categories such as race, gender, homosexuality and religion have been used in the past to position individuals in a low or high level of social hierarchy: “Each age and society re-creates its ‘Others’” (Said 1979, p. 332). However, members of these groups have also recently used these same categories as places of empowerment. According to Bhabha (1995), the ‘Other’ is emerging to demand a halt to historical notions of ‘other’ and project a more accurate view on equal grounding. “His focus is on the nature of a claim that emerges between the recognition of exclusion and the demand for inclusion” (Papastergiadis 1998, p. 50).
Despite the progress made in understanding cultural difference and ‘Othering’, there are those such as Gilroy (2004) and Young (1995) who found that racialised ideas perpetuated through colonialism are still being perpetuated in contemporary cultural discourse. However, Bhabha (1995) maintains a positive attitude and cites Baldwin (1995) who states that in the process of recognising the ‘Other’ as equals in contemporary society, an environment is created which indicates more about the initiators to the victimised and where the initiators are forced to assess themselves and their actions.

While the term ‘hybridity’ was initially used in reference to interracial mixing in cultural discourses, the term broadened to include the cultural intermixing through migration and diaspora: “Hybridity is usually associated with the effects of multiple cultural attachments on identity or the process of cultural mixture” (Papastergiadis 2005, p. 40). It is these broader notions of ‘hybridity’ that motivated me to investigate the major influences on these various constructions of ‘hybridity’ in relation to Australians with Chinese heritage and Chineseness, which I delve into in the following section. It is also this position of ‘hybridity’ that has been a major spearhead for my studio practice.

**Multitude of Chinese-Australian Identities and Chineseness**

Stereotypical representations of the Chinese diaspora in Australia, together with theoretical frameworks of assimilation through generations have been key factors in limiting the mainstream perception of the individual Australian with Chinese heritage. Members of the Chinese diaspora in Australia cannot be contained within one or a few groups as individuals come with a wide range of geographical, economic, social, educational and familial backgrounds with a wide range of individual experiences, which creates a multitude of cultural identity constructions.

In recent years there has been increasing theoretical debate as to what constitutes Chineseness, ranging from advocates of authenticity to those who dispute the existence of authenticity due to the continuous intermixing of peoples and cultures
and the changes that this brings about to so-called pure cultures. “Chineseness enables diasporic Chinese to make sense of their lives and negotiate their notion of identities between East and West, North and South” (Ngan & Chan 2012, p.21). This strongly supports the notion that it is an individual interpretation. One’s definition of Chineseness or Australianness determines one’s degree of Chineseness or Australianness at any given point in time.

Ngan & Chan (2012) further reject assimilation notions that long-term ABCs lose their Chineseness through generations. They believe that ABCs are denied inclusion as authentic Australians by ‘White’ Australians, but also subject of ‘Othering’ by some Chinese diasporic groups who do not see them as authentic Chinese. Shen (2001) details a number of examples from ABCs who thought of themselves as Australian, but had to confront their Chineseness due to incidents of ‘Othering’, sometimes causing Chineseness to be viewed negatively.

‘Chineseness’ here is the marker of that status, imparting an externally imposed identity given meaning, literally, by a practice of discrimination. It is the dominant culture’s classificatory practice, operating as a territorializing power highly effective in marginalizing the other, which spaces the meaning of Chineseness here as a curse, as something to ‘get used to’ (Ang 2003, p. 37).

From a personal perspective, this has been generated through an inner compunction in search of cultural origins often from the standpoint of being the subject of ‘Othering’. Therefore, my physical appearance has triggered environmental and situational responses in relation to both my inherent and nurturing cultures. It has been a cyclic action where environmental and inherent cultures continually influence each other. Physical attributes have influenced cultural identity construction and decisions on life trajectories (Ngan, LL-S & Chan 2012). For example the Chinese face of the ABC often acts as an exclusionary device by White Australians, while on the other hand, those of mixed heritage whose physical attributes may not be typically Chinese, may be excluded by some diasporic Chinese groups.

Ngan and Chan (2012, p.165) stated that for ABCs, Chineseness is established through “families, mainstream Australian society, and the Chinese diasporic spaces they inhabited”, but that ABCs assess their Chineseness at varying age-related events in their life such as “childhood, adolescence, marriage, parenthood and old age”.
Ngan and Chan advocate that construction of ethnicity is linked to life course and suggest life stages as a means of charting and assessing the changing stages of ethnicity. Although they agree that these stages vary and are not necessarily related to a particular age, they use these general age-related stages to chart the Chineseness of subjects in their study. While I agree that Ngan and Chan’s (2012) framework may be useful in assessing an individual’s Chineseness through their life course, I would suggest that the framework is stage-related rather than age-related and that rather than a linear framework, it is multi-layered where there may be an overlayering of stages. For example, marriage or parenthood may interact with adolescence for some or mature age for others. Also, with the complex family structures today, there may be some oscillation between life stages. For example, parenthood and/or marriage may come at adolescence and then again in later life. Therefore, the framework needs to be multi-tiered in order to account for the multi-layered or cyclic stages of an individual’s life course and sets of experience.

Within this framework are a number of environmental influences on Chineseness including geographical, social, political and familial, as well as inherent influences such as physical attributes, gender and sexuality. As Ngan and Chan (2012) have outlined, families play an important role in instilling Chinese, in particular, Confucian, ideals in their children, which are often passed down through subsequent Australian-born generations. However, these may have positive or negative results as individuals compare these ideals and practices with Australian cultural practices, resulting in a rejection of these Chinese ideals. Some ABCs may not have been aware of their Chineseness, especially at a young age, as their families assimilated into Australian society. For example, Shen cites Yang (2001, p. 130):

What an attachment to the country. All my family’s roots were in Australia. I was more Australian than the kids who told me to go back to China. I didn’t even know where China was.

In Australia, immigrants have assumed Australian cultural practices and their Australian-born descendants have often mainly been exposed to the Australian culture with varying degrees of exposure to their heritage culture. In relation to my own experience, I was surprised to discover that one of William Yang’s Chinese relatives was someone I knew in my childhood. However, although we referred to
her as Auntie Dora and she and her family spent Christmas Eves with our cousins and our family, I never thought of them as being Chinese. To me, their cultural persona was more Australian than Chinese. However, Ngan and Chan (2012, p.180) state that ABCs retain a level of Chineseness whether they accept it or not and that even those who have lived all their lives in Australia and do not intend on going to China, are “innately connected to a larger imagined origin that is shared by all diasporic Chinese”. My artwork series, *Territory Meditations* (Figures 35, 36, 48, 49), considers the combination of inherent and environmental influences on the cultural identities of ABCs. In my own case, this has actualised through behaviour, such as work and moral ethics and social etiquette, which I believe have been passed on through the generations from my Chinese ancestors.

In contemporary Australian society, many Australians with Chinese or mixed - Chinese heritage have attended the same schools, recreational and sporting clubs and are often employed in similar fields to their non-Chinese peers. Australian-born descendants of Quong Se Duk noted that “they were only faced with their Chineseness when they tried to enter professions” (Ganter 2006, p. 153). Some, especially the young, have not thought of themselves as Chinese even though one or both of their parents may have Chinese heritage. Chan (1999, p. 7) explained these groups through Wang Ling-chi’s categories as either “zhancao chugen (denial of Chineseness) or genwai zhuifei (to criticise China and Chineseness)”. This sense of being Australian and not acknowledging cultural heritage has resulted from the past portrayal of national identity from a “white” perspective. With the recent emphasis on multiculturalism as a national identity appreciating Australia’s diverse range of cultures, there have been more positive attitudes towards ethnic origins by an increasing number of individuals (Chan, H 1999).

Even so, the practice of categorising individuals into groups may have detrimental effects. For example, Chan (2000a) reasoned that some art critics are perpetuating the stereotypical identity images of so-called Asian-Australian artists, by using generalisations and essentialist assumptions. In reference to William Yang, he stated:
The certainty with which writers make claims on the so-called 'recognisably eastern' aspects of Yang's works is indicative of a fixation on the myth of essentialist origins, which is taken to be somehow innate and automatically natural to the subject in question (Chan, D 2000a, p. 144).

While this may give a person some sense of belonging in a particular group, it can be limiting by labelling and categorising individuals into rigid boxes. On the other hand, Lo (2000, p. 166) reasoned that Yang’s Bloodlinks emphasised “a hybridised and hyphenated identity” diminishing the “concept of ‘Chineseness’ as ‘categorical difference’”. Many ABC artists can relate to this “hybridised” standpoint, having been in similar circumstances of either oscillating between the two cultures, whether voluntarily or not, or feeling half in one culture and half in the other. In the following chapter, I further discuss this position of ‘hybridity’ amongst Asian-Australian artists.

There are some who have questioned the use of the term ‘hybridity’ in relation to cultural politics. Chen stated that in order for hybridity to exist, there initially must be two pure cultural entities. Chen (1998, p. 24) quotes Gilroy: “the idea of hybridity, of intermixture, presupposes two anterior purities…there isn’t any purity; there isn’t any anterior…that’s why I try not to use the word hybrid”. Chen (1998) and McFarlane (2004) preferred the term ‘syncretism’ in discussing the intermixing of cultural identity and visual studies, respectively. Their standpoint was that the dominant cultures are already influenced by other cultures (for example through art, food, language), and thereby are already ‘hybrid’. Therefore, syncretic cultural identity and visual arts are combinations of already complex and intermixed components. On the other hand, Lo (2000) advocated the need for the terms of ‘hybridity’ ‘race’ and the category of ‘Asian-Australian’ from a socio-political stance through the arts, in order to emphasise the issues of inequality in the Australian nation state of multiculturalism. She distinguished between different types of hybridity, advocating for a more assertive ‘intentional hybridity’ for political and socio-economic rather than a laissez faire ‘organic hybridity’ of ‘harmonious fusion’ (Lo 2000, pp. 154, 67). However, evidence supports that both these stances are important in the arts to maintain a balance of agitation and calm. For example, while it is important to highlight the ‘in-between stances of culturally mixed identities and the issues of exclusion and difference experienced by these
individuals, it is also important to celebrate the ‘harmonious fusions’, which come about through the mixing of various cultural elements such as food, fashion and the arts. Not all statements of cultural identity need be political or socio-economic. Ang (2009, p. 24) expressed this balance with the opposite emphasis: “Hybridity is not simply a smooth process of synthesis: it denotes friction as well as fusion, uneasy entanglement as well as happy co-existence.” This supports my theory of oscillation amongst the multitude of in-between spaces through varying life experiences.

In addition, the category of Chinese-Australians is highly complex as immigrants of Chinese heritage have originated from countries outside China such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam (Wang 1992). Therefore, the ‘hybrid’ Chinese-Australian is multitudinous. These groups may bring aspects of the other cultures and languages of their respective countries as well as that of the Chinese groups within these countries. Chan (1999) used Wang Ling-chi’s and Wang Gungwu’s descriptions of the Chinese diaspora to demonstrate this diversity of the Chinese diaspora in Australia. For example, Wang Gungwu’s terms huagong (Chinese labourer abroad) and huashang (Chinese merchant abroad), describe the first immigrants to Australia. His term huaqiao (overseas Chinese) and Wang Ling-chi’s term luoye guigen (fallen leaves that must return to their roots in China) would refer to the sojourners such as my paternal great-grandfather. This group remains loyal to China and thus are an important group to the Chinese government who may call upon members of this group to participate in negotiations between China and other countries.

On the other hand, Wang Gungwu’s term huayi (foreigner of Chinese ancestry) describes descendants of the groups not loyal to their Chinese identity. Wang Ling-chi’s term zhancao chugen (to eliminate weeds by pulling out their roots) would describe a group of huayi who have been affected by the White Australia policy and assimilated into Australian society. Wang Ling-chi’s luodi shenggen (planting seeds in foreign soil and allowing them to take root) would describe the huaqiao or huayi who settle in a foreign country. This term describes some of my ancestors such as my paternal and maternal grandmothers. His term xungen wenzu (searching for one’s roots and ancestors) describes the current wave of ABCs, such as myself, who decide to research their heritage language and culture. Another group, shigen qunzu
(“wandering intellectuals” away from their roots) includes those who have been exiled and cut off from their roots.

These identity descriptions of groups of the Chinese diaspora demonstrate the multitude of these groups, however, as Chan (1999) states, these descriptions are by no means comprehensive. Shen (2001, p. 133) concluded that

…for most Australian-born Chinese, a Chinese-Australian identity is realised through representing the two worlds and two cultures that have forged their selves…It is the dynamic created by the tension between the competing cultural systems of Chinese and European Australia…that generates a sense of multiplicity or cross cultural identity.

This section has highlighted the complexity of cultural identity constructions through Chan’s (1999) emphasis on the varied backgrounds of the Chinese diaspora, Chan’s (2000a) appeal for a varied examination of the complex cultural identity constructions of the Chinese diaspora, particularly in relation to art critique, and McFarlane’s (2004) extension of Mirzoeff’s (2000) multi-focal transnational and transitory place. In my studio practice I have investigated this multitude of identity constructions of the Chinese diaspora particularly in my work Multi-faceted Identities (Figures 32,33), which demonstrates the unlimited variations of cultural influences on identity.

Oscillation beyond the third space

I now look to what may lie beyond these descriptions of ‘Others’ in hybrid spaces. As evidenced in the previous section, cultural hybridity is more complex than simply a place between two cultures. In between the several cultures that an individual may be a part of, there is not necessarily only one ‘hybrid’ or in-between space, but a continuum of these spaces along which an individual may oscillate depending on different situations. An individual may have multiple identities that may change depending on different social and cultural settings. This is supported by Chan (1999) who demonstrated through personal experiences, that individuals may move between descriptive groups of the Chinese diaspora in different circumstances, for example being huayi, but going through stages of denying heritage through zhancao.
chugen and at another stage, becoming xungen wenzu through searching for one’s origins.

Determining factors in the construction of an individual’s identity include one’s ancestral language and cultural beliefs and practices, in addition to current cultural and physical environment and language (Hall 1996). The degree, to which certain factors are dominant and the level of influence of each factor, varies within an individual due to changing circumstances throughout one’s lifetime. Some theorists believe that the individual can move between different cultures. In discussing his background of being an Arab with a Western up-bringing,) Said (1993, p. xxx), writes “Ever since I can remember, I have felt that I belonged to both worlds, without being completely of either one or the other.” He considered that this gave him a greater understanding of both worlds. While there are individuals who can attest to this position, this is not my position as an Australian-born Chinese with the physical appearance of Chinese. I have limited knowledge of heritage language and culture, and exclusive knowledge of Australian culture, but no physical resemblance to ‘White Australia’.

Throughout Australian history, many Asian-Australians, including ABCs, have not related to the nationally portrayed Australian image (Chan, H 1999). Even the “multicultural Australian” image portrayed in contemporary society has not necessarily been inclusive of Asian Australians, having originally emerged for the inclusion of non-white Europeans (Wang 1992). Chan (1999) discusses the diverse identities of the Chinese diaspora to Australia particularly in regard to Wang Gungwu’s (1991 cited by Chan 1999) categories of Chinese migratory patterns and Wang Lingchi’s (1994 cited by Chan 1999) descriptions of Chinese diasporic groups to America. These classifications include the sojourners who returned to China, those who came as labourers and merchants and those born in countries other than China, but also emphasise the wide-ranging experiences within these groups. It is the descendants of these four groups with whom I am interested in. In particular, the group Wang Lingchi referred to as “xungen wenzu – the search for roots and ancestors” is applicable to my own investigations for this research project (Chan, H 1999). Chan also explains that individuals may change between the various identity
groups as described by Wang Lingchi, which supports my premise of oscillating between identity spaces.

This constant change is also one of the principle ideas of the Tao (Wilhelm 1960). Change is not erratic, but a steady progression of growth which is not one-dimensional, but a cyclic process forming the whole or completeness. There is consistency, but continuous movement and progression through change, and it is important to go with the flow of change, not against it (Lin 2010). Within change, there is duality or opposite polarities. The Tao is about finding and maintaining harmony and balance between these opposites and in all things (Star 2008).

From within my research, I have found that some individuals whose appearance or heritage language is not of the dominant culture reject their heritage culture and language in a bid to assimilate and reject their ‘difference’. My survey, discussed in chapter 5 and Appendix 4, supports this evidence, particularly in relation to the era of the White Australia Policy. On the other hand, individuals, such as myself, who do not speak the language of their ancestors, feel a disconnection with their Asian culture when surrounded by others speaking the language. Ang (2003, p. 150) explained this position between cultures well:

I would describe myself as suspended in-between: neither truly Western nor authentically Asian; embedded in the West yet always partially disengaged from it; disembedded from Asia yet somehow endurably attached to it emotionally. I wish to hold onto this hybrid in-betweenness not because it is a comfortable position to be in, but because its very ambivalence is a source of cultural permeability and vulnerability that is a necessary condition for living together in difference [author’s emphasis].

However, Ang (2011, p. 29) has pointed out that the boundaries of this model of ‘unity in diversity’ have become somewhat fuzzy with the various ethnic groups becoming more and more diverse within themselves: “Witness the second, third and fourth generations, whose ethnic identities are increasingly fluid, hybridized and westernized”. Therefore, the ‘unity in diversity’ model has become applicable from within as well as from without.

I agree with Ang’s view that although the in-between space may be an uneasy place to be in, it may be helpful in understanding other cultures. This view was generated
by cultural theorist bell hooks, who celebrates being an outsider and sees it as an empowering position (Valdivia 2002). Bhabha (1993) conceived the term ‘third space’ to explain the space in between the two cultures, where those who are a part of two different cultures are situated. His conviction was that a ‘new’ culture was created, partially like the original culture and partially like the culture of the new country, creating ‘borderline’ identities. According to Shumar (2010), Bhabha’s position on this ‘third space’ is that it is one of continual change, not a static notion. He references similarities with Derrida’s state of *différence* in that the implications of this place of difference are constantly deferred. Similarly, Hall (1996, p. 5) and Grossberg (1996, p. 89) accentuate this “constant process of change and transformation” and the “multiplicity of identities” with which I concur. However, I take this argument further and posit that, not only are these identities multi-faceted and changing, but these identities inhabit a multitude of spaces between cultures and individuals oscillate among these spaces.

The oscillating nature of my grandfather’s journeying between two countries referred to in chapter two is a parallel of the oscillation among the in-between spaces of cultural identity. The lives of my family members and others of similar backgrounds have been influences in my visual research into the numerous facets of ABCs and Chinese-born Australians. Having spent portions of both his childhood and adulthood in Australia and China, my grandfather possibly could have related to Said’s (1993) status of being able to relate to both cultures. However, having spent most of his adult life in Australia, speaking English to his children and Chinese to his wife, dealing with the Australian business environment while participating in Chinese cultural activities, my grandfather would have fluctuated between the two cultures and the in-between mixed cultural spaces. In a similar fashion I have oscillated between different cultures and in-between spaces, intersecting each culture at varying points of the continuum with different experiences.

In the process of different cultures coming together through cultural mixing, I now turn to what happens when languages of these cultures come together. Language is an important factor in identity construction, as without the same language, not only is communication limited, but also total immersion into culture is impossible. “Each
language embodies a view of the world peculiarly its own” (Humboldt, 1995). Colonialist ‘white’ intent was for other cultures to assimilate into the dominant culture including discarding heritage language. While contemporary attitudes have changed with regards to retaining heritage language, years of colonialist practice has paid a toll on heritage language retention for some individuals.

**Language Retention through the Generations**

In terms of my studio practice, language has been a major influencing factor through the use of Chinese calligraphy and English text as visual representations as well as meaning. The examination of literature on the importance of language in cultural identity construction resonates through my artwork. In investigating studies on heritage language retention, I identify implications for future generations.

Although ancestral languages and perhaps to a lesser degree, cultural beliefs and practices, are decreasing through the generations, there are still a number of ABCs striving to pass on or re-kindle these for future generations. However, the success rate of heritage language maintenance may not equate with these motivations. A number of studies in The United States of America and Australia indicate a major reduction of heritage language by the third generation of immigrant families (Pink 2009; Portes & Hao 1998; Tannenbaum 2003). These studies indicate that family and peers play a major role in heritage language maintenance, but that this could be helped by positive community attitudes and policies in immigration, education and language.

Redding (1990) as cited by Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe (2009) implied that some Chinese migrants have retained an idealised notion of China which is reflected in their terms for themselves as Huoqiao or sojourner, and Chinese in the United States of America use the term American Chinese, indicating ethnicity, rather than Chinese American, indicating nationality. Similarly, in Australia, the term Australian-Chinese continues to be used by migrants while the more recent use of the term Chinese-Australian is used more often by second generation Australians or later
American studies have found variations in motivation to retain the heritage language in different ethnic groups. Portes and Hao (1998) found that Asians (Laotians, Cambodians, Filipino and Vietnamese and Other) and Haitians in their study had a lower success rate of maintaining their heritage languages. Causes were attributed not only to the importance individuals may place on language maintenance, but also on the fact that there was no one language to unite them and that languages with pictorial characters may be more difficult to learn and maintain. On the other hand, Zhang and Slaughter-Defoe’s (2009) research on Chinese in The United States of America indicated a strong motivation for speakers of Mandarin (Putonghua) to maintain their language. Possibly, motivation is stronger in this group because although there may be a number of variations in dialect, they may be united under the official dialect Putonghua.

In addition, researchers have found that success rates for heritage language maintenance were higher when both parents spoke the same heritage language with their children and other family members, and ethnic peers also communicated in this language (Pauwels 2005; Portes & Hao 1998; Tannenbaum 2003; Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe 2009). Luke and Luke’s (2000) study of mixed Asian and Australian marriages found that despite the fact that Asian-Australians continue to be subjected to racial practices due to their appearance or speech, the urge to retain language and culture remained strong through the generations. However, the 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics found that the percentage of languages other than English spoken at home declined through the generations from 49% in first generations to 29% in second generations and 2% in third plus generations (Pink 2009). Of this 29% of second generation Australians, more than 60% of those with Chinese heritage spoke another language. Therefore, although there was some
strong interest and practice in maintaining Chinese languages through the
generations, there was a dramatic decline in the maintenance of these languages.

This is in keeping with the trend in the United States of America where studies have
indicated that languages other than English rarely continue past the third generation
(Portes & Hao 1998). The main reason for this trend found by American studies,
such as Fishman (1966) and Veltman (1993) as cited by Portes & Hao (1998), was
pressured by native-born Americans on immigrant children and grandchildren to
speak only English. Similarly in Australia, Chinese immigrants received pressures
to assimilate by banning languages other than English in schools (Tan, C 2003).
Others, while mourning the loss of language, felt that it was an inevitable result of
generations of affirming their Australian identity (Giese 1997).

Furthermore, Pauwels (2005) found that while adolescents often had a positive
attitude to maintaining their heritage language, this is not matched by community
and educational support, thereby putting pressure on families to maintain heritage
languages. As many families do not have the ideal resources and environment for
teaching these languages, such as a native speaker in the home to engage with the
younger generations, families often find heritage language maintenance too difficult
to pursue.

Even so, in some cases when ancestral languages have not been maintained, a later
generation may become interested in learning the language and culture of their
forebears. Ang (2001) argued that because the “diasporic other” was now
celebrated, more individuals with diasporic connections were seeking to rekindle
their ancestral links. My assessment is that because many of these individuals have
previously had identity conflicts, this yearning was always there, but was suppressed
in the past. I think that the average Australian youth is more influenced by peer
groups than as an adult. Therefore, increased interest in ancestral language and
culture may not eventuate until later. With the focus in more recent years on identity
politics, the “Other” has more readily been viewed in a more positive light, making it
easier to follow up these yearnings. As Ang (2001, p. 7) noted, the Australian
government's push since 2000 towards an 'Asianization' of Australia in the wake of a
looming Asian Century "after a century-long rejection", has "rearticulated and
recontextualized [her] own Asianness in unprecedented ways”. It is ironic that while some Chinese migrants to Australia were denied the practice and maintenance of their heritage languages, many American and European students are now studying Chinese language for increased business potential. Some Australian students and businesses have also become aware of the potential need for studying Chinese language.

Contemporary studies of bilingual students in the United States of America have shown that these students have more cognitive development than monolingual students, which may explain the reasoning behind promoting the learning of foreign languages in schools (Portes & Hao 1998). However, Zhang and Slaughter-Defoe (2009) found that despite the indication of the community and national benefits of bilingualism, mainstream social attitudes in the United States of America continue to support “English monolingualism and cultural assimilation”. While a number of researchers have found that heritage language maintenance should be helped by educational policies and school practices, Pauwels (2005) emphasizes the need for families to play an important role in practising these languages. Tannenbaum’s (2003) study of first generation Australian immigrants and their children reinforces this. He found that children were more likely to speak in the heritage language with their mother and in the private domain rather than the public domain. The implications of this are that when heritage language maintenance is supported by government policies, community attitudes and parental involvement, it is beneficial to individual cultural identity as well as the nation’s level of education and economy.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a theoretical background to my studio practice in relation to notions of hybridity and multi-faceted identity constructions of the Chinese diaspora. In addition, it has highlighted the importance of environmental and nurturing influences on identity construction. The examination of inter-disciplinary critique has supplied a platform for situating myself within the cultural borderline spaces.
Through a variety of discourses, I have examined the concept of hybridity and the notion of ‘Othering’ in relation to cultural difference and the construction of Chineseness for ABCs. This examination has revealed that while the historical version of ‘Othering’ was steeped in imperialist racialism, more contemporary practices demonstrate an empowering stance of minority ‘Others’ from the in-between or borderline spaces. This highlights cultural hybridity and issues of identity construction. In addition, it has provided a personal insight that there are inherent influences, generated from an inner search due to exclusion as ‘Other’.

I have drawn on Ngan and Chan (2012) who presented a framework for assessing Chineseness at various stages of life. However, I have emphasised that this framework needs to be flexible to encompass the multiple layers of variables and influences on the construction of Chineseness. This is because the cultural identities of ABCs are wide-ranging and include families who have been in Australia for one or more generations from varying countries and experiences. The questioning of environmental and inherent influences has exposed that there are numerous possibilities that influence levels of Chineseness and affect life trajectories. When considering my own levels of Chineseness through my studio practice as discussed in chapter five, there has been a diverse range of affecting factors, both environmental and inherent. In contemplating identities in hybrid spaces, it is clear that the cultural identities of ABCs are constantly in flux. This notion of oscillation or flux is essential to my studio practice.

Furthermore, an examination of heritage language retention through generations of descendants of immigrants has uncovered a desperate need for addressing the issue of increasing this retention rate. This has also highlighted a personal need to take action on this issue of heritage language and this will be considered in chapter five. Before moving to discussing my own work, it is essential to look at other artists from a similar milieu as myself.
Chapter Three Notes

Research into heritage language maintenance has unearthed a number of trends where these languages were severely decreased by the third generation, despite efforts, particularly by the first generation, to retain them (Pink 2009; Portes & Hao 1998; Tannenbaum 2003). Fishman (1991) and Feltman (1983) as cited by Tannenbaum (2003), found that the general pattern was that the first generation of immigrants mainly spoke their ethnic language, the second generation spoke both the heritage language and the language of the new country and the third generation usually assumed the new language. Therefore, under this model, the second generation is important in determining the extent that the heritage language may be continued through the generations. Studies have also found that the use of the heritage language in the home between parent and child or grandparent and child was a strong indicator of prolonged language maintenance (Pauwels 2005; Tannenbaum 2003). Research in both The United States of America and Australia have indicated that the parents’ desire for their children to maintain their heritage language was greater than the children’s willingness (Tannenbaum 2003; Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe 2009). In addition, studies have found that while children are more prepared to learn their heritage language when they are young and more readily influenced by their parents, this enthusiasm decreases in adolescence (Pauwels 2005). Children do not place the same level of importance on heritage language maintenance as their parents:

They do not have their parents’ transnational scope of vision to foresee the potential usefulness of the Chinese language in their academic advancement as well as in the globalised job market. For another, they do not feel the same connection and attachment to China, their parents’ homeland, and are unable to identify with the Chinese language. (Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe 2009, pp. 89-90)

While there have been varying influences towards heritage language retention in Australian society, parental attitudes have influenced subsequent generation’s willingness to maintain the heritage language (Pauwels 2005; Tannenbaum 2003; Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe 2009). Although the Australian National 2006 census report found that a larger percentage of second generation Australians speaking another language were under 19 years old, possibly indicating parental influence, the reasonably high percentage (60%) of Chinese speaking a second language at home could be attributed to importance that this group places on maintaining ancestral language (Pink 2009). Initially it is the actions of the immigrant parent(s) to pass on the language to the next generation, then the choice of this generation to maintain language(s) and to pass on to further generations.
Chapter 4

Asian-Australian Artists
In this chapter, I examine ABC artists within the broader field of Asian-Australian artists, with a particular reference to art practices related to cultural identity. I also include a number of artists of Chinese heritage who have spent most of their lives in Australia or who, through technicalities, may not have been born in Australia, but who voice the position of ABCs. These particular artists address issues of Chinese migration, diaspora and identity as ABC, which I also explore in my art practice. Although the artwork and the artists I discuss in this chapter are diverse and informed from equally varied and multiple sets of experiences and historical stances, I pinpoint certain works as relevant to my art practice.

A majority of well-known Asian-Australian artists today are part of the Asian diaspora. Many obtained their artistic skills and training in their native countries. Their works often depict their coming to terms with their new environment while deriving information and imagery from their original culture. These include Chinese artists, Ah Xian, Liu Xiao Xian, Guan Wei, Tie Hua Huang, Guo Jian and Hou Leong. A number of these artists investigate issues of identity within a mix of ‘Eastern’ and ‘Western’ cultures. Melissa Chiu (1999) argues that Asian-Australian artists have less similarities than differences in their art practices, so should not be categorised together as a group, but rather examined individually. This concurs with my research. While there are many Asian-Australian artists who, at times, explore cultural identity issues within their art practices, there are also many whose work does not usually address such concepts. Consequently, while I looked at their work, I have not included these artists in this exegesis as they are not the focus of this research project. These include amongst others: Suzanne Victor, Bill Seeto, Juliana Wong, Paula Wong, Felicia Kan, Dacchi Dang, Li Bao Hua, Shen Jiawei, and Natsuho Takita.

In relation to discourses on Asian-Australians in the visual arts, the focus of this research has been given to the ‘hybrid’ nature of artworks, combining elements of Australian and Asian cultures. There have been an increasing number of discourses emphasising and celebrating the ‘hybrid’ nature of artworks of Asian-Australian artists. In discussing the artwork of a number of artists of the Chinese diaspora in Australia and Australian artists with Chinese heritage, Berguis and Maravillas (2009) stated that new, globalised artforms are being generated from this ‘in-between’
position. Clark (2005, p. 1), stated that there has been an increase in the number of Asian-Australian artists since the mid 1990s who “use in-between-ness in some way to inform their art practice” as they are informed with the navigation of two or more diverse homes. However, Chan (2000b) and Clark (2005) have extended on Chiu’s (1999) view and emphasised that we must be cautious of not categorising these artists into one homogenous group of ‘hybridity’. Beynon (2000), as quoted by Edmundson (2009a), stated that her work *Where is your original home?* explored

…the multi-layered experiences of people negotiating ‘hybrid’ or ‘mixed’ identities produced by a nexus of cultural influences such as heritage, family histories, travel, language, paths of migration and a sense of belonging.

While there are a number of Australian artists who have immigrated to Australia from Asian countries and have brought these cultural and artistic influences into their art practice in Australia, there are also many with Asian heritage backgrounds who have had little or limited heritage cultural and language influence. They have largely grown up in an Australian environment and culture. These artists come from a different place of ‘in-between-ness’ to those immigrants negotiating a new environment. Xianting (2009), in discussing the exhibition *Zhongjian – Midway*, stated that Australian artists of Chinese heritage who were not born in China portrayed artwork that was “more gentle or unscarred and does not convey the particular emotions and strong symbolism of the works by Chinese artists”. While it may seem to some that these artists may at times be considered ‘non-authentic’, such as Leong’s description of William Yang’s *Sadness* as ‘stagey’ (Chan, D 2000b), these artists are bringing their own set of experiences, cultural influences and knowledge to their art practices. This is most certainly to differ from those of Chinese-born artists, but not to be diminished in worth.

On the other hand, there are those such as Chan (2000b) who believe that there are no pure cultures as all cultures have evolved with influences from other cultures or are a conglomerate of many cultures. For example, there would be no single Chinese culture as China today is composed of many different cultural and language groups and also members of the Chinese diaspora have spread to many countries where the influences of those countries have changed and evolved those cultures. Therefore, the question of ‘authenticity’ should not be an issue in looking at the art
practices of Asian-Australian artists. Berguis and Maravillas (2009) also reiterate the diversity of the art practices of artists of the Chinese diaspora in Australia, and argue that many of these artists challenge “the idea of a fixed notion of ‘Chineseness’” through their artwork.

Some artists, who were either born in Australia or came to Australia when they were young, often search nostalgically for connections to the cultural heritage of their Asian ancestors. This includes ABC artists Lindy Lee, William Yang, Pamela Mei-Leng See, and Owen Leong. They address issues of Chinese migration and diaspora, as well as issues of identity as ABCs. However, Melissa Chiu (1999) believes that while artists such as Lindy Lee, William Yang and John Young do not always explore their cultural connections through their work, the younger generation, which includes overseas-born Kate Beynon, approach their art practices with their dual cultural backgrounds in mind. Similarly, my own art practice has not always focused on my dual cultural identity, as I do in this research project. Possibly this was due to a combination of denial of heritage culture and a predominance of Western art influences in my education, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s.

While I acknowledge that the art practices of Chinese-Australians and ABCs are broad, for this research project I have focused on artwork that relates to cultural identity from the viewpoints of Australians with Chinese heritage. In this next section, I examine the work of overseas-born artists John Young, Greg Leong, Kate Beynon and Tony Ayres and ABCs Pamela Mei-Leng See, William Yang, Lindy Lee, Owen Leong and Aaron Seeto. This intensive review of their work has helped me understand the direction of my own practice and given me a greater appreciation of my cultural connections.

**Chinese Diaspora – Sojourners and Settlers**

Many Chinese-Australian artists, some of whom have spent most of their lives in Australia, explore themes of migration and diaspora through their work, often relating to their own personal journeys and experiences or those of their family
members. These include John Young, Greg Leong and Kate Beynon. While Greg Leong immigrated from Hong Kong at a later age, I include him in this research as his mother is a third generation ABC through her maternal lines, but her father was denied permanent residence, resulting in the family’s move to China. Hence the reference to sojourners and settlers is apt as it includes those who travel, physically and cognitively, between China and Australia.

First generation Australian, John Young, also known as John Alexander Young Zerunge, was born in Hong Kong but undertook his schooling in Australia from 1967 at age 11 (Barnes 2005). On completion of his studies, Young remained in Australia. He has sometimes combined aspects of his heritage culture with a more contemporary art practice. Some of Young’s more current works have explored themes such as migration through the overlay of photographic images onto painted patterned backgrounds. While some of my work has used drawn and printed landscape imagery on a patterned background, Young’s bold rectangular blocks of photographic images contrast starkly with his patterned backgrounds. This is similar to Lindy Lee’s photographic portraits on bold blocks of colour. In contrast, my landscapes in *Territory Meditations I-V* merge with the patterned background.

Young’s abstract paintings of landscape shapes demonstrated a preoccupation with remote places, which are reminiscent of his homeland. This can be seen in *Pilgrim’s Way #2*, 2006 where subtle pastel shapes echo the emptiness of remote landscapes and are a contrast to his photographic landscapes and polychrome paintings of bright blocks of colour. His interest in the transient nature of cultural diaspora stems from time spent in Harbin, Manchuria where he made a photographic documentation entitled *Manchurian Snow Walk* (1979). In this performance he chose a random point and walked to a tree and back again and then to another tree and back again until that point became a familiar place (King 2008). This can be related to Wang Ling Chi’s description of one group of the Chinese diaspora - “wandering intellectuals away from their roots” (shigen qunzu) (Chan, H 1999). Having experienced winter in Harbin, I can relate to Young’s sense of alienation from his heritage culture in this remote environment and the motivation to reinforce such connections. Works such as *Open World*, 2005 (Figure 7) where Chinese calligraphy and photographic images are layered onto landscaped or negative
Figure 7
John Young, Open World, 2005, cotton and wool tapestry, 303 x 365cm. (Young, J. 2005)
backgrounds and *Passages*, 2012 where soft muted shapes reflect Australian aesthetics have influenced my art practice.

Some artists of the Chinese diaspora have addressed multiple migration issues of family members moving their homes to and from China and Australia. In particular, Greg (Kwok Leong) Leong highlights issues faced by the Chinese diaspora and their descendants in Australia as well as in China. In 2005, Leong installed a site-specific artwork at Mindil Beach in Darwin, entitled *The Sojourners*, which recognised the many Chinese who came to Australia with the intention of returning to China, but may have decided to stay (Figure 8). The Chinese calligraphy in this work translated as “people of Australia” incorporating both sojourner and settler (Leong, GKK 2005, p. 2). Leong enlisted the assistance of the Darwin community, including myself, to make the two thousand textile flowers required for the installation.

Leong’s own position of in-betweenness stems from growing up outside China in a British colony with an English education, and considering his Chineseness in Australia, which was heavily influenced by his mother’s negative experiences of dual cultural backgrounds. While his mother’s maternal grandmother, who was not of Chinese heritage, was apparently cast out by her Chinese family, her father, a Chinese immigrant was forced to return to China taking his Australian-born family with him (Leong, G 2000). Leong has not only addressed his own issues of identity of being Chinese in Australia as well as being homosexual, as in *Jia (Home)*, but also identity displacement issues of his ABC mother in *Remembering Chinese*, 1999 (Best 2003; Leong, G 2000). Leong’s mother who moved to China at age fourteen and later returned to Australia, did not find a sense of belonging in either place due largely to discriminatory attitudes towards her “difference” (Leong, G 2000). Many of Leong’s works, which often combine textiles and performance, also reflect the difficulties facing Chinese in Australia. Having commenced my art practice through textile printing, Leong’s work has been greatly influential. I am particularly influenced by the subtleties of some of his concepts such as in *Remembering Chinese* where garments that appear to be typically Chinese contain images that reference racial discrimination.
Figure 8  Greg Kwok Keung Leong, *The Sojourners* (detail), 2005, textiles and metal, 5 x 3.2m each, photograph: Glynis Lee
There are those of Chinese heritage born in countries other than China who have immigrated to Australia. Their work may incorporate aspects from their country of birth, their new country as well as feelings or thoughts on China and Chinese culture. This includes Hong Kong-born Kate Beynon, whose mother was Malaysian Chinese, and who migrated to Britain and then to Australia. Beynon is one of the *huayi* referred to in chapter three – a foreign born overseas Chinese who has re-migrated from places other than China. Having spent most of her life in English speaking countries, Beynon positions her work from a hybrid in-between space of a non-Chinese speaking Australian of multiple cultures (Beynon 2002). Her works such as *Chinese Calligraffiti: Where are you from?* 2001 and *Golden Dragon Encounter*, 2007 where a contemporary female floats amongst Chinese dragons, are influenced by these cultural backgrounds.

![Figure 9](image)

*Figure 9* Kate Beynon, *Golden Dragon Encounter*, 2007, acrylic on linen, 170 x 220cm, (Beynon 2007)
Australian-born Chinese, Pamela Mei-Leng See's work has reflected the Chinese migration to Australia (Rodgers 2006). Like Beynon, See draws from three cultures as her grandfather migrated to Malaysia from China while her father migrated from Malaysia to Australia. See has concentrated her works around traditional Chinese paper-cut techniques and has used multiple images in many of her works, often involving the community in the making of these multiple pieces for her installations. Images of moths and birds have alluded to immigration and cultural displacement (Figure 10).

Figure 10  Pamela Mei-Leng See, *A Change in Frequency* (detail), 2004, paper-cut moth installation, (See 2004)
Some of See’s symbols have different meanings in different cultures and her works have been interpreted differently in China to Australia. See (2008) stated that in China, her work has often been seen as an observation on “cultural and commercial colonialism”. Her paper-cut pieces have reflected fragility and delicateness, yet strength in numbers and structure. Spending time in China to research Chinese culture and develop her paper-cut techniques was integral to her art practice (Maier 2009). This skill was apparent when I observed See during a workshop in Darwin, cutting her paper stencils without the need for pre-drawing.

Using traditional Chinese techniques and integrating them into their art practices has been important to other artists such as Leong who is influenced by Chinese embroidery in ceremonial textiles and traditional costumes, Beynon who is influenced by symbols and talismans, and See as mentioned above. Other work that influenced my practice was a national touring exhibition from 2006 to 2008, entitled *Echoes of Home: Memory and mobility in recent Austral-Asian art* which showcased a number of Asian-Australian artists’ work reflecting their perspectives on their dual or multiple cultures. Many of these artists used traditional techniques and/or media in combination with their contemporary art practices, sometimes contrasting aspects of their dual or multiple cultures or exploring the concept of home and family in relation to ‘in-between-ness’ (Clark, C 2005). Pamela Mei-Leng See was the only Australian-born artist of fourteen participants in this exhibition. This highlights the need to provide voice to more Australian-born artists of dual or multiple cultures whose studio practices may encompass similar cultural identity themes about these multiple cultures. Likewise, it was integral to my art practice to incorporate traditional Chinese woodblock printing and water-ink painting. It was essential to use these techniques as a way to return to my cultural heritage source.

In addressing the concept of sojourners and settlers, some artists have used images of their family members to relay their stories (Figure 11).
William Yang is a performance artist and photographer who has combined monologues with slide images. His pieces have often reflected stories of his family, such as *The North*, which was about his childhood in North Queensland, and *Blood Links*, which looked at the migration of his family from China to Australia and the United States. Yang (Yoon 2002, p. 2) described his family as “just linked by blood, but still connected” even though they were far apart geographically. Yang’s experience of growing up in Australia has touched on some similarities with other ABCs where his mother desired for him to be ‘Western’ because Australian authorities wanted those of different cultures to assimilate into ‘White’ society (Yoon 2002). As with several other ABC artists, Yang found that journeying to China was a pivotal factor in the development of his artwork (Leong, G 2002). This is similar to other artists such as myself and another ABC, Lindy Lee.
Figure 12  Lindy Lee, *Birth and Death (installation detail)* 2007, accordion books made from inkjet print on paper mounted on wood, variable dimensions, photograph: Robert Scott-Mitchell (Lee, L 2007)
Lee's works have explored concepts of diaspora by looking at the original as opposed to the reproduction – how the original culture has manifested in the new environment (Evans 2003). In *Cycles Through a Chinese Landscape* 2001, Lee considers the dual influences of her Chinese and Australian backgrounds through concepts of opposites – light and dark, Eastern and Western, heritage culture and nurturing culture. She achieves this through the use of colour, which plays an important role in representations of imagery, emotions and qualities of subjects and matter. Lee uses strong blocks of coloured panels, which are sometimes juxtaposed against each other. Similarities in the use of the colour red as a representation of the Chinese diaspora can be seen in See’s *A Change of Frequency* (Figure 10), Lee’s *Birth and Death* (Figure 12) and my work *CBA-ABC* (Figure 19). Lee has used photographic images of her family in her work to demonstrate the physical and emotional experiences of the Chinese diaspora over many generations.

In *Birth and Death* 2003 and 2007 (Figure 12), Lee uses ink-jet prints of the faces of her family members capturing a moment in time of each individual at different ages (Evans 2003). Copies of these larger than life-size portraits allude to notions of ‘authenticity’ in which Lee perceives herself as a “false copy” of both cultures (Colless 2010). As with See and Leong, Lee has been influenced by Chinese art forms such as Chinese accordion-style books.

In contrast, Owen Leong combines video, sculpture and installation in his art practice. Leong often uses his own body or those of others as a tool for his concepts on cultural identity, gender and sexuality (Low 2010). In *Birthmark* 2010, other Asian faces wear ‘masks’ of Australian moths and Leong invites the audience to see beyond the similarities to the individual differences (Figure 13). For this work, Leong was “fascinated by the idea of home, the sense of home, the sense of belonging and how a land like Australia might leave an imprint on a body” (Low 2010).
On the other hand, Aaron Seeto has been influenced by family photographic albums and historic archives in his art practice. Seeto often touches on concepts of cultural identity and sense of belonging in subtle ways, such as in *Brick* 2010 where hair of family members are encased in plaster casts of bricks from his grandfather’s backyard. His exhibition *Fortress* 2010 was a collection of ‘stories within stories and histories within histories’ (Douglas 2010). In this exhibition, Seeto used a technique of re-photographing his father’s photographs, in a similar fashion to Lee’s repetitive portrait photocopies, and using a salt printing technique, changed the images to imply another meaning such as in *Parade* 2010. As with Owen Leong, Seeto used parts of his body in a number of works. In his *Fortress Returning* series,
Seeto used a traditional photographic technique, daguerreotype, focusing on one portion of his body to create mirror images that morph into something beyond the original image (Figure 14). Seeto seems to invite his audience to look beyond first appearances and find what is hidden within. His *Fortress 2 Channel Digital HD Video* of his family in his grandparents’ backyard limits the audience from interacting with the subjects by not showing their faces. In contrast, my video, *Made in Australia*, portrays some of the faces of the subjects to highlight their Chinese appearance, as does Owen Leong’s video work.

Figure 14 Aaron Seeto, *Fortress (Returning Finger #2)*, 2010, daguerreotype, 13 x 10cm, (Seeto 2010)
The above-mentioned artists have considered the dual or multiple cultural backgrounds in relation to their experiences and/or those of their family members. Likewise, some of my work for this research project has investigated similar concepts. However, the execution of each artist’s work has more differences than similarities. As with See and Lee, multiples are an important aspect of my work. While Lee uses technology to create her multiples and almost obliterates her multiple portrait images with black wax, See often uses community members to help create hers. Leong has also used others to help produce his multiples. In contrast, I have been created my multiples individually by hand. I have often utilised printmaking matrices and equipment, influences of my printmaking background.

As with Lee and Yang, my art practice includes images of my family members and addresses issues of identity as Australian-born Chinese. For example, in *CBA-ABC I, II and III* (Figures 19-27), I consider members of my family who were sojourners and those who were settlers and their dual cultural environments and language. I also consider the notion of home and a sense of belonging through the concept of sojourner/settler from multiple viewpoints. For example, in *An le wo* (Figures 56-62) I explored the interrelations and similarities between my Australian home, my father’s home as a young child and my temporary home in China during 2010. My work for this research project explored issues of cultural identity faced by family members such as with Leong, Lee and Yang. Perhaps my grandfather felt a similar quandary of being caught between two worlds as Leong’s mother as mentioned above. As an ABC, being relocated to the foreign environment of China, he would have been torn between family and his home environment. While my art practice for this research project also explored changes in my own identity through the experiences of visits to China, I was particularly interested in the oscillating nature of my forebears journeying between two countries and cultures in this sojourner/settler pendulum and the continuous fluctuating nature of one’s identity through different experiences. My work *Territory Meditations I-V* (Figures 35, 36, 41, 48, 49) alludes to this sojourner aspect.
Language and Culture in Art

As discussed in chapter three, heritage language and cultural maintenance often diminish rapidly through the generations of Chinese-Australians and therefore it is important to highlight this concern. A number of ABCs have little or no knowledge of their heritage language(s) and some attempt, at some stage in their lives, to re-address this issue. This concern has manifested in the artwork of some ABC artists through the incorporation of Chinese calligraphy or calligraphic imagery into their works.

Greg Leong and Kate Beynon have used forms of Chinese calligraphy in their works. However, Lindy Lee has had a different style of using Chinese calligraphy in her artworks. Breaking away from the constraints and precision of traditional Chinese calligraphic styles, Lee used her own version of freestyle brush strokes, which resembled Chinese calligraphic strokes. In some of her works, Lee splashes ink mixed with oil and wax across the canvas in a sense of release from the constraints of conforming with the precision of Chinese calligraphic brushstrokes (Colless 2010). Unlike Lee who was frustrated with the repetitious nature of learning Chinese calligraphy, I embraced the meditative nature of practising strokes, and while far from being a master of these strokes, my work charts the progress of this learning and also focuses on the simplicity and beauty of single brushstrokes in repeated patterning.

As discussed in chapter three, a number of Chinese-Australians who were born in Australia or came to Australia at an early age, were not encouraged to learn Chinese languages, particularly prior to the 1980s. Some have become interested in learning Chinese at a later stage in their lives and thus the Chinese calligraphy and sometimes pinyin or kanji may start to infiltrate some of the artworks of such Chinese-Australian artists. One of these is Kate Beynon who, as mentioned earlier, thought she would not be considered as someone who spoke Chinese language despite undertaking some studies in Chinese language at a later age (Beynon 2002). Her situation then, may be similar to my own in this respect, where the inclusion of Chinese language and calligraphy in artworks may initially have come from a place of not fully understanding the background of calligraphic strokes and the traditional
background to each of the simplified strokes used today. Kate Beynon has formed chenille sticks (pipe cleaners) into Chinese calligraphic forms in a number of her artworks. *Old Story (The Foolish Old Man Removes the Mountain)* 1995 addressed the issue of those of Chinese descent with an inability of speaking Chinese (Beynon 2002). In some of my work, images of the Australian landscape were combined with Chinese calligraphy or traditional Chinese art techniques from the point of view of an ABC searching for heritage cultural connections, articulated by Wang Ling Chi as “xungen wenzu” (Chan, H 1999).

Many first generation Chinese-Australian artists use Chinese calligraphy throughout their works. In traditional Chinese art, calligraphy is a crucial part of the work and calligraphy itself is an artform. Therefore, it is understandable that this practice should also continue through to contemporary art practice. For those of the Chinese diaspora, it can be a method of retaining the language and culture in a new place. It can also be a subtle means of conveying a stronger message, which is only apparent upon closer inspection, such as in a number of Greg Leong’s works. In *Remembering Chinese*, he used images of Pauline Hanson, known for her stance against Asian immigration, to construct the Chinese characters for “Australian person” and in other Chinese characters, constructed a play on words (Leong, G 2000).

Similarly, some of my art production for this research project discussed later in chapter five included the use of Chinese calligraphy. However, my use of calligraphy was of a progressive and evolving nature, which reflected the varying stages of my learning Chinese calligraphy as a non-speaker of the language and differs in this respect to those artists with more comprehensive knowledge of Chinese languages. As with Beynon’s sculptural and graphic forms and Leong’s textile forms of calligraphy, I have also attempted to create correct Chinese characters. In addition, I have used fragments of calligraphic characters so that the meaning is not immediately evident to the viewer, reflecting fragmented identities.

Spiritual beliefs, practices and imagery often play an important role in Asian-Australian artists’ lives and consequently their artistic outlets. Taoism and Buddhism, as well as Confucius philosophy have been influences. Both William Yang and Lindy Lee were influenced by Chinese philosophy in their later lives;
Yang by Taoism (Yoon 2002) and Lee by Zen Buddhism (Evans 2001). Lee’s growing interest in learning about Zen Buddhism has influenced her earlier, as well as later, works where the portraits of family members were situated alongside images of Kwan Yin in *Cycles Through a Chinese Landscape*, 2001 and family portraits were replaced by images of Buddha and Bodhisattva in *Ten Worlds, Ten Directions*, 2002 (Evans 2002). In her artworks such as *Red Autumn*, 2007 (Figure 15), which used a calligraphic style resembling Chinese calligraphy, Lee saw herself as a medium through which the brushstrokes were materialised by emptying the self through meditation in a Zen Buddhist approach (Colless 2010). Lee’s more recent works have extended on this spiritual theme, with the combination of an ancient Buddhist practice of flinging ink on paper to represent the universal totality in one single moment with another Buddhist theme of fire. In *Flames from the Dragon’s Pearl*, 2009, Lee has replaced the flung ink with molten wax to create bronze sculptures that have been captured in the moment of cooling and hardening on impact with the cement floor (Lee, L 2009). To these artists, these spiritual beliefs are a way of life and their influences permeate through their lifestyle choices as well as their art.
Figure 15  Lindy Lee, *Red Autumn* (detail), 2007, archival pigment inks on canvas, 210 x 61cm, photograph: Robert Scott-Mitchell, (Lee, L 2007)
Similarly, Taoism has been a large influence on my studio practice. My interest is particularly in its philosophy of maintaining balance of opposites and of constant change reflecting personal growth. My works, *Territory Meditations I-V*, *Territory Impressions I-V* and *An le wo* reflect the calm, meditative approach to art making, which can be found in Taoist philosophy. The oscillating nature of *Multi-faceted Identities* demonstrated the concept of constant change as well as the balance of opposites of the two cultures as discussed in chapter three.

**Exclusion and Inclusion**

A few Chinese-Australian artists approach concepts of social or political exclusion in their artworks, including topics of colonisation and the influence of the White Australia policy as discussed in chapter three. Although the legislation behind the White Australia Policy has been changed for more than three decades, discrimination has continued to affect immigrants and their families. These issues have been highlighted by a number of artists. The issue of “otherness” through difference in appearance and cultural beliefs and practices has been a common subject.

Owen Leong’s work explores issues of racial discrimination through physical appearance as an ABC, and he challenges the idea of white supremacy. His video installation *Second Skin*, 2003 highlighted European ‘Othering’ of Asians, using his own body in distorted poses to reflect the ambiguity of stereotypical fixations and constructions of the ‘Other’ (Edmundson 2009b). In contrast, my video *Made in Australia*, uses dialogue and animation as means to highlight similar issues of ‘Othering’ and exclusion. However, Leong uses metaphoric imagery of milk representing white skin and honey as yellow skin (Edmundson 2009b). From a position of exclusion, Leong challenges the audience to confront their own values on inclusion and exclusion.
In comparison, Greg Leong explored discrimination and “otherness” issues in a more light-hearted performance in *Jia* where he dressed as Princess Feng Yee (Figure 17) and had the audience sing “Click Go the Shears” in Cantonese (Moss 2003). The stereotypical image of the national Australian identity is challenged in his *Click! Singing History Quilts for New Chinese Australians*, painting his own face on the shearer in the reproduction of Tom Robert’s *Shearing the Rams*. In *Remembering Chinese* (Leong, G 2000), the issue of reverse racism, where his mother was treated differently by her Chinese relatives because she was not fully Chinese in their eyes, is an intriguing one. This is because most discrimination incidents involving cultural
differences that have previously been highlighted have been from those of different appearance and heritage culture.

Leong (2002) further investigated this dilemma and he also mentioned Australian-Chinese film director, Tony Ayres’s childhood incident of reverse racism against his own culture. Seeing his mother being discriminated against by the Chinese caused Ayres to view himself as Western, even though he immigrated to Australia from Macau at the age of three. Ayres encapsulates the sentiment of a number of ‘Chinese-Australians’ in his statement: “I wanted to fit in. That is the driving impulse for a lot of first-generation migrant children. The idea of not wanting to be Chinese” (Cunningham 2007, p. 2). Incidents such as these have fuelled the occurrence of situating many Chinese-Australians amongst the in-between identity spaces of the two cultures. My own experience in China is similar to that of Leong’s mother where my lack of Chinese language and cultural knowledge set me apart from local Chinese.
Chinese-Australian cultural identity in art is complex and nuanced. While Ayres’ films are about relationships and individual characters, his film *Home Song Stories* (2007) was based on stories of his family, in particular, his mother and her struggle to find a sense of belonging, particularly in a foreign environment. As with Lee and Yang, Ayres has included family photographs at the end of the film. However, Ayres explained that in the process of converting autobiography into film, it becomes fictionalised in order to achieve the form he is aiming for and to reach a wider audience (Cunningham 2007).

In contrast, Yang’s autobiographical slide performances have aimed to portray his personal accounts, the process of which he described as therapeutic (Yoon 2002). In *North* and *Sadness*, Yang speaks about the White Australia policy fuelling his mother’s desire for her family to assimilate (Grehan 2002). Yang (Leong, G 2002, p. 82) also found that the racist attitudes perpetuated during the period of the White Australia Policy, generated what he terms as ‘internalised racism’ where he disliked the appearance of other Asians and disengaged himself from them. While I can see the benefit in Ayres’ approach to filmmaking for the large screen, Yang’s autobiographical approach has been more influential to my own art practice in relaying life experiences.

Similarly to Ayres’ approach, Kate Beynon creates fictionalised characters in some of her works. Situating herself from a cultural ‘hybrid’ standpoint through her work, Beynon has portrayed the ‘Asian’ face in the Australian urban landscape in a position of power and self-confidence as if demonstrating against the stereotypical image constructs of an Australian that continue to exist in some areas of contemporary Australia. Her art practice explores issues of immigration, racism and cultural identity. Beynon (2002) states her work comes from a hybrid space as a result of dealing with multiple identity platforms of having Welsh and Malaysian-Chinese backgrounds and migrating from Hong Kong to Britain and then to Australia. Her stylised graphic-like paintings contain Chinese imagery, text and symbols, sometimes on a modern Melbourne city backdrop. One recurring theme is based on the story of Chinese female warrior, Li Ji. Beynon has revived Li Ji into comic-book graphic contemporary adventures in urban Melbourne, addressing
discrimination, political and cultural identity issues. Dwyer (2003, p. 90) quotes Beynon:

*Li Ji: Warrior girl* is about asserting a positive mind-frame for living in a multicultural society and recognising/respecting that the issues of race and identity, including a sense of belonging, are everyday internal concerns for many people living in Australia.

In some of her works such as *Anti-anxiety Guardian Goddess*, 2010 Beynon seems to go beyond the hybrid spaces in her bid to portray the ‘global citizen’ (Beynon 2008). Beynon’s strong graphics and imagery are almost a form of forced inclusion rather than coming from a position of exclusion as in Leong’s *Second Skin*.

![Figure 18 Kate Beynon, *Anti-anxiety Guardian Goddess*, 2010, acrylic and Swarovski crystals on linen, 100cm diameter, (Beynon 2010)](image)
As with the above-mentioned artists, my work for this research project highlights the issues of inclusion and exclusion as Australians with Chinese heritage. Like Greg Leong, Yang and Ayres, I use stories of my family members to portray these concepts. However, I have extended this to include others’ stories and text in *Made in Australia*. While Leong, Leong and Yang use themselves in their performances, Ayres uses actors. While some of my print work contains photographic imagery of me and my family members and the context of Northern Australia, my video work uses interviews of other ABCs to portray their stories rather than my own. In a similar manner to Beynon, my work comes from the hybrid spaces between cultures, oscillating between the various spaces as mentioned in the previous chapter.

Although my art practice has addressed issues of discrimination in past artworks in a more overt depiction, the majority of works for this project tended to portray identity issues in a more subtle manner than those artists discussed in this section. For example, in *CBA-ABC* and *CBA-ABC II*, the Chinese calligraphic fragments combine to construct words such as ‘Eastern’, ‘Western’, ‘origin’, ‘bloodline’, ‘identity’, ‘separate’ and ‘Australian person’. While my work, *Multi-faceted Identities*, investigated the multitude of identity constructions of Chinese-Australians, it also explored the stereotyped racial constructs perpetuated during the White Australia Policy. However, I do not think that art by Asian-Australian artists necessarily needs to be of an overt form because visual art comprises a vast range of aesthetics, concepts, themes and rationale.

**Conclusion**

While there are some similarities in the issues and topics that are part of the art practices of some of these artists and my own, there are also differences, which emphasise each artist’s individuality. Many of the artists discussed in this chapter have explored the issues of Chinese migration and diaspora, which interest me, as I have also been motivated to address the issues that my family has faced in sojourning and settling in Australia. I am also interested in how other Chinese-Australians and Australian-Chinese situate and see themselves within the Australian
community and national identity as well as in their heritage country/countries. In particular, I think that Greg Leong’s Chinese version of *Click go the Shears* and his portrayal of a Chinese shearer have best highlighted for me the issue of the generally perceived Australian national identity, while Owen Leong’s video installation *Second Skin* best highlights the position of the ABC as a casualty of ‘Othering’ in that they cannot escape their appearance. As with Pamela See’s artworks, the artwork of other Chinese-Australian artists may be interpreted differently in China to Australia. Likewise, the artist with dual cultures may be seen differently in China to that of Australia, and this may influence individual identity constructions and the oscillation between the various cultural identity spaces, especially for those artists spending time in China and Australia as well as other countries of their heritage.

In this research project, I have been interested in heritage language retention and therefore am drawn to the works that highlight this issue or the issue of communication breakdown due to the lack of language such as Greg Leong’s *Remembering Chinese*. Chinese philosophy has also been a common theme, which has manifested in the work of some of these artists and my own works. My interest in Taoism and its philosophy as a way of life, as considered in chapter three, has influenced my work more through philosophical methodology than through imagery or media as is discussed in the following chapter on my studio practice. Some of my previous works have had more influence in symbolism, imagery and concept in a similar manner as Lindy Lee has developed more Buddhist imagery, media and philosophy in her work. In a similar manner to Kate Beynon, I am interested in the ‘hybrid’ cultural identities of Chinese-Australians. In particular, I am concerned with the multiple ‘hybrid’ spaces where the Chinese and Australian cultures meet and the effect of language at these fluctuating intersections. In the following chapter, I detail my studio work as the principle motivation for this research project that addresses similar as well as different concepts to the artworks discussed in this chapter. I situate my work for this particular research project within the field of these artists and recognise their various influences.
Chapter 5

Moulding Multiples in Printmaking and Beyond
Introduction

“Even though the lotus roots are broken the fibres are still linked”

(Chinese proverb)

The challenge in the studio practice was to find ways to effectively blend artistic methods reflecting Australian and Chinese cultures. I wanted to portray my Chineseness and personal journey in a way that would communicate this to a broader audience. Resolving how to do this led to a creative journey, which integrated manipulating photographic images of my family, explorations of learning traditional Chinese visual art techniques, as well as portraying biographical stories of other ABCs through digital means. The Chinese proverb above as cited in Yow (2006, p.205), implies that although cultural roots may be severed by distance or loss of heritage language and cultural practices, the links still remain. This proverb is appropriate to my studio work as the lotus is a recurring image, which reflects notions of home to me.

In the course of research for my studio work I considered portrayals of cultural identity themes in a contemporary setting influenced by postcolonial issues of assimilation, discrimination and loss of heritage language, and in particular, ‘hybridity’. From this research, questions arose as to how to represent such complex social situations through colour, media and composition. Such issues were resolved through creative explorations into different media, modes and aesthetics. My practice-based research into identities of ABCs has resulted in a number of artworks using various media, techniques and structural forms.

Through this work I aimed to communicate the concept of identity of ABCs by focussing on:

- Criss-crossing paths indicating the journeying between countries, cultures and identity spaces.
- The multitude of cultural identity constructions of ABCs.
- The examination of environmental and heritage influences on cultural
identity construction.

- The meditative process of learning calligraphy paralleled with the meditative atmosphere of the Northern Territory landscape.
- The changing levels of Chinese language within Australia.

In this chapter, I outline the creative process of my art projects that were finalised and considered for exhibition. Overall, these artworks demonstrate my investigation into my own identity as well as those of other ABCs. In addition, they portray my views on the construction and permeability of the individual’s identity when more than one culture is involved. Through the use of various media, I have extended the boundaries of printmaking to new levels by combining methods and creating three-dimensional structures.

This chapter is comprised of three discreet sections. The first section concentrates on the initial stages of my studio practice. These artworks focused on my families’ stories, on migration and the impact of a new environment. The impetus for the following installation series was to portray the variety of hybrid or fusion identities that exist within the group of ABCs. The process of undertaking personal journeys was integral to the realisation of my studio work.

In the second section, through further personal journeys, I highlight how the importance of language in cultural identity construction and the issues relating to the loss of heritage language is reflected in my practice. To many, cultural identity stems from the knowledge of the language. I draw on chapter three where I reviewed differing viewpoints on the link between heritage language and Chineseness. Here I contemplate these viewpoints and explain how my level of my art practice was influenced by Chineseness and my concerted effort to learn more about the Chinese culture, writing and Putonghua language (Mandarin) through living in China and the north of Australia. To explain this aspect of studio work I discuss the discreet series of works, Territory Meditations I-V and Territory Impressions I-V, which explores the concept of environmental and inherent influences on cultural identity construction already mentioned. This series of prints compares the meditative action of writing Chinese calligraphy with the peaceful experience of being immersed in the Northern Territory landscapes.
My experiential journey into Chinese language and culture further informed my studio practice, which resulted in a series of works. This assemblage of works, An le wo, was inspired by my four-month visit to China to extend my knowledge of traditional Chinese woodblock printing and water-ink painting and explores the notion of ‘home’ and similarities of these ‘homes’ in China and Australia. This series of works highlights the changing levels of Chineseness I felt in China from the exhilarations of familiarities to my frustrations with the Chinese language.

The third section of this chapter details how my work is informed by a survey and interviews into identity construction of ABCs and identity issues individuals have faced. I examine the results of this survey and discuss these results and findings in relation to reflective practice and biography of my own family members. This survey was conducted through questionnaires and interviews in order to examine levels of Chineseness and obtain further biographical data of other ABCs for my studio work. My final audio-visual work for this research project, Made in Australia, demonstrates the key issues of my survey as well as using images exploring notions from previous studio work. This section describes the progress of my studio practice for this work, from concept to output and highlights the process of taking printmaking practice into the digital realm.

The culmination of this studio work is the exhibition Balancing on Borderlines, which brings together the installations and series of works detailed in this chapter. My journey through this doctoral research commenced with ‘old’ beginnings’ of family origins and traditional printmaking and progressed to ‘new’ beginnings in my studio practice.
1. Beginnings

Family – Sojourners and Settlers

Become totally empty
Quiet the restlessness of the mind
Only then will you witness everything
Unfolding from emptiness
See all things flourish and dance
In endless variation
And once again merge back into perfect emptiness-
Their true repose
Their true nature
Emerging, flourishing, dissolving back again
This is the eternal process of return

Lao Tzu (500BC)

My studio practice began with the need to portray the stories of my ancestors, of their arrival in Australia, their encounters with the physical and social environment and their sojourning activities. The concept for this project came more as an instinct and impulsion to commence with my family - from our beginnings as Australians. As Star’s (2008, p.19) poetic translation above of the Taoist verse portrays, calming the mind allows creative ideas to emerge, which form a cyclic pattern of creative processes. Therefore, allowing this initial idea to emerge enabled this artwork to flourish. The verse also emulates the recurring journeying between China and Australia. To reflect this link to my cultural origins, I reverted to an earlier printmaking technique.

Family portrait photographs and written stories motivated my preliminary exploration. I used photographic images of my family members to make photo emulsion screens for screenprinting. With my limited knowledge of Chinese, I constructed an emulsion screen of Chinese calligraphic characters corresponding to
the words that I wanted to portray relating to a mix of Australian and Chinese identity.

My first scrolls commenced as one large canvas piece, which was later cut to form the three scrolls in *CBA-ABC I* (2009-2012). The idea of using the scroll came from the Chinese use of the scroll in water ink painting, particularly for landscapes, people and flowers and birds (Wu 2008). Traditional Chinese scrolls were made of bamboo or wood and bound together with cord. They were originally used as books for calligraphy, but later included paintings and were used for ease of transportation (Liu, F-j 1997; Martinique 1983).\(^1\) The style is usually figurative with emotions portrayed through symbolic means.

Chinese landscape paintings do not depict realism, but emulate realism while emphasizing areas that have created stronger emotions in the artist and lessening those that created little feelings for the artist (Wu 2008). Chinese people do not show their emotions easily. “They are a race of people shy in their hearts. But their tendency to being shy results in abundant and minute emotions” (Wu 2008, p. 56). Therefore, “there are so many allegorical ways in China, such as simile and metaphor” (Wu 2008, p. 56). For example, objects in nature are often personalized such as symbolizing a person and also stones were thought to be ‘living.’ Chinese painting scrolls may portray dark, sombre landscapes, however, a particular trait of Chinese water-ink painting utilises the blank space within the composition: “white paint is rarely used in traditional water and ink painting where the white is represented by the colour of the paper and this is called “leaving white” (Wu 2008, p. 91). The Chinese used black, white, red, blue, green and brown as they were found in nature. “Only these natural colours were used in Chinese painting implying that Chinese people attach importance to nature and its surroundings” (Wu 2008, p. 90). Black ink is always used in Chinese water-ink painting as it is considered as having a steadying or grounding effect on the painting, and paintings without black are considered to be floating. Yellow (pure yellow) is rarely used in Chinese painting, as it was associated with power and nobility. Gold and gamboge (between orange and brown) were used, as they were not as ostentatious.
While the content of my canvas scrolls was predominantly of people of Chinese heritage as is similar to that of some Chinese scrolls, my works differ in material, medium and composition. I chose canvas to work on as the heaviness of material evoked images of the long arduous journey undertaken by the diasporic groups and provided a similarity with the heavy drapes behind the family portraits. The red, black and gold colours chosen for the background of this work were the colours I associated with China and also emitted a dark and foreboding atmosphere of the long journey to a new land. The colours were painted and sponged in layers to enhance this concept. The photographs were digitally altered for screenprinting and printed in colours that I associated with Australia, particularly the Northern Territory. The earthy ochres evoked images of the dust and dirt of the gold mining towns and are representative of ‘becoming Australian’.

While some of the colours I used were similar to those used in Chinese water-ink painting, there were no white areas left in my canvas scrolls. Traditional Chinese painters do not overlap objects and colour as in Western painting and scattered points perspective is used in Chinese painting so that the painting is on one plane (Wu 2008). My canvas scrolls similarly used scattered points perspective, but they also used layering of different imagery and colour. There are several layers of family portraits, some almost transparent while others are more opaque, implying the varying degrees of Australianness felt by family members at different times (Figure 19).

The strategy was to layer images of my family who migrated to Australia or were born in Australia. The placement of images in a flowing pattern signifies the traversing and journeying back and forth between countries. The layers of screenprinting embody the layering of different identities as migrants, settlers to a new country or of Australians with ancestors from another culture. The concept of looking at identity from different angles and the sometimes transparency of one’s identity was explored.
Figure 19  Glynis Lee, CBA-ABC I (detail), 2009, screenprint, handpainting and acrylic paint on canvas, photograph: Glynis Lee
Layers of Chinese calligraphy, both screenprinted and handpainted, signified the Chinese language encroaching onto the Australian environment, with the traditional script portraying the practice of cultural traditions and the simplified script representing changes to the Chinese language with the process of immigration. For this concept, I chose a number of words in English that were applicable such as ‘Lee’, ‘Australian person’, ‘East’, ‘West’, ‘origin’, ‘identity’, ‘boundary’, ‘bloodline’, ‘divide’ and ‘family/home’. Other characters that were chosen included 话 (huà) meaning word, speech or dialect and 画 (huà) meaning painting or drawing. While the pronunciation of these characters is the same, they have different characters and meaning. These words are meaningful for a number of my artworks, as not only do they describe the drawing and painting of words upon the “canvas” of the works, they allude to the importance of language and cultural practices such as the visual arts, in the construction of one’s identity. I was particularly interested in the ancient Chinese calligraphic characters as these were pictorial. I found as many applicable ones in books and dictionaries (Manser 1999; Tan, HP 2007) and combined these with the standard script or kai shu (Han 2008).

As my knowledge of Chinese calligraphy at this stage was limited, this was demonstrated in the style and accuracy of my writing of the Chinese characters. However, this also demonstrated the limited extent of my links to Chineseness at the time and demonstrated how one’s identity can change over time and with different circumstances. This work was then extended onto scrolls of Xuan paper for CBA-ABC II (2009) with the colours becoming lighter, brighter and redolent of the intensity of the Australian tropics (Figure 20).

Replacing the heavy acrylic paints of the first work, the Chinese watercolour paints were administered with an abundance of water, evocative of the Darwin skies at sunset and the seas of coastal Australia where the immigrants sailed to their new home. These scrolls also include the ‘leaving white’ areas seen in Chinese water-ink painting. In preparation for the art-making process for this work on Xuan paper I decided to further my watercolour techniques. In 2009, I attended a workshop in Chinese watercolour painting by Lian Zhen at Territory Craft, Darwin. Here I explored utilising different papers to achieve fused areas of colours or definitive
lines, and including dry or wet paper. I incorporated some of these techniques into my studio practice.

Figure 20  Glynis Lee, CBA-ABC II (detail), 2009, Screenprint and watercolour on Xuan paper scrolls, 170x45.5cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
Imagery similar to the canvas scrolls was screenprinted onto rice or Xuan paper scrolls in a scattered points perspective style as in Chinese painting. The paper scrolls were firstly prepared with a background of Chinese watercolour paints using a wet on wet technique. The colours of indigo, phthalocyanine blue, blue green label three, vermilion, cinnabar indicate a mix of Australian skies and seas with Chinese reds. There were multiple layers of print on these scrolls, while some were printed double-sided. The images were screenprinted in earthy colours such as red earth and yellow oxide, which are characteristic of Northern Territory colours, thus reflecting the Australian-ness of Chinese-Australians. Screenprinted Chinese calligraphic characters in lighter shades of these colours portrayed the occasional thin layers of Chinese culture within the make-up of my Australian-Chinese identity. As some of my family members who were born in Australia had limited knowledge of the Chinese dialects of our ancestors, these semi-transparent layers represented the limitations of the Chinese language and culture of these individuals in the Australian environment. Chinese calligraphy was also hand-written with sepia ink. Layers of Chinese white watercolour washes, which are not used in Chinese water-ink painting, were then applied over the entire piece. These layers, often transparent or thin, reflected the varying levels of cultural identity within the Australian-born members of my family.

After completing these works I decided that aesthetically, the Xuan paper scrolls required further variations before the work was successfully resolved. The canvas scrolls however, portrayed a richness of culture and depth of colour through the overlaying of colour and imagery (Figure 21). They were exhibited together with some pieces from the following installation series in the 2009 exhibition Point at Charles Darwin University. Variations on the Xuan paper scrolls were completed in 2013 (Figures 22-26).
Figure 21  Glynis Lee, *CBA-ABC I*, 2009, Screenprint and painting on canvas, 162 x 44.5cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
Figure 22, Figure 23, Figure 24, Figure 25  
Glynis Lee, *CBA-ABC III* (detail), 2013, screenprint and watercolour on Xuan paper scrolls watercolour on silk, 238 x 45.5cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
My studio practice required maintaining continual balance between the positive and negative, dark and light, hard and soft, in relation to material, media, methods and composition, which reflect the Taoist philosophy of yin and yang (Star 2008; Yow 2006). Through the art-making process, I aimed to achieve balance and harmony, seeking aesthetic and conceptual equilibrium in the works. “In the aspect of spirits, it should be by addition that gives painting that aesthetic feeling and meaning but Chinese aesthetic judgment is often represented by subtraction” (Wu 2008, p. 114). I used addition through layering effects as a guide in the aesthetics of these scrolls generally, though later works employed more of the ‘subtraction’ as employed in Chinese painting. While Chinese painting use “general images, concise painting styles and simple colours” (Wu 2008, p. 115), my canvas and Xuan paper scrolls used specific images, multiple painting and printing styles with layering with a similarly simple colour palette. “The supreme realm in Chinese painting is ‘being similar to both shape and spirit’” (Wu 2008, p. 121). However, less importance was placed on similarity of shape than on representation of inner beauty or features.
While my *CBA-ABC* scrolls included photographic imagery of members of my family, the process of layering of transparent prints and washes reduced the representation of individuals to an often more generalised form (Figure 27). Similar to Chinese painting aesthetics of portraying spirit, my scrolls evoked the inner mettle of the sojourners and earlier generations of Chinese-Australians. This work reflects my initial research that focused on the first generation of my ancestors in Australia, the transition from the old country to the new country and the journeying back and forth between countries; as well as the development of identities as Australians. Drawing on and extending this, my research then turned towards the multiplicity of cultural identity constructions and the identity spaces between cultures.

**Figure 27**  
Glynis Lee, *CBA-ABC III* (detail), 2013, screenprint and watercolour on Xuan paper scrolls, 238cmx45.5cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
Following on from the scrolls described in the previous section, I wanted to explore the environment where my paternal family members had initially encountered the Australian culture. The resulting work, *Multi-faceted Identities* (Figure 28), explored the multiple identity constructions, not only of my family members but other Chinese-Australians as discussed in chapter three. The work also examined the changing culture and language in a new environment and the oscillation amongst the different cultural identity spaces between the two cultures.

![Multi-faceted Identities](image)

*Figure 28* Glynis Lee, *Multi-faceted identities* (detail), 2009/10, screenprint on silk paper 15 x 15 x 7 cm – 23 x 23 x 11 cm, photograph: Glynis Lee

The inspiration for this work resulted from a visit in 2009 to Brock’s Creek gold mine site at the Crocodile Gold mine near Pine Creek in the Northern Territory. As explained in chapter two this was the place of my paternal grandfather’s birth. My grandfather and his siblings were the first Australian-born of our family members².
At the Chinese temple site, many pottery shards of Chinese bowls and pots were found. Remnants of the typical ivory white bowl with blue designs and calligraphic seal were evident (Figure 29). I photographed these pottery shards and the scenery around Brock’s Creek and these provided the inspiration for my studio practice.

Figure 29  Pottery fragment Brock’s Creek heritage site, photograph: Glynis Lee

In the process of trying to see cultural identity issues through the eyes of my ancestors, I contemplated the hardships they must have encountered in trying to make a better life for themselves and the inner and outer struggles that would have beheld them. In particular, I wondered about my paternal great-grandfather’s motivation to spend nine months on a ship from Hong Kong to encounter foreign shores. I tried to empathise with my grandfather who was taken to China at the age of four, having lost his mother. I determined that my great-grandfather endured many hardships to earn a better life for his family, but misfortune dictated that he abandon his new life to return to China for assistance with raising his family. I wondered what life was like for my grandfather who, having spent the next ten years in China, returned to his country of birth at the age of fourteen to forge his own quest
for a better life. I concluded that my grandfather was obviously determined to return and remain in Australia as he went to great lengths to achieve his goals.

Having spent some time in China, I can understand my grandfather’s determination for a better life. I can only speculate on the confusion he may have felt as a young child being taken to a foreign land. The shards of the bowl resonated as a symbol of broken cultural links. To resolve the dilemma of how to represent this tenuous link to the past, I explored the making of various ceramic shapes onto which I painted Chinese calligraphy. However, silk paper forms eventually superseded these forms, as they portrayed my intended concepts more fully (Figures 30,31).

Figure 30  Glynis Lee, *Multi-faceted identities* (detail), 2009/10, screenprint on silk paper, 15 x 15 x 7cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
I had previously used some silk paper bowls for another artwork and decided that the medium was ideal to make symbolic bowls for this project. The rice bowl shapes represented traditional foods and cooking. Silk was chosen for its link with China. The silk fibres and materials were, for me, a metaphor for identity. The fibres were interlinked and bound together to reflect transparency and fragility, yet strength of the material. They were soft and pliable, but when made into silk paper, took on the shape they were moulded in. Similarly, identities are constructed, but are being continuously changed or re-moulded due to varying circumstances and environments. This installation series combined screenprint with silk paper sculpture. The silk fibres were felted to form silk paper pieces. Fragmented Chinese characters such as ‘Australian person’, ‘home/family’, ‘Eastern’, ‘Western’, and ‘bloodlines’, were screen printed on both sides of the silk paper and moulded into Chinese bowl shapes using colours representing the different cultures of China and Australia (in particular, my history and place in the Northern Territory).

The original idea was to use bleached mulberry silk fibres and blue screenprinted calligraphy indicative of Chinese bowls. I then decided to also use unbleached Tussah silk fibres to represent the Northern Territory. I used printing inks such as
clay, indigo, burnt orange and ochre with the Chinese calligraphy on these off-white bowls. Finally the idea was broadened to combine blue coloured calligraphy on off-white bowls, earthy coloured calligraphy on white bowls, then and a mix of colours on both types of bowls to demonstrate the various hybrid and fusion identities of ABCs. The critical theory discussed in chapter three on Said’s (1993) ‘hybrid’ cultural identities and Chan’s (2009) discussion of Wang Gungwu and Wang Lingchi’s multiple identity constructions of the Chinese diaspora provided the theoretical impetus for this studio work.

Bowls were made in groups of eight, as eight is a lucky number for the Chinese (Yin 2002). There were eight white bowls with blue design calligraphy, eight off-white bowls with earth coloured calligraphy, four white bowls with earth colours, four off-white bowls with blue print, eight white or off-white bowls with mixed colours and one with both white and off-white fibres with earth and blue prints. Altogether, the work consists of 33 bowls. The extra bowl composed of mixed fibres and mixed coloured prints, embodies the ultimate notion of multi-faceted cultural identity construction. The bowls were constructed in four sizes representing the communal sharing of food, which is important in Chinese cultural events (Giese 1997; Wilton 2004). The final construction was effective in that they looked fragile like fine Chinaware, but were firm. Each was thin enough to allow some of the fibrous strands to be seen. The fragmented Chinese calligraphic characters reflected my experiences of the broken shards of pottery found on the goldfields where my ancestors and many other ABCs worked.

A variety of display ideas were considered. However, the final configuration included bowls displayed on a layer of clear acrylic hanging from the ceiling (Figure 32,33). The work can oscillate slowly, with the use of a manual device, to indicate the movement between the various in-between spaces of cultural identity. Taoist philosophies of maintaining balance of opposites of the two cultures and endorsing constant change are emphasised in this work. The various bowls were intermingled to represent Ang’s ‘together in difference’ (2003). They were not fixed in place or time and could be moved around by artist or audience, giving rise to the notion of moving amongst the various spaces between cultures.
Figure 32  Glynis Lee, *Multi-faceted Identities* (installation detail), 2009, screenprinted silk paper constructions on acrylic, dimensions variable, photograph: Fiona Morrison
These creations highlight the thinness and fragility of the fibres and keep some degree of softness in the form while still maintaining a strong framework. This was indicative of the strength of connections with my familial culture. Even if these connections are denied, they are still evident under the surface (Figure 34). These bonds remain strong, binding me to a culture of which I know little, or at times, have had limited concern. I was able to use the Chinese bowl form in multiples to convey the multitude of cultural identity constructions while utilizing colours to portray the multi-faceted variety of these identities. Through placement I was able to convey the in-between spaces and through display, the oscillating nature of these identities.
Figure 34  Glynis Lee, *Multi-faceted identities*, 2009/10, screenprint on silk paper, 15cmx15cmx7cm – 23cmx23cmx11cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
2. Language and Chineseness

Personal Journey

This section provides some essential insights into how my journey through the Chinese language has influenced my art practice, which is described later. In my experience, language plays an important role in the construction of cultural identity. I do not situate myself as completely of the Australian culture or of the Chinese culture, but somewhat of a ‘hybrid’ or ‘multi-faceted’ combination, while situated in the in-between spaces between cultures. It was from this platform that my studio work was initiated. My personal investigation involving learning the Chinese language and travel to China has been imperative in extending this studio practice to a critical level. As mentioned in the previous section, Chinese calligraphy was used in my works CBA-ABC and Multi-faceted Identities. The fragmented and faded calligraphy in these works are reference to early life stages of assimilation into the dominant Australian culture and consequently, a rejection of heritage language.

As an ABC growing up in the 1960s in a small town in North Queensland, I had a desire to be similar to my peers and so was not very interested in my heritage language and culture. My parents spoke different dialects from each other, and usually only spoke these to their respective mothers who spoke little English. We learned a few words of our father’s dialect, See Yup, but did not wish to be ‘different’ from our peers. Although our town of Innisfail began as predominantly Irish, immigrants from southern Europe and China gradually increased (Birchley 1986). My mother was born there and my father immigrated at the age of six. However, they desired to fit into the Australian culture and consequently this desire influenced my siblings and I.

In the case of my extended family members, my father and his brother who were born in China could not speak English when they arrived in Australia. Their Australian-born siblings were taught Chinese, but spoke mainly English, even at home. Their mother, however, spoke little English as she spent the majority of her time at home. As her husband was in the grocery business and with six children to
rear, it seems there was little need or opportunity to venture into the English-speaking world. Members of my paternal family saw English language as a necessity for conducting business in Australia and the need for passing on their Chinese languages as ideal, but of lesser importance.

In later years, I became more interested in learning the Chinese language and thought to pursue Cantonese lessons as Cantonese was closest in pronunciation to my father’s dialect. However, opportunities to achieve this outcome at the time were non-existent. Later, as a parent, I tried to encourage my son to learn Mandarin, but the limits to the school’s curriculum made it difficult to continue. In recent years I have come to regret this lack of knowledge of heritage language and consequently tried to pursue learning the national dialect Putonghua (Mandarin). As I felt there was something missing in my cultural self, my premise was that learning Chinese language would somehow fill this gap and increase my sense of Chineseness. The impact of this pathway to Chineseness through language learning and travels to China resulted in an increase in the use of Chinese calligraphy in my studio practice and explorations of concepts of home and a sense of belonging through imagery, material and technique.

**Considering Chineseness**

“Calligraphy is not just writing but an art reflecting people’s spirit.” (Han 2008)

Learning Chinese language as a method of engaging my Chineseness, increased my interest in learning Chinese calligraphy. Not only is it the written language form but also is an art form spanning centuries as expressed in the above quote. There are five main types of calligraphic strokes, but the two main styles used in modern communications are Xing shu and Kai shu. The other styles of calligraphy are still used by artists and scholars in China (Yue 2004). Kai shu is the regular script used in books and is used to learn the strokes. However, it is slow to write, so cursive (Cao shu) and running Xing shu forms of writing were developed. The calligraphic strokes must be balanced in composition with precision in the thickness of the
stroke, thinning out in the correct places and finishing with precision (Han 2008). This strict ordering of strokes forming each character and the precision required in these strokes echoes the orderliness and discipline of Chinese society, and indicates Confucian influence. Years of practice are required to obtain the correct balance in each calligraphic stroke. For example, there are even several ways of writing a dot, which takes much repetition to achieve perfection. My calligraphy practice entailed initially learning *Kai shu* strokes.

The series of works *Territory Meditations I-V* were influenced by this desire to learn Chinese language. My journey into learning the Chinese language of *Putonghua* began with undertaking studies at Charles Darwin University. The tonal aspect and writing of characters (*Hanzi*) were difficult as these are not aspects found in the learning of English. As part of these studies, I participated in a number of cultural activities including cooking and calligraphy. In 2009 I embarked on a four-week intensive Chinese language unit organised by the university with the Hainan University in Haikou on Hainan Island. This was a valuable experience in immersion in language and culture. As an ABC with limited knowledge of Chinese language and culture, I was continually searching for a sense of self and place that embraced both cultures and sought ways to integrate this exploration in my work.

The idea for this project began with the meditative activity of repetitively writing these calligraphic strokes learned in these language studies. This was compared to the generally peaceful atmosphere of the Northern Territory natural landscape, particularly in the dry season. In keeping with Taoist philosophy, this project was approached with a calm, meditative approach, which created a cyclic process. According to Wu (2008), Chinese painting reflects quietness, which is similar to what these series of *Territory Meditations* and *Territory Impressions* echoed. As the Chinese people had many restrictions placed on them by governments and ruling classes, their emotions and political stances were represented through landscape paintings (Wu 2008). They used generalisations of shapes rather than exact representation. For example, certain lines were used to portray particular objects or positions of objects and these techniques have been developed over centuries by Chinese painters and taught as the basis of the Chinese painting style. In Chinese
painting, spatial remoteness and closeness “are represented by false remote things and true close things” (Wu 2008 p. 121).
Figure 35  Glynis Lee, *Territory Meditations III*, 2010, lithograph, drypoint & etching on Arches paper, 410cmx38cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
Figure 36  Glynis Lee, *Territory Meditations II*, 2010, lithograph, drypoint & etching on Arches paper, 410cmx38cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
In comparison, in *Territory Meditations* and *Territory Impressions*, I based my drawings on my photographic images although I simplified and varied the scenes to suit the techniques I employed such as using lithographic tusche in areas of water. The series portrayed underlying emotions as in Chinese painting. These were related to the issues of moving between China and Australia and the intersection of the two cultures. This printmaking work addresses the notions of ABC cultural identity, the diminishment of the Chinese language in the Northern Territory environment and the pathways between lands and cultures. The series *Territory Meditations I-V* (2010-2011) (Figures 35,36) portrays these concepts while the *Territory Impressions I-V* (2010-2011) series (Figures 37-40) depicted a more subtle infiltration of the Chinese language through the Australian landscape.

The mode of imagery incorporated in my studio practice leaned more towards realism than the abstract expressionism of previous work. Some works for this research project contain an abstract/realist combination or an abstracted form of realism. The reason for this shift towards realist imagery was due to using landscape, environment and family portraits as platforms for expressing the concepts. In deciding which landscape scenes would be used, I searched for images that would showcase the Northern Territory landscape and represent the feeling of ‘home’ to me. Scenes chosen were of waterlilies, pandanus trees, eucalyptus swamp, sea cliffs and magnetic termite mounds.

As before mentioned, the use of Chinese calligraphy was a crucial element, and although at times the words were disjointed, it was important to use correct hanzi or written Chinese. The Chinese character, 千 (qian) meaning one thousand, was used to emphasise the repetitive nature of practising Chinese calligraphy writing (Manser 1999). The seemingly abstract dotted lines across landscapes were drawn from the practice mats I used in learning Chinese calligraphy. In practising Chinese calligraphy, I use felt templates ruled with red squares, which are divided into segments to enable the strokes to be written correctly and to obtain the correct balance in the characters. My distortion of the red squares into wavy lines was indicative of the numerous journeyings between countries and cultures as well as identity spaces. The use of this abstracted design and calligraphic strokes juxtaposed
against realist landscapes creates a tension emulating the concerns of maintaining or searching for cultural identity in different surroundings.
Figure 38  Glynis Lee, *Territory Impressions IV* (detail), 2010-11, lithograph and embossing on Arches paper, 50cmx38cm, photograph: Glynis Lee

Figure 39  Glynis Lee, *Territory Impressions II* (detail), 2010, lithograph and embossing on Arches paper, 50cmx38cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
The Territory Meditations I-V series (Figure 41) was prepared through printing two etchings over a lithograph for each image while Territory Impressions I-V (Figures 42-44) combined the lithograph landscapes with embossing of the calligraphy etching plate. These prints portrayed the fading of the Chinese language in the Australian environment and also implied the fading of cultural identity at times within an Australian social context.
Figure 41  Glynis Lee, *Territory Meditations I*, 2010, lithograph, drypoint & etching on Arches paper, 410cmx38cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
Figure 42  Glynis Lee, *Territory Impressions III* (detail), 2010, lithograph and embossing on Arches paper, 50cmx38cm, photograph: Glynis Lee

Figure 43  Glynis Lee, *Territory Impressions I* (detail), 2010, lithograph and embossing on Arches paper, 50cmx38cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
The last two images of this series were undertaken after my four-month practice-based research in China, which will be discussed later. While drawing on the lithograph plates, I noticed that my drawing style was influenced by the traditional Chinese water-ink painting style I had studied during this period. Even though I was drawing with lithographic pencils as opposed to using Chinese paintbrushes, the style of some of the imagery and line work demonstrated this influence (Figures 45,46). Another influencing factor evident in these images through composition and space was the Chinese practice of leaving white areas in their paintings. Therefore, despite my Chineseness levels being lower while in China, the experiences affected my cultural identity in that I had adopted Chinese cultural practices and this became more apparent through my studio practice. These last two images in this series have a luminous ambience compared to the previous images and this indicated to me that the inner struggle with my Chineseness became calmer after this experience in China. I had clearly become more content in the in-between spaces.
Figure 45  Glynis Lee, *Territory Meditations IV* (detail), 2011, lithograph, drypoint & etching on Arches paper, 100cm x 38cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
Figure 46
Glynis Lee, Territory Impressions V, 2011, lithograph and embossing on Arches paper, 50cm x 38cm.
photograph: Glynis Lee
The initial display ideas considered for both horizontal and vertical hangings of this series of prints were of concertina book structures or of scrolls. The portrait style hanging structures were to be in scroll form while the horizontal book structures were to be in the accordion book form. The Chinese people used both of these methods (Martinique 1983). Because of the softness of the printing paper and the size of the prints, it was decided that accordion book configuration would not be the best display option due to the thinness of the printing paper (Figure 47). Wooden end pieces were bought in China and combined with dowel so that some scrolls had end pieces. Some prints were also framed individually.

Figure 47  Glynis Lee, *Territory Impressions II* (concertina construction) 2010-11, lithograph and embossing on Arches paper, 50cmx76cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
The two vertical scrolls of eight prints (Territory Meditations I, II) were made to hang from the ceiling against the wall or back to back in the centre of the room (Figure 48). The scrolls were draped over two plinths each in a cascading view. The three remaining scrolls in landscape view were displayed against the wall at eye level (Figure 49). The scroll could also be displayed on a wavy support structure to give the impression of the oscillating nature of cultural identity. A selection of the Territory Meditations I-V series was exhibited in an exhibition in Yogyakarta, Indonesia in 2011 entitled Here &/or There: Art from Northern Australia and in an exhibition under the same title at the Nan Giese Gallery, Darwin in 2012.

There were a number of influencing factors on this series of works comprising visual, theoretical and reflective practice. Through the process of my studio practice, I considered the levels of my Chineseness within an Australian context, while encountering a number of Chinese cultural influences. Through juxtaposing the series Territory Meditations and Territory Impressions I have highlighted the issue of the reduction of heritage language and culture.
Figure 48  Glynis Lee, *Territory Meditations I*, 2010, lithograph, drypoint & etching on Arches paper, 410cmx38cm, photograph: Fiona Morrison
Figure 49  Glynis Lee, *Territory Meditations V*, 2010, lithograph, drypoint & etching on Arches paper, 410cmx38cm, photograph: Fiona Morrison
The previous series of artworks dealt with Chinese influences in the Australian environment. This next group of works, *An le wo* (2010-2012) addressed the Australian influence within the Chinese environment as my studio practice shifted from Australia to China for a period of time while undertaking practice-based research in Hangzhou and Haikou, China. During my stay in China, I considered the idea of ‘home’ as a multiple and permeable concept. Similarities and differences were comparative issues, which were addressed through my studio work. My practice-based research of traditional Chinese woodblock printing and Chinese water-ink painting were strong influences on my studio work during my sojourn in China.

Four months were spent in China researching these traditional Chinese art techniques and areas where my ancestors lived. One of the pre-cursors to Chinese woodblock printing was the seal. Taoists used the seal to print curative potions, spells or mystic symbols which were burnt, mixed with water and drunk (Barker 2005). Traditional Chinese woodblock printing (*zhong guo chuan tong mu ban shui yin* or *zhong guo chuan tong shui yin ban hua*) uses a range of cutting tools with the main one being the *quangdao*. Prints are made using the printing tool, *cazi*, and a special table (*yinshuatai*) for printing editions (Barker 2005). While in Hangzhou, I used these traditional tools and equipment and made a *cazi* for printing.

I was inspired by the imagery of lotus flowers and leaves in Hangzhou as they were similar to the waterlilies found in the Northern Territory and this resulted in a number of works such as *Connecting Homes* (Figures 50-52). As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the lotus symbolises unbreakable cultural links. In addition, the lotus is the floral emblem of Macau, where my father was born, and appears on the Macau flag. Therefore, the dual image of the lotus/waterlily symbolized family and home, as well as our temporary home in China.
Figure 50  Glynis Lee, *Connecting Homes*, 2010-11, woodblock print on silk paper, 16cmx16cmx6cm each, calligraphy and embossing on Xuan paper, photograph: Fiona Morrison
Figure 51  Glynis Lee, *Connecting Homes* (detail), 2010-11, woodblock print on silk paper, 16cmx16cmx6cm each, calligraphy and embossing on Xuan paper, photograph: Glynis Lee

Figure 52  Glynis Lee, *Connecting Homes* (detail), 2010-11, woodblock print on silk paper, 16cmx16cmx6cm each, calligraphy and embossing on Xuan paper, photograph: Glynis Lee
Initially, the lotus/waterlily image was printed on Xuan paper. I then decided to print on silk paper and construct sculptures similar to my rice bowl constructions. The ceramic water bowl, which I used for Chinese water-ink painting in Hangzhou, was an ideal vessel for moulding. My Chinese printmaking teacher, Zhang Xiaofeng, encouraged me to experiment with using varying degrees of water within the printing process. I thus decided to print the lotus using a progressive degree of watery prints, starting with a dry print and finishing with a totally wet print (Figure 53). Three groups of five bowls were made, with some being made on return to Australia. The ones made in Hangzhou had to be re-moulded in Australia as they were slightly flattened through the transportation process.

![Figure 53](image)

**Figure 53**  Glynis Lee, *Connecting Homes* (detail), 2010-11, woodblock print on silk paper, 16cmx16cmx6cm each, calligraphy and embossing on Xuan paper, photograph: Glynis Lee

Bombyx silk fibres were used to make pieces of silk paper and silk bowls. Watercolour paints and ink were used to print the woodblocks and backgrounds. Plywood and pear wood were used for the woodblocks. Xuan paper was used for the
prints. In traditional Chinese woodblock printing and Chinese water-ink painting, maintaining the correct balance of water, paint, ink are challenging components of the process, as well as carving thin lines in woodblock and correct brushstrokes and composition in painting.

Firstly, I printed the image of the lotus onto small pieces of silk paper I had made. Chinese woodblock printing emphasizes the use of water to obtain different effects. The block can be printed dry, wet or a combination of wet and dry. The printing of the lotus is a gradual process of dry printing to wet printing. This transition reflects the changes in cultural identity and the wet and dry portions reflect the contrast between the two cultures. Xuan paper was used to absorb the excess paint from the prints resulting in watery images of the lotus. The printed lotus pieces were then moulded over the water bowl used for Chinese water-ink painting to make silk water bowls. The silk water bowls were made in groups of five, as five is an important number in Daoism³. The silk paper bowls were displayed on a long scroll of Xuan paper printed with calligraphy, practiced daily over a period of eight months and embossed with woodblock lines reflecting water as they float in the Chinese cultural environment.

The preliminary display idea was for the bowls to float on a long scroll with a woodblock print of water. However, on return to Australia, I decided to make a scroll of calligraphy practice, going back to basic strokes. This was because calligraphy is the basis for Chinese painting and therefore would give me a better grounding for continuing my painting practice. Some of these dots are used in Chinese characters relating to water, such as 游泳 (yóuyǒng) meaning to go swimming and 湖 (hú) meaning lake. Returning to these calligraphic origins enabled me to engage with my cultural roots. In addition, it highlighted the Taoist approach of a calm and meditative studio practice. Visually, the dots also resemble punctuation marks (‘ ‘) used in speech or conversation. This provides links to both English and Chinese languages and alludes to connections to dialogues on cultural identity and belonging.
My original thinking on identity construction had been that learning to speak Chinese language would somehow make me feel more Chinese, enabling me to fit in more easily with the Chinese population in Australia and perhaps feel more at ease amongst Chinese overseas as well as providing insights into my studio work. Similarly, Shen (2001, p. 149) cites Tan:

> For in China, I was sure I would find the answer to all my problems-the alienation I had felt in Australia, the problem of not being Chinese yet being Chinese. I would find my identity.

Although my proficiency of the Chinese language remains at an elementary level, it has had the opposite effect, reinforcing a sense of difference of how “Western” or Australian I really was. This sentiment has been felt by other ABCs – “I never felt more Australian - and less Chinese – than when living in China” (Chung 2008); and Quong cited by Giese, 1997, p.150:

> Now the people of my generation, and my children’s generation, they’re complete foreigners if they go to China. They’re not accepted. They can’t speak a word of Chinese. They’re Australians. But it took several generations to do this.

This oscillation between Chineseness and Australianness raised questions of notions of home and belonging through An le wo. In China I felt I did not completely fit in, having never lived there for an extended period or having known family ties there. Although I may not have felt a complete sense of ease with my heritage language and culture, there have been small aspects that have influenced and become a part of my changing identity construction. In Hangzhou I experienced a form of difference, not the dominating attitude of Said’s ‘Othering’, but a form of exclusion. Most Chinese I met here could not understand someone looking Chinese, but unable to speak Chinese. To them, if you could not speak Chinese, you were not Chinese. The comment I often received was that if you wanted to learn Chinese painting or printmaking, you should learn how to speak Chinese first. They had a term ‘overseas Chinese’, however, this referred to those who were born overseas and returned to live in China. Therefore, unless I was able to speak Chinese with some fluency, I would not begin to be accepted as Chinese in any form. This made it more difficult to feel a part of the Chinese culture within some areas of China.
In Hangzhou, there were foreign students from other Asian countries such as Japan, Korea and Malaysia. Sometimes I was mistaken for one of these students, however, the Chinese still expected all foreigners, especially students, in China to speak some Chinese. Unfortunately, as I had not studied Chinese since I was last in China, I found that a lot of what I had previously learned was forgotten. There were still times in China where I could blend in with the locals and feel closer to the Chinese culture if I did not need to speak. These times included my visit to Macau to find the house my father had lived in as a child and the school he attended and walking around Hainan University with other Chinese students or even on my own. The times when I felt more caught between the cultures was when I was with my husband and son and encountering locals who could easily understand them being foreign, but not myself.\(^4\) Mentioning that my father or ancestors were Chinese only increased the locals’ confusion over my identity. My findings were that continuing to learn *Putonghua* would be a method of reducing the language barrier and consequently, this identity confusion, but it also informed the notion of oscillation in my work.

To reflect this ambivalence and the hidden cultural identity portions of self I decided to carve a woodblock for embossing the image of water, rather than printing. The woodblock was embossed over the calligraphy scroll in various areas with the waterlily bowls on top (Figure 54). The scroll represents the motivation to engage with and retain my heritage language. It reflects a return to my origins in order to better understand my heritage culture through utilising Chinese calligraphy as a connection with Chinese water-ink painting in my studio practice. Situating the lotus/waterlily bowls over the calligraphy scroll connected my temporary ‘homes’ in China with my ‘home’ in Australia by bringing together the basics of Chinese calligraphy and water-ink painting brushstrokes and Chinese woodcut with the imagery of both ‘homes’ in China and Australia.

My frustration with my lack of Chinese language brought to mind the works of Chinese artist, Xu Bing. His work *Book from the Sky* (1987-88) (*Tianshu*), which was originally titled *An Analysed Reflection of the World-The Final Volume of the Century* (*Xi shi jian-shiji mo juan*), was formed using made-up characters resembling Chinese characters (Erickson 2001). Many Chinese people were
perplexed by not being able to read any of the characters. This was an interesting parallel to my own experience of being surrounded by many Chinese characters and not being able to understand them. Although Xu Bing’s meanings and incentives for his works differ from mine, there are some parallels that can be drawn. In some of my works such as *Multifaceted Identities* (2009), the words that I had written in Chinese characters were then broken up in the printing process and scattered throughout the individual pieces. This process made it difficult to read the words, alluding to the decline of heritage language in ABCs. However, with this process, some characters were still recognisable, unlike Xu Bing’s “characters” in the *Book from the Sky* (1987-8), which are completely fictional. My limited knowledge of Chinese characters meant I was unable to read the characters I was using without the aid of a dictionary. In Xu Bing’s case, the *Book from the Sky* (1987-88) cannot be read by anyone. However, his books *An Introduction to Square Word Calligraphy* and *Square Word Calligraphy Red Line Tracing Book* (1994-96) appear to contain Chinese characters, but are actually English words (Erickson 2001). Thus, this again created confusion in Chinese viewers, which is often felt by non-readers of Chinese language. My work, *Connecting Homes* (2010-11), deconstructs Chinese characters to their individual strokes, focusing on the dots that resemble punctuation or dialogue quotation marks. These marks find familiarity by both readers and non-readers of Chinese characters, but are not words in either English or Chinese. This ambivalence over language is a contributing factor in trying to find a sense of belonging.
Figure 54  Glynis Lee, *Connecting Homes* (detail), 2010-11, woodblock print on silk paper, 16cmx16cmx6cm each, calligraphy and embossing on Xuan paper, photograph: Glynis Lee
Figure 55  Glynis Lee, *35 Rue de San Roque*, (2010), trial proof, woodcut on Jing Xuan paper, 52cmx61cm, photograph: Glynis Lee

Qīng qīng chí táng shuǐ  The pool water is very blue
Tīng tíng yù lì hé  Lotus looks very nice
Kōng kōng lóu gé yǐng  Although the building looks empty
Yōu yōu wǎng shì qíng  It has some stories from long, long ago.

Chen Yan 2010

The above poem was written by my printmaking teacher in Haikou, Chen Yan, in response to my woodcuts of my father’s house in Macau and Chinese lotus scene entitled *35 Rue de San Roque* (Figure 55). Her comment that the imagery conjured
up emotions of loneliness and isolation was probably an indication of the emptiness felt for the loss of culture, language and identity on leaving this ‘home’ in Macau for my father as a young child. Fifty years passed before my father returned to visit this ‘home’, which was full of mixed memories for him. However, although I felt a link with this house knowing my father had lived there, it did not hold the strong attachment that it did for my father, and therefore, imparted more feelings of loss of culture for me. Consequently, this loss materialised to some degree through my studio work.

Over time, however, I began to feel more ‘at home’ in China in some circumstances such as within the university culture in Haikou and this is echoed in a more congenial aesthetic in my studio work. The title of this group of works, An le wo, while translating as ‘a cosy nest’, examined the concept of ‘home’ as a multiple entity – multiple places, imagery, memories and emotions (Mallet 2004; Manser 1999). ‘Home’ could be a collection of places and imagery, for example, the lotus and waterlily linked my home in Australia, my temporary home in China and my father’s childhood home. The work explored the sense of home in this foreign land, a home that was very familiar to my father, but was unfamiliar to myself, yet I could sense a feeling of belonging by association when I visited my father’s home. My studio practice also explored the loss of cultural identity through leaving these ‘homes’. Therefore, in my personal experience, while ‘home’ was often a cosy nest, it also evoked a sense of loss, of culture and identity.

While in Hangzhou, I had commenced some artworks, which later became the In Search of Home and Leaving Home (2010-2011) series. For the In Search of Home series of woodblock prints on Xuan paper, painted watery backgrounds of blue, green and ink mirror the landscape of Hangzhou around West Lake (Figures 56-58). The lotus leaf backgrounds for the Leaving Home series were painted in the Chinese water-ink style (Figures 59,60). Woodblock prints of lotus were printed within these painted backgrounds, in white and silver combinations so that they were not initially evident to the observer, but had to be sought out. Within the compositions of this series was a print of the house my father lived in as a child in Macau. The image of the house was less evident in some prints, alluding to the fading memories, language and culture of those who left this home.
Figure 56  Glynis Lee, *In Search of Home* (detail), 2010-11, woodblock print on Xuan paper, 46cm x 64cm, photograph: Fiona Morrison

Figure 57  Glynis Lee, *In Search of Home* (detail), 2010-11, woodblock print on Xuan paper, 46cm x 64cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
Figure 58  Glynis Lee, *In Search of Home* (detail), 2010-11, woodblock print on Xuan paper, 46cm x 64cm, photograph: Glynis Lee

Figure 59  Glynis Lee, *Leaving Home* (detail), 2010-11, woodblock print and ink painting on Xuan paper, 46 cm x 69 cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
Figure 60  Glynis Lee, *Leaving Home* (detail), 2010–11, woodblock print and ink painting on Xuan paper, 46 cm x 69 cm, photograph: Fiona Morrison
Colours (crimson, yellow, black, blue, green, white and silver) were important elements in this collection of works. Crimsons and yellows were used for the lotus prints onto white silk paper reminiscent of the Chinese water ink painting. Black ink used on the scroll of white Xuan paper is typical of Chinese calligraphy. Blues, greens and ink were used in some of the prints to reflect the landscape of Hangzhou summer and spring. White and silver were used to reflect the hidden elements of cultural identity.

The combined woodblock prints and water-ink paintings were displayed in landscape view, which was representative of the Chinese landscape painting scrolls as well as the actual long rows of lotus in West Lake, Hangzhou. A long scroll of Xuan paper with embossed water imagery over calligraphy was draped over a long low plinth with the silk paper water bowls seemingly floating down the river in front of the lotus landscape (Figure 61).

A series of screenprints entitled Rue de San Roque (2011) were added to this group of works (Figure 62). In this series, a number of colour variations were printed on a range of printing papers of varying shades. This gave the impression of on-going terraced houses as they appeared in the streets of Macau. The subtly embossed image of the brolga flying over the houses alluded to an Australian passing through the scene as well as my father’s journeying to Australia and the temporary nature of visits by our ABC family members to this Macau home over the years (Figure 63).
Figure 61  
Glynis Lee, Connecting Homes, 2010-11, installation view, photograph: Glynis Lee
Figure 62  Glynis Lee, Rue de San Roque, (2011), screenprint on BFK Rives, 50cm x 66.5cm, photograph: Glynis Lee

Figure 63  Glynis Lee, Rue de San Roque (detail), 2011, screenprint on BFK Rives, 50cm x 66.5cm, photograph: Glynis Lee
3. Other Voices

Integrating the Questionnaire and Interview into Audio-visual work

While the previous series focused on my own journeys, the next project incorporated experiences of other ABCs. Conducting my own survey on the identity of ABCs provided critical material for my studio work, which focused on cultural identity and heritage language retention through the use of biographical content. The information collected reinforced my views on the ambivalence of the hybrid in-between spaces that individuals in this group are situated within personal, social and political platforms.

The final project, *Made in Australia*, brought together the concepts in the earlier works – Chineseness and Australianness, cultures as separate as well as intermixing, multiple notions of home, loss of language, inclusion/exclusion, cultural in-between spaces and moving amongst these spaces. This project was a departure from my previous studio practice. The reason for this was a motivation to incorporate video footage and text from my survey of ABCs into my studio work in order to more clearly depict my theoretical perceptions of ‘self’. I determined that an audio-visual work would effectively portray my perceived concepts, as it would incorporate voice, imagery and emotion of other ABCs. William Yang’s performance slide shows of family biography and autobiography in relation to Chinese immigration and identity issues, which were discussed in chapter four, was an influence on this decision to use video media.

In 2010/11, I undertook a survey of ABCs. Appendix 1 provides details of the questions and ethical process. The return rate of responses was thirty-nine percent (Appendix 2). A total of 48 questionnaires were distributed in three areas – Darwin, Innisfail/Cairns and Brisbane/Gold Coast, including one to three different Chinese clubs in each of these areas to disseminate among their members. 19 responses were returned and nine video interviews were conducted. The survey included second,
third and fourth generation Australians with at least one parent with Chinese ancestry as collated in Appendix 3.

Through this survey I obtained biographical information from other ABCs and their thoughts on their cultural identity. The participants addressed issues of discrimination, inclusion and exclusion, as well as a number of elements in cultural identity construction through personal stories and these were recorded into visual media through video and text animation. The video editing process began with selecting these comments from ABCs on how they identify themselves culturally, incidents of discrimination or exclusion they or their family members encountered in or out of Australia as well as incidents of inclusion in an Australian social context.

The final audio-visual work included repetitive voice grabs to emphasize positive aspects of being ABC. The outcomes of my survey reveal the varying levels of Chineseness in participants. As Ang (2001, p. 38) explained:

Chineseness is not a category with a fixed content – be it racial, cultural or geographical – but operates as an open and indeterminate signifier whose meanings are constantly renegotiated and rearticulated in different sections of the Chinese diaspora. Being Chinese outside China cannot possibly mean the same thing as inside. It varies from place to place, moulded by the local circumstances in different parts of the world where people of Chinese ancestry have settled and constructed new ways of living.

Most participants considered themselves as Australian and Chinese or ABC, while others considered themselves only as Australian. None considered themselves as Chinese. The majority had only lived in Australia. This is similar to my own situation. Having lived all my life in Australia, I identify as Australian primarily and then as ABC. My siblings share a similar perspective. Participants’ levels of Chineseness were influenced by their life experiences of cultural and social inclusion and exclusion.

I used some of these narrated reflections of exclusion and discrimination combining animated text with video footage to provide variety of visual imagery (Figure 64). While results of my survey revealed that the level of exclusion on cultural grounds had decreased in recent years, there was still an indication that discrimination and a
level of ‘Othering’ was occurring in present times and some of these are expressed in video clips and voice-overs.  

In one video clip an interviewee describes incidents of reverse discrimination in China. Others have had similar experiences: “If I thought I may at times have counted as an overseas Chinese – a Huaqiao or Bridge of China – I was mistaken” (Chung 2008); and “…one is not Chinese, they seem to say, if one cannot speak the Chinese language” (Shen 2001, p. 149). Wilton (2004, p. 113) relates the experience of ABC, Joyce Sue Fong (nee Fay), on her return visit to her ancestral village in China as demonstrating the sense of not belonging:

And when we all went there, they all followed us and called us like – you know how we call people ‘Ching chong chinaman’ here. They called us the opposite when we went over there. Because we looked different…We had English clothes on and they had Chinese clothes on, pants and that.

While some interviewees in the video commented on incidents of exclusion, others mentioned experiences of inclusion such as participating in picnics, excursions and dinner/dance balls. In addition to the video footage of interviews to illustrate concepts of inclusion and exclusion, I included text from the questionnaires received.
in my survey as well as photographs of ABCs within the Australian postcolonial social context and some of my works in print (Figure 65). These included digitally altered photographs and lithographic prints of Chinese-Australians participating in social activities in Australia, some of which were manipulated to create abstract imagery.

Figure 65 Glynis Lee, Made in Australia 2012, video digital still image.

I used video footage to demonstrate one participant’s regret for not learning Chinese language and another’s joy at encountering others speaking her heritage tongue. The outcomes of my survey revealed that there are opposing viewpoints on the importance of heritage language and cultural maintenance through the generations. In relation to heritage language retention, the results of my survey were consistent with the surveys of Pink (2009), Portes and Hao (1998) and Tannenbaum (2003) mentioned in chapter three and indicated that heritage language maintenance was diminishing through the generations (Appendix 4). The findings in this survey in regards to the lesser importance that subsequent generations place on heritage language maintenance were consistent with Zhang and Defoe’s (2009) survey. However, there were some points of interest to be noted. While some participants indicated that they were proud of their Chinese heritage and many thought it was important to pass on some Chinese culture to their children, few considered it
important for their children to learn the Chinese language. Some of the reasons for this viewpoint were that although learning a second language was important to them, this language did not necessarily need to be Chinese; or that speaking Chinese is not necessary in Australia. This is interesting considering that Chinese in China and Chinese immigrants in Australia and the United States of America equate being Chinese with knowledge of the language (Tannenbaum 2003; Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe 2009), while those considering themselves as ABC placed less importance on the heritage language over participation in some form of cultural activity. In interpreting this data into the video, I recorded myself drawing Chinese characters with a large brush and black ink on various Xuan papers, and also of water bowls and brushes used for calligraphy and Chinese water-ink painting. Video footage of calligraphy fading in and out indicated the diminishing levels of heritage language through the generations and the varying levels of interest in retaining heritage language (Figure 66). Video clips and audio voice-overs highlight the importance of cultural activities for ABCs.

Figure 66 Glynis Lee, Made in Australia 2012, video digital still image.

The findings in my survey as detailed in Appendix 4, support those of Pauwels (2005), demonstrating that this evidence of diminishing heritage languages has not necessarily equated with corresponding support. My own experiences with the
issues of heritage language maintenance are consistent with some of the views of my survey respondents such as those who expressed a desire to learn or their children to learn their heritage language, but encountered difficulty in accessing educational means. To counteract the diminishment of heritage language continuance in ABCs, there is a requirement for increased resources and support for family groups, further Chinese languages in education policies and positive community attitudes. My survey also revealed that the level of interest in retaining heritage languages within ABCs varied and therefore, encouragement in the benefits of heritage language retention is also required, particularly to the younger generation. This is highlighted in text in my audio-visual work (Figure 67).

Figure 67   Glynis Lee, *Made in Australia*, 2012, video digital still image.

Animated text in English and Chinese was filtered throughout the video. The banners I had seen on my visits to China particularly those at the Hainan University, were an influence in using Chinese and English text together. Large red banners with white or gold Chinese calligraphy were common sights in China, however the ones in Hainan University included English translations for the benefit of the Australian students. In my audio-visual work, I used English for some text, emphasising the Australianness of ABCs as well as their exclusion of Chineseness. Photographic images of some of my prints on paper and silk paper bowls were animated to the
point of abstraction. The purpose of this was to portray prints in a new dimension as well as portray the concept of oscillation amongst cultural in-between spaces.

The underlying flute music throughout the video was made with a Chinese flute called a *tao xun*, which I obtained on my visit to China. The slow, repetitive, deep tones emphasise the mostly sombre atmosphere of the work. In order to emphasize the meditative ambiance of the music, the sound files were adjusted, repeated and reversed. A large amount of technical adjustments were required to obtain the required timbre and to eliminate unnecessary noise. The video editing process trialled a number of versions, gaining feedback from technical experts before the final result was realised.

The initial display idea was to project the work onto a construction of silk paper in the form of a circle, sphere or bowl. Another concept considered was to have an installation depicting a room in my grandparents’ house such as the dining room where photographs and Chinese artefacts were displayed or the kitchen, which contained woks, chopsticks and other Chinese utensils. The video animations would be displayed through digital photo frames. However, the decision to project onto a silk paper form was more suitable for this project as it provided continuity with other works in this research and portrayed the sometimes transparency and variableness of Chineseness experienced by a number of ABCs.

During the process of this studio work, my mother was diagnosed with lung cancer and eventually passed away. This motivated me to include photographic images of her in this studio work. On Australia Day 2012, during an interlude from her hospital bed, I saw a news item of complaints that many of the Australia Day merchandise were not made in Australia, but in China. A few hours later, my mother passed away, leaving me with the thought of how fitting it was that as an Australian-born Chinese, she had left on Australia Day, and we would always have a public holiday in her memory. This incident prompted the title of this work, *Made in Australia*. As mentioned in chapter four, other Chinese-Australian artists have conveyed their mothers’ biographical accounts of inclusion and exclusion in Australia as well as China. These include incidents of discrimination such as in Yang’s *Sadness* (1992), and reverse discrimination as in Leong’s *Remembering*
Chinese (2000), which have had an impact on the cultural identities of the artists and their family members (Grehan 2002; Leong, G 2000). Similarly, my mother experienced incidents of inclusion and exclusion and this is portrayed through photographic and print imagery in *Made in Australia* (Figure 68).

![Figure 68](image.png)

**Figure 68** Glynis Lee, *Made in Australia*, 2012, video digital still image.

The reasons for undertaking quantitative research through survey and qualitative research through interviews were to gauge similarities and differences with existing research and to obtain data for my audio-visual work. The advantages of using these methods were that the use of questionnaire and interview helped to expand my studio work and provide an outlet for other ABC voices. Personal and other written knowledge from participants brought the work into the current context of local communities such as Darwin. However, this process also presented a number of difficulties. For example, response rates to the questionnaire were slow, so potential participants had to be constantly pursued. There were also issues related to qualitative research such as the subjective nature of interviewees’ memory and interpretation of events, especially if the information is of a secondary nature (Ngan, L 2008). In addition, at times there was some deviation from the central topic or interviewees needed prompting to give more detailed responses. As Ngan (2008)
found, interviewees’ responses may be influenced by the researcher’s perceived need or behaviour and reaction to responses.

The use of audio-visual media for this project resulted in valuable outputs, which also presented some challenges. Animated imagery of my artworks in print took these works to a new level in my art practice. This digital realm has given my prints a new life through motion, as well as focusing on close-up patterns within the works and multiplying these into repetitive patterns. At times, this close focussing resulted in disguising the images to entice the viewer to look deeper to define its true meaning. My initial impulse was that the imagery should be in motion to reflect my interpretation of hybrid or fusion identities as being in constant flux. Therefore, I needed to obtain and learn how to use the software necessary to achieve the desired results of combining video footage, moving text and still imagery. However, using survey to obtain data and interpreting this through video has been beneficial in informing concepts of cultural and social inclusion and exclusion of ABCs through my studio practice.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has given an introduction to my studio practice. In order to fully explore ABC cultural identity, it was necessary to start on a personal level with my ancestors’ immigration to Australia and my own cultural identity. Therefore, beginning with the first printmaking method I adopted, my studio practice mirrored my initial investigation of ABC cultural identity of returning to my origins. My approach in my studio work was to combine different printmaking techniques with each other or with different media to produce new forms of visual expression. While my initial studio investigations considered a number of media and method, I turned to earlier forms and processes. This initial investigation of my family history through my practice has resulted in a clearer understanding of the hardships and issues faced by the Chinese diaspora to Australia and their first descendants. It brought to light biographical information of family members, which, for me, added to the emotive aesthetic of works such as *CBA-ABC I* (Figure 19).
Combined with this biographical perspective, my studio practice also addressed notions of hybrid spaces and the concept that individuals of mixed cultural influences may find themselves situated within a number of different spaces between cultures. This artwork relates to a number of critical discussions, detailed in chapter three, by theorists on ‘hybrid’ cultural spaces where individuals may be situated in between two or more cultures, and discourses advocating that identities are continually changing. While I understand these viewpoints, it is my premise that these individuals continually oscillate between a multitude of in-between spaces depending on differing circumstances and time. Therefore, identities of Chinese-Australians are not only multi-faceted, but constantly in a state of perpetual motion, and this is demonstrated in my artwork *Multi-faceted Identities* (Figure 32).

My sojourning in China as discussed in section two has revealed insights into a reversal of roles through the “Othering” of “Western-looking” foreigners by Chinese nationals. My own journeying between China and Australia have increased my knowledge and abilities in Chinese calligraphy, water-ink painting and traditional woodblock printing, which have enabled a more complete resolution to my works technically and aesthetically. The situations in China where my non-Chineseness were highlighted, reinforced my oscillating position in the continuum of spaces between the two cultures and this process of personal journey and reflection has been critical in the resolution of my artworks.

Explorations into my heritage language and culture were also critical in the realisation of my studio work focusing on the importance of language in cultural identity construction, the effect of changing environmental and social influences on this identity, notions of home as a multiple entity and situations of inclusion and exclusion. My personal journey into the language and culture of my ancestors has revealed some insights into identity constructions. Not having proficiency in my heritage language reinforced my Australianness over my Chineseness, particularly while being in China. While ‘Western’ foreigners were treated as special, foreigners of Chinese appearance were not. These insights reinforced my sense of ‘hybridity’, of not belonging fully to either culture, but moving somewhere in-between them.
My journey into the Chinese language and culture is a continuing one in which I find that I am constantly on the edges of the two cultures or situated in in-between spaces between the cultures. I continually move amongst these spaces with the level of my Chineseness or Australianness varying with different experiences. Although a large portion of my identity construction is influenced by the Australian culture, aspects of the Chinese language and culture continue to play an important role in my lifestyle and influence my artwork.

In section three I further developed these concerns of heritage language retention through incorporating new media in the form of video and animated text and imagery, in conjunction with previously used media such as digitally altered photographs of family members and ABCs and images of lithograph prints and screenprinted and woodblock printed silk paper bowls. In addition, my studio practice was enhanced by the results of my survey as examined in the final section of this chapter. Themes of inclusion and exclusion, the importance of heritage language retention and cultural identity as an ABC as detailed in biographical information by survey participants were a particular focus in the video production. Including images of my prints and Chinese calligraphy into audio-visual media has enabled alternative displays of works through the added dimensions of motion and sound, thereby extending the capacity to communicate concepts explored. It has enabled me to connect my artworks with narratives of other ABCs and provided a platform for an added direction in my studio practice.

Having been trained in Western traditional printmaking techniques and styles, the introduction of traditional Chinese woodblock printing and water-ink painting was a very successful strategy within my studio practice. This is because it enabled me to increase my knowledge of traditional Chinese art forms, techniques and procedures. Temporarily relocating my art practice to China allowed me to be immersed in Chinese language and culture. I was also able to analyse reasoning for the inclusion or exclusion of traditional approaches, imagery and style within my practice and to adapt techniques and styles to suit my contemporary art practice.
Another inventive strategy was the further development of three-dimensional silk paper constructions combining printmaking. A number of experiments with different silk products, shapes, thicknesses and colours refined the final works to elucidate a visually ephemeral quality while demonstrating diverse cultural influences through colour. Textual meanings are obscured through the fragmented Chinese calligraphic characters alluding to the loss of heritage language and the confusion of cultural belonging for some ABCs. Expanding the printmaking element to Chinese woodblock prints was a particularly ground-breaking move as it enabled the introduction of a range of diffused imagery affected by water. This creative process lends itself to future experimentation of this technique. The use of these strategies within my studio practice was extremely beneficial in achieving my aims of combining printmaking into three-dimensional forms resulting in innovative works.

The construction of prints combining lithograph, etching and drypoint into long scrolls was also a prime strategy, particularly the installation of the two vertical scrolls. The scrolls cascaded in opposite directions like waterfalls of landscape and language, forming a symmetrical temple-like structure, which alludes to a calm sanctuary and balance of all things according to Taoist beliefs. Extending the use of scroll forms through sandwiching painted and screenprinted xuan paper between handpainted silk was also fundamental as the installation of multiple scrolls in staggered formation allowed the works to be considered from multiple viewpoints. In addition, the use of transparent materials facilitated reversed images to come through from behind, adding to the ephemerality of the faded memories of family members, history and heritage language and culture.

This chapter concludes the progression of my studio practice throughout my thesis in my visual exploration of self, cultural identity and difference in the in-between spaces of the Australian and Chinese cultures.
Chapter Five Notes

1 The four types of portable calligraphy and painting were hanging scrolls, hand scrolls, album leaves such as accordion and other folded forms and fans (Liu, F-j 1997). Contemporary Chinese painting scrolls are usually on a lightweight white Xuan paper, backed and mounted within a silk border. Scrolls can be vertical or horizontal and can be mounted on a wall, on easels or lying in a glass cabinet.

2 The mine township of Brock’s Creek is now a heritage site, which is located in the operational mine now run by Crocodile Gold. The staff at Crocodile Gold were enthusiastic and helpful in assisting my exploration of the area.

3 The five determinant elements of metal, wood, fire and earth are important in Taoism for maintaining balance and harmony in nature (Yow 2006). Eight is considered a lucky number by Chinese as the pronunciation is similar to that of prosperity and wealth (Chiu, L 2012).

4 In several parts of China, particularly areas where foreigners were uncommon, I found a reversal of roles. Westerners were treated as ‘Others’, thought of as exotic, different and revered, especially if they attempted to speak Chinese. They were much sought after to photograph, especially the young, fair-haired women. One of my companions commented that after returning to Australia after spending time in China, she noted that she was just like everyone else, not treated as someone special.

5 Less than half of participants indicated that the White Australia Policy in respect to immigration or employment affected their families: “(My father) had to denounce his country and country’s beliefs to become an Australian and therefore it wasn’t until he passed away how much I have been robbed of knowing and learning of my heritage and his culture” and “It took ten years before my mother and two eldest brothers, who were born in China, were allowed into Australia”. More than half indicated that they or their family members were subjected to discrimination. Although many stated that these incidents had occurred some time ago such as while at school, some indicated that they were still subject to discrimination due to their appearance: “However, there are still some elements (of discrimination) in today’s society, particularly amongst the less well educated who passively discriminate eg. serve other westerners first or are more polite to westerners”.

6 The Chinese government considered it a form of rejection that there were Chinese who left China but did not return (Yee 2006). Therefore they have not perpetuated positive views of this group to the Chinese nationals. Yee (2006, p. 3) cites Evans, Saunders & Cronin (1975):

It is one of the pleasant fictions of the Chinese Government that no child of the great Emperor can withdraw himself from the paternal rule; and that to leave his dominions and settle elsewhere permanently is a crime.
The xun is a hand-made clay-fired bottle-shaped instrument whose origins date back to the stone age when stones with holes created sound when thrown as a weapon (Chinadaily 2005). The earliest archaeological xun is 7000 years old.
Chapter 6

Conclusion
This research project has taken me on a journey into visual representations focusing on printmaking. My aim was to express the in-between spaces linking the Chinese and Australian cultures that, as an Australian-born Chinese, I find myself in. As highlighted in the introduction to this exegesis, it is important for people in the borderlines of cultures to affirm their identities by voicing their personal experiences. Independent stories of bridging two cultures, the difficulties in retaining heritage culture and language and the values of bringing two cultures together have been significant for informing my studio practice. In this extensive, detailed work I have given voice to my own experience and that of other ABCs, through textual and visual representations, highlighting the importance of recognising the variety of different places of cultural identity where ABCs are positioned.

In the preface, I wrote that before undertaking this research, I felt on the fence-line between cultures. Throughout this investigation, I have described incidents of being torn between two different worlds. I have oscillated amongst the many spaces between these two worlds and have reached the edges of both extremes. I have been on many parts of the pendulum between cultures. Having concluded this particular research project and although I will continue working in this area, I find that I have come to a new understanding. I have become content in all these places that comprise varying compositions of my cultural self. I have found belonging in a variety of “homes”. For ABCs, there is a new truth. Being ABC cannot simply be defined as one entity. We are not just one thing or another. We are a multitude of things. We are Australian, Chinese, ABC and more. Our identities are multi-faceted and forever changing. We continually move amongst the abundance of identity places. This is also true of others with dual or multiple cultural connections. The cultural self encompasses all of these spaces and many of us can find contentment in this all-encompassing reality.

This doctoral research addressed the multi-faceted cultural identities of ABCs through new visual artworks, which culminated in a multiple media exhibition supported by a written exegesis. Through studio practice underpinned by a theoretical framework, my research investigated in depth, the factors affecting the construction of cultural identity such as experiences of the Chinese diaspora in
Australia, the complexities of discrimination, exclusion and inclusion, ‘Othering’ and cultural ‘hybridity’, heritage language retention, immediate environmental factors and heritage influences on Chineseness. Essentially, my work strongly analyses and depicts responses to the in-between spaces amid heritage cultures where many ABCs situate themselves.

Through utilising printmaking in innovative ways, I have portrayed the diversity of ABC cultural identity and the persistent search for a sense of place. I have achieved this particularly through a number of successful strategies in my studio practice. These include combining screenprinting and Chinese woodblock printing with three-dimensional hand-made silk paper forms into installation works and combining abstracted imagery of prints into motion with narratives from other ABCs in audio-video work. The *Multi-faceted Identities* (2009) installation, comprised of screenprinted three-dimensional silk paper forms, portrays the many cultural identities of ABCs through variety of size and colour, with different printed combinations. The *Territory Meditations* and *Territory Impressions* (2010-11) series and *An le wo* (2010-11) installation work investigate concerns of ABCs. This is achieved through portraying the intersection of heritage language with the Australian environment through prints of the Northern Territory and Chinese landscapes and the use of Chinese calligraphy, which is evident in some works but a mere impression in others. This faded imagery alludes to the concern for loss of heritage language, while the search for belonging is portrayed through the use of imagery representing “home” such as the house and waterlily/lotus which is found in both Australia and China. These are some of the issues affecting the diverse range of ABCs.

One of the key theoretical findings was that individuals continually move around the multiple spaces between cultures depending on the situation and context of experience. This finding was represented by works such as *Multi-faceted Identities* (2009). Suspending the silk paper bowl forms onto a clear acrylic shelf gave them the appearance of balancing between cultures and the added movement of the piece produced an illusion that the forms are floating. This alludes to the continuous movement between various cultural identity spaces amongst which these multi-faceted identities are hovering.
Another key finding was that individuals are able to find a sense of place and belonging within the multiple spaces between cultures and they can be comfortable in continually moving amongst these spaces. In my studio practice, the An le wo series included works such as *Searching for Home* (2010-11) and *Connecting Homes* (2010-11). The former portrayed “home” as something elusive while the latter alludes to finding connections through languages of both cultures. Also in *Rue de San Roque* (2011), my interpretation of my father’s childhood home is a yearning for lost homes and culture, but finding contentment within this mix of familiar and unfamiliar. As a personal creative journey these works reflect the move among multiple spaces.

In parallel with other research, my survey findings emphasized that heritage language is diminishing through the generations of ABCs. It also found that along with individual motivation, this problem is compounded by lack of resources, community and education support, and I argue that this needs to be addressed. The *Territory Meditations* and *Territory Impressions* (2010-11) series address this issue of loss of heritage language through the contemplation of Chinese calligraphy in the Territory landscapes and the subsequent fading of language through the embossed characters in *Territory Impressions* series. This issue of heritage language is also addressed in the audio-visual work, *Made in Australia* (2012) where ABCs present their different views. Through these works, a journey in time and place for many ABCs resonates.

One of the key influential strategies used in my studio practice to articulate these findings was the introduction of traditional Chinese woodblock printing and water-ink painting. Another major approach was further development of my three-dimensional silk paper constructions combining printmaking. Expanding these two elements, to combine Chinese woodblock prints with silk paper forms, was a particularly innovative stratagem as it enabled the introduction of a variety of diffused imagery. Another prime tactic was the sandwiching painted and screenprinted xuan paper scrolls between hand-painted silk pieces. The use of installation in my studio practice was very relevant to the conceptual aims as it enabled the works to be considered in a variety of formats as well as from multiple vantage points.
Integrating different media and techniques provides for numerous creative possibilities particularly when introducing the added third dimension and installation elements to the works. The *Territory Meditations* (2009) series is an excellent example of this. In this work, different printmaking techniques were used within the print. The multiple prints were then amalgamated into long scrolls. Two of these scrolls were united in an installation creating a three dimensional temple-like form. Therefore, strategies within my studio practice relied on establishing an initial basis and building upon this to progress the work further.

The implications of taking printmaking into the digital realm are multi fold. The visuals of the print are changed through abstraction as well as through removing the immediate printed image through digital aspects of photography, computer software and video. In addition, by projecting onto a three dimensional silk paper form gives the visuals an added element of the silk fibres intersecting with the visuals and when the imagery moves beyond the flat area over the three-dimensional edges, it creates an additional element. Taking printmaking in this different direction by combining these abstracted printed moving images with interview narratives, means that the traditional print can be integrated into digital formats and projected in a variety of ways.

A multi-disciplinary methodology framework incorporating historical, language and cultural studies, identity theory as well as visual arts theory and practice provided deep and rich insights into the broader fields, which in turn informed my studio work and exegesis. Reflective applications and biography were imperative as my research stemmed from a personal impulse to research my family history and make sense of my own cultural identity through my art practice. Biographical information from other ABCs reinforced personal experiences and thoughts on cultural identity as well as emphasising the multi-faceted cultural identity constructions of Chinese-Australians. Learning Chinese language and visits to China provided insights into my Chineseness and Australianness and the varying nature of these in differing circumstances, which in turn enhanced the augmentation of my studio practice. This exegesis reinforces the argument that many ABCs oscillate amongst diverse spaces between cultures.
In chapter two, a synthesis of historical literature of the Chinese diaspora to Australia combined with biographical information of my family members provided a theoretical grounding which informed my studio practice. Through this historical framework, I evaluated my own cultural identity construction and made visual inferences in regards to other Australian-Chinese and Chinese-Australians. In addition, the identified concerns of exclusion and aspects of inclusion experienced by individuals portrayed through my artwork, demonstrated some of the important influences on cultural identity construction for some ABCs and highlights the ongoing effects that past incidents have on present life trajectories.

Based on the evidence in chapter three I have concluded that the cultural identity constructions of the Chinese diaspora are multi-faceted, considering the variety of life experiences of individuals, the variety of countries that individuals have immigrated from besides China and the journeying backwards and forwards between countries. I have shown that many Australian-born Chinese are caught in the in-between spaces between the two cultures, not fully belonging to either culture. In Australia, their physical appearance sometimes creates incidents of ‘Othering’ and exclusion, while in the ‘Motherland’ of China, their lack of heritage language and culture also leads to forms of exclusion. My verdict is that these exclusions steer these individuals into the ‘in-between’ spaces. In considering environmental and inherent influences on levels of Chineseness in individuals, I found that Ngan and Chan’s (2012) framework of life stage experiences is useful in charting levels of Chineseness, however, flexibility for a multi-layered framework is necessary to include individual circumstances. This chapter also provided evidence that heritage language retention of ABCs is dramatically reduced through the generations, despite motivation levels remaining strong. Evidence has also shown that heritage language maintenance is of value on national, community and individual levels, but that corresponding support could be increased. This motivation to support language learning and maintenance may be encouraged by artwork such as mine that questions cultural identity.

In chapter four I reviewed the artworks of a number of other Asian-Australian artists who have explored similar issues and concerns of cultural identity. A number of...
these artists with whom I felt affinity, have also been motivated to travel to their heritage countries, investigate their heritage language and culture and consolidate their emotions, thoughts, concepts and perceptions through some of their artworks. Each artist has approached their art practices with these heritage cultural influences in uniquely individual modes. The more individuals explore their heritage languages and cultures, the more individual diversity and differences are highlighted. In this search for knowledge of heritage language and culture, there are individual artists that have addressed similar themes to myself, such as family, home and a sense of belonging in their works. However, there are also differences in concepts, approaches to art practices, methods and media, which accentuate the individuality of each artist. Another difference is that my research has a regional Northern Australia focus.

Throughout the three years of this research project, my studio practice as detailed in chapter five, has been the principle focus. It involved exploration of media and concepts, which express the intercultural amalgamation of imagery, media and text. In the course of my investigations, I undertook a number of creative representations of the mix of Australian and Chinese cultures, focusing on elements affecting cultural identity and establishing a sense of belonging and place. Incorporating both Western and Chinese forms of traditional printmaking and painting, as well as contemporary sculptural forms and audio-visual production, I merged aspects from the two cultures into individual works. The results of these investigations were that these additional techniques enhanced my already established professional printmaking practice. This was achieved by extending the possibilities of combining media and techniques, particularly into the third dimension. Chapter five also details my survey of ABCs in three Australian locations focusing on heritage language retention, cultural identity and issues of exclusion and inclusion through biographical incidents. My main aim was to obtain biographical information on other ABCs and to situate my own experiences and sense of cultural identity on a global scale. The resultant audio-visual work enabled a new direction to take my printmaking into the digital realm. It also gave voice to other ABCs on their cultural identity concerns while focusing on both positive and negative experiences.
This research highlights these situations of ambivalence and the multi-faceted nature of cultural identity construction. As described throughout the exegesis, I conducted investigations into my own identity to gauge changes in my perceived level of Chineseness. My journeys to China highlighted my sense of exclusion from my heritage culture and my situation in the in-between spaces between cultures. In particular, these experiences strongly emphasised the oscillating nature of my cultural identity construction within these spaces. My relocated arts practice and investigation into my familial history greatly enhanced my investigation into themes of belonging and cultural identity influences, highlighting the notion of multiple homes across time and space. The work has taken me on several exciting pathways through history, language and cultural identity theory, visual arts practice, biographical accounts and cultural and language immersion. Despite the long journey that I have already undertaken through my studio practice, I sense that this is just the beginning of an on-going adventure into my Chineseness through language, calligraphy and the incorporation of traditional Chinese water-ink painting and woodblock printing into further practice-based visual arts research.

Utilising Chinese woodblock printing in a contemporary style with three-dimensional hand-made silk paper forms contributes significant knowledge to the visual art field. This has implications for other visual artists such as printmakers who may wish to broaden their scope of media, as well as artists already using three-dimensional silk paper making to incorporate a different printmaking style. Utilising the three-dimensional silk paper form as a projection screen also extends further possibilities for artists using audio-visual media.

Undertaking this research has raised questions, personally and globally, on issues affecting cultural identity for ABCs and how these can be represented visually. The resultant artwork and exegesis highlight issues of concern for myself and other ABCs. These intimate recommendations for future action. As knowledge of heritage language can influence cultural identity construction, it is imperative to address the issue of language maintenance in diasporic populations. Consequently, I identified the need to encourage individuals as well as provide community and educational support, particularly for increasing knowledge of heritage languages. It is my premise that many individuals in this group of ABCs oscillate amongst the ‘in-
between’ spaces due to changing circumstances that bring them further or closer to the Australian or Chinese culture at different points in time. One can, however, find belonging in multiple spaces. These findings have implications for visual artists, educators, politicians and future researchers, not only in relation to ABCs, but for all those with dual or multiple cultural connections.

This doctoral research has enabled me to strengthen connections between two worlds and provided a focal point for future journeys. It has significantly enhanced the development of my studio practice and will launch further explorations of my Chineseness through future artworks. It has contributed new knowledge and implications for future researchers and visual artists, particularly in the context of people with an intercultural identity in the North of Australia. Through the exhibition of my work I hope the audience experiences the concepts of cultural identity and language retention discussed in this exegesis through aesthetic immersion. Balancing on Borderlines demonstrates that multi-faceted identities of ABCs are continuously changing. This is also true for others of dual and multiple cultural heritages. This creative work emphasises that individuals can find belonging and balance within, on and beyond the borderlines of cultures.
Glossary of Terms and Definitions

**Australian-born Chinese**

‘Australian-born Chinese’ or ‘ABC’ is the term I grew up identifying with (Chung 2008; Ngan, L 2008). While the term “Australian-born Chinese” is restrictive, it is a term that has been used in cultural discourses and is used throughout this exegesis for convenience and ease of expression.

**Chinese-Australian**

In more recent discourses the terms ‘Australian Chinese’ or ‘Chinese Australian’ have been used (Chan, H 1999; Leong, G 2000). This includes those of Chinese heritage born in countries other than China such as Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. I use the term ‘Chinese-Australian’ to include those of Chinese heritage born outside and in Australia. I use the hyphenated version to reflect the in-between spaces that individuals in this group may find themselves situated.

**Asian-Australian**

The term ‘Asian Australian’ has also been used to encompass Australians born in or with heritage from countries in the regions of South-east Asia, North-east Asia, Southern or Central Asia (Clark, J 2007). Since the boundaries of Asia are still in contention, the term ‘Asian Australian’ can be somewhat problematic, however, in the context to Australia, usually refers to the regions of Asia mentioned above. I use the hyphenated term Asian-Australian to encompass the broader groups from these regions particularly when referencing other authors (Chan, D 2000a; Lo, Khoo & Gilbert 2000).

**Chineseness**

The term “Chineseness” has been used by others in reference to “authenticity”. However, I use the term as an individual gauge for one’s closeness to the Chinese culture or as Ngan & Chan (2012, p. 141) term “one’s sense of ethnicity”.

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Chinese Places Names

Since *Putonghua* became the official language in China, the spelling of many place names has changed. I give the names as they were at the time of immigration with the name as they are today in brackets. A large proportion of Chinese immigrants in Australia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries originated from the Kwangtung (also known as Canton or Guangzhou) area and spoke dialects similar to Cantonese (Yee 2006). However, there was no official system for anglicising Chinese names and places. The first standardised system used by the British from 1912 for converting Chinese pronunciations to English was the Wade-Giles system (Wilton 2004). In 1958, China declared the *Pinyin* system was to become the official system for *Putonghua* (standard Chinese or known as Mandarin by English speakers) (Liu, X & Shi 2007). Therefore, written records of Chinese names and places may be confusing due to the anglicising of original names such as Kwangtung Province to Canton, which is now referred to as Guangzhou Province using *Putonghua* and *Pinyin*. In this document I have used the names used at the various points in history or those used by the referenced authors.

Chinese Names for People

The practice of anglicising Chinese names also added to the difficulty in tracing information on Chinese immigrants. The Chinese practice of putting the surname first resulted in some surnames being used as first names while the Christian names or the middle name became the surname. For example, a well-known Innisfail entrepreneur, Taam Sz Pui, was called Tom See Poy by Australian administrators, even though his surname was Taam (Jones, D 1973). He later took on this name for his business and used “See Poy” as has descendants’ surname. Similarly, my mother’s maiden name “Lee On” or “Leeon” does not appear to be a standard Chinese surname (Yow 2006). It is unclear as to where it originated. In this exegesis, I use the English names with Wade-Giles conversion of the Chinese name if known, or the name the person was known by in Australia.

Diaspora

The term “diaspora” is currently used to refer to groups with the same country of origin that have been scattered to various other countries. In the past, these groups within larger nation states were referred to as immigrant minority groups. With the
increase of globalization, these groups across the globe have united into larger diasporic groups often with strong political or social voice (Braziel 2008).

**Hybridity**

The term ‘hybridity’ has been used increasingly in relation to Asian-Australian identity to describe the fusion of various Asian cultures with Australian culture (Lo 2000). While this implies a binary code such as Bhabha’s (1993) ‘third space’, Asian-Australian identities encompass a multitude of differing backgrounds and positions, hence creating a number of hybrid cultural entities. Accordingly, I have used the term “multi-faceted” as it is a more accurate description of Asian-Australian identities (Chen, G-M 2009).

**Oscillation**

I use the term “oscillation” to describe the continuous movement between different identity spaces in-between the Australian and Chinese cultures (Moore 1987). To me, there are many identity spaces between cultures and I move between these spaces in varying circumstances, feeling closer or further away from one culture or the other and a variation in the level of my “Chineseness” as I am affected by differing incidents or environments. This is reiterated by authors such as Ngan (2008).
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Appendix 1 Questionnaire

Questionnaire Introduction Letter

Dear

You are invited to participate in a visual arts research project, which explores the identity of Australian-born Chinese. If you are willing to participate, please read the attached plain language statement, which gives further details of the project and your involvement in the proceedings.

Yours sincerely

Glynis Lee
PhD candidate
Charles Darwin University
# Australian-Chinese Identity

## Plain Language Statement

### Project: Art Installation of prints, photographs, ceramics, artist books, and possible video display

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chief Investigator</th>
<th>Glynis Lee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Purpose of Study
The purpose of this research is to create an art exhibition, which reflects identities of Australian-Chinese individuals.

### Benefits of Study
This research will help the Chinese community and other dual or multi-cultured individuals living in Australia to better understand their identity and place in the wider community.

### What would be expected of you?
This study is in two parts. The first is a questionnaire, which you may complete in your own time, and return or you may give your answers verbally to the interviewer. In which case, your answers will be recorded on computer. The second part of the study may result in a video recording of participants’ individual incidents, which become evident through the questionnaire. In this case, only one or two individuals may be contacted to participate in a video recording. The video will be a story-telling style documentary for display within the art exhibition.

### Discomforts/Risks
There are no particular risks associated with this study.

### Confidentiality
There are two levels of confidentiality associated with this study. There will be total confidentiality of your questionnaire responses. Names will not be included with the data collected. Although some text may be used in artworks, no names or identifying data will be used.

At the end of the questionnaire, you will be asked if you are willing to be recorded or have your story recorded by a narrator on video camera with regards your responses to the questionnaire or to allow text or photographic images of yourself or your family to be used in the art installation. Only a limited number of participants will be contacted to comply with this request and you will be given the choice of whether to continue your involvement with the project. If photographic images or video footage of you are used, you will be invited to preview the artworks before public viewing.

### Your Participation
I would be very grateful for your participation in this study. However, you are free to refuse participation. Steps will be taken to protect your anonymity in accordance with CDU research ethics requirements and the above statements.

### Results of the Study
Information collected through the questionnaires and recordings may be used in developing artwork for an exhibition. Results will be included in theoretical writing relating to the art exhibition. The information may also be included in a conference paper about the project, leading to publication.
| Contact Persons | If you have any queries regarding this project, please contact the researcher, Glynis Lee on 89466531 or email glynis.lee@cdu.edu.au. If you have any concerns before commencing, during, or after the completion of the project, you are invited to contact the Executive Officer of the Charles Darwin University Human Research Ethics Committee on 89467064 or toll free number 1800466215. The Executive Officer can pass on any concerns to appropriate officers within the University. Lifeline 24 hr per day free counselling service available on 131114. |
Project – Art Installation and Video Display - Identities of Australian-Chinese People

Interview Consent Form – Audio/Audio-Visual Recording

(If you are under 18 years, consent form should be signed by a parent.)

I hereby consent to participate in an interview for the study undertaken by Glynis Lee of Charles Darwin University and I understand that the purpose of the research is to develop an exhibition of artworks including video display which explores the identities of Australian-Chinese individuals, their individual stories and experiences growing up in Australia and the extent to which the Chinese culture and language remains prevalent within their families.

I acknowledge that:

• The aims, methods, anticipated benefits and possible risks of the study have been explained to me by Glynis Lee in her Plain Language Statement.

• I voluntarily and freely give my consent to my participation in this interview.

• I understand that accumulated results will be used for research purposes and may be recorded in academic journals.

• I am free to withdraw my consent at any time during the period that information is being collected, in which case my participation in the research study will immediately cease and any information or audio/audio-visual material obtained from me will not be used. Glynis will delete these details from computer files and/or audio/audio-visual files.

• If text, audio recording or audio-visual footage from the questionnaire/interview is chosen for inclusion in artworks or video display, I am aware that Glynis Lee will contact me. At this stage, I will be able to decide whether or not I wish to be represented publicly in this manner.

• Once artwork and video production have commenced, I may not revoke permission to use text, audio recording or video footage from my questionnaire/interview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV
Questionnaire

Identity of Australian-Chinese People

1. What is your place of birth? _______________________________________

2. Where were your parents and grandparents born?
   c. Mother ____________________________________________
   d. Father - __________________________________________
   e. Maternal grandmother - ______________________________
   f. Maternal grandfather - ______________________________
   g. Paternal grandmother - ______________________________
   h. Paternal grandfather - ______________________________

3. When and why did your ancestors come to Australia?
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

4. Have you lived in any other country besides Australia? _________________
   c. If yes, state country and number of years in each
country________________________________________________

5. Do you identify as Australian, Chinese, both, other? ____________________

6. What do you think of your Chinese heritage?
   ______________________________________________________
7. Do you speak or read any Chinese language(s)?

If yes,
   a. state which dialect(s)
   b. What is/are the dialect(s) of your ancestors?
   c. Was Chinese spoken at home?
   d. If your parents did not teach you Chinese, where did you learn?

If no, give reasons

8. If you have children, do you speak Chinese to them at home?

9. If you have children, do they learn Chinese language at school?

10. How important is it to you for your children to learn Chinese?

11. Do you celebrate Chinese cultural festivals?

12. How important is it for you and your children to celebrate these festivals?
13. What Chinese traditions do you and your family practice or undertake?

14. How often do you cook or eat traditional Chinese food?

15. If you follow any Chinese religious beliefs, please state which religion and describe what activities you undertake.

16. What extended family members, if any, do you have living with you?

17. What do you think of arranged marriages?
18. Were you or any of your ancestors affected by the White Australia Policy?

If yes, give details:

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

19. Have you been subjected to incidents of racial discrimination? Give details

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

20. Are you willing to have text from your questionnaire or photographic images of yourself used in artworks? ______________________________________

21. Are you willing to participate in a video recording relating to the above questions in which you relate an incident relating to yourself or your family?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
Questionnaire for under 18 year olds

Identity of Australian-Chinese People

1. What is your place of birth? ______________________________________

2. Where were your parents and grandparents born?
   a. Mother – _____________________________________________________
   b. Father - _____________________________________________________
   c. Mother’s mother - ____________________________________________
   d. Mother’s father - ____________________________________________
   e. Father’s mother - ____________________________________________
   f. Father’s father - ____________________________________________

3. When and why did your ancestors come to
   Australia?______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________

4. Have you lived in any other country besides Australia? _______________
   a. If yes, state country and number of years in each
country________________________________________________________

5. Do you think of yourself as Australian, Chinese, both, other?
   ______________________________________________________________

6. What do you think of your Chinese heritage?
   ______________________________________________________________
7. Do you speak or read any Chinese language(s)?

______________________________________________________________

Circle which language - Mandarin, Cantonese or other.

______________________________________________________________

a. What is/are the language of your ancestors?

______________________________________________________________

b. Is Chinese spoken at home? _________________________________

c. If your parents did not teach you Chinese, where did you learn?

______________________________________________________________

If no, give reasons

______________________________________________________________

8. When you eventually have children of your own, how important is it for them to learn Chinese?

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

9. Do you celebrate Chinese cultural festivals? __________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

10. How important is it for you to celebrate these festivals?

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

11. What Chinese traditions do you and your family practice or undertake?

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

X
12. How often do you cook or eat traditional Chinese food?

13. If you follow any Chinese religious beliefs, please state which religion and describe what activities you undertake.

14. What extended family members, if any, do you have living with you?

15. Have you been discriminated against because you are Chinese? Give details

16. Are you willing to have text from your questionnaire or photographic images of yourself used in artworks?

17. Are you willing to participate in a video recording relating to the above questions in which you relate an incident relating to yourself or your family?
# Appendix 2  Questionnaire Table

## Questionnaire Sent Table

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<td>15/3/10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Gold Coast</td>
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<td>16/3/10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Brisbane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/4/10</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tr>
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<td>6/5/10</td>
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<td>Darwin</td>
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<tr>
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## Questionnaire Returned Table

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<td>16/03/10</td>
</tr>
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<td>19/03/10</td>
</tr>
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<td>20/05/10</td>
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<td>19/04/11</td>
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<td><strong>Total 13 questionnaires, 1 email, 9 interviews</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total 19 participants</strong></td>
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## Appendix 3 Questionnaire Results

### Generation

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<th>Generation</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd generation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
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</table>

### Lived in other countries

<table>
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<th>Other</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
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### Identity

<table>
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<th>Chinese</th>
<th>ABC</th>
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<tbody>
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### Language

<table>
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<th>Speak heritage language</th>
<th>Speak some Chinese</th>
<th>Speak no Chinese</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>3rd generation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th generation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Interest in learning</th>
<th>Not interested in learning</th>
<th>Interested in child learning</th>
<th>Not interested in child learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd generation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4th generation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
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### Culture

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<th>Not important</th>
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<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
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### Food

<table>
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<th>Important (weekly or more)</th>
<th>Not important (less than once a week)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
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### Religion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taoism</th>
<th>Buddhism</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Extended family members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Arranged marriages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Don’t agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Discrimination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>White Australia policy</th>
<th>Other (past)</th>
<th>Other (present)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4 Analysis of Questionnaires and Interviews

This analysis of the questionnaire and interview data provides an extension to the discussion in chapter five concentrating on the importance of heritage language and culture.

My survey showed that eighty-three percent of second-generation participants could speak at least some of their heritage language (although only thirty-three percent spoke fluently). Fifty percent of the third generation or later participants in my survey spoke a little Chinese with none being fluent however, this dropped to zero percent in 4th generation participants, demonstrating a dramatic reduction in heritage language through the generations. The reasons for the lack of language retention ranged from assimilation regulations and practices for second-generation participants, to lack of opportunity or language classes for the later generations.
The results of my survey demonstrated that although there was some interest in participants or their children learning Chinese language, the general consensus was that it was not practical or necessary in present Australian society. The majority of responses showed that many ABCs did not place the retention of Chinese language through to further generations as a high priority: “I can see the benefits of it (broader work network, travel, etc.), but I wouldn’t enforce it”. Of the participants, less than half could speak a minimal amount of their Chinese heritage language. Most of these learned from their parents when they were young, but many had lost much of these languages due to lack of use when parents passed on or from lack of interest as children.

Responses demonstrated that the parents’ desire for their children to maintain their heritage language was greater than the children’s willingness: “Parents gave up trying” Some participants in my survey mentioned that their children were learning Japanese language because they enjoyed it or it was a heritage language for them, having one parent of Japanese heritage and one with Chinese heritage. Three had extended family members living in the same house, but only one of these spoke the heritage language of the older family member and this was not a Chinese language, but the heritage language of the non-Chinese parent.
While the viewpoints of many Chinese immigrants and Chinese nationals equate ethnicity with knowledge of the heritage language and culture, a number of ABCs in my survey placed less importance on heritage language retention, but retained a higher level of importance on retaining some of the culture. Sixty-one percent of survey participants maintained minimal Chinese cultural beliefs and/or practices: “As I get older regret that I didn’t retain more of it”. More than half thought it was important to participate in or pass on at least some basic cultural practices or beliefs: “Important to keep some tradition”. Only three participants practiced any Chinese religious beliefs or philosophies, two Taoists and one Buddhist. However, the importance of Chinese food had the greatest variation in results with the partaking of Chinese food varying from rarely to ninety percent, with forty-seven percent taking part at least weekly. Some did not cook Chinese food themselves, while others did not believe their cooking to be very traditional. One participant stated that she cooked more Chinese food when the children were young. Thirty-seven percent indicated that they still used chopsticks. Therefore, while heritage language may be dramatically reducing through the generations, the maintenance of cultural practices is still fairly strong and to a lesser degree, the maintenance of traditional food.

Evidence has shown that heritage language maintenance of immigrant families is beneficial at national, community and individual levels, but that this maintenance is
severely decreased by the third generation. Sixty-six percent of participants in my survey were in favour of heritage language maintenance, however the predominant view was that achieving a favourable outcome was problematic: “It was very important to me at one point in time but it was too difficult as they became of age”. In addition, Cantonese or Mandarin was not always available to study: “Today my daughter learns Japanese because it is the only language offered” and “My oldest son tried to learn it at school but was disappointed as they would only teach Mandarin”. Therefore, further support is needed to encourage and support the maintenance of heritage languages.
Appendix 5  Catalogue of Exhibition Works

*CBA-ABC III* (detail) 2013, Screenprint and watercolour on Xuan paper scrolls, 170cm-238cmx45.5cm, Photograph: Glynis Lee

*Multi-faceted Identities* (installation detail), 2009, screenprinted silk paper constructions on acrylic, 179 x 58cm, Photograph: Fiona Morrison

*Territory Meditations I*, 2010, Lithograph, drypoint & etching on Arches paper, 410cmx38cm, Photograph: Fiona Morrison
Territory Meditations II, (detail) 2010, Lithograph, drypoint & etching on Arches paper, 410cmx38cm, Photograph: Glynis Lee

Territory Meditations III, (detail) 2010, Lithograph, drypoint & etching on Arches paper, 410cmx38cm, Photograph: Glynis Lee

Territory Meditations IV, (detail) 2011, Lithograph, drypoint & etching on Arches paper, 410cmx38cm, Photograph: Glynis Lee

Territory Meditations V, (detail) 2011, Lithograph, drypoint & etching on Arches paper, 410cmx38cm, Photograph: Fiona Morrison
Territory Impressions I, 2010-11, Lithograph and embossing on Arches paper, 50cmx76cm, Photograph: Fiona Morrison

Territory Impressions II, 2010-11, Lithograph and embossing on Arches paper, 50cmx76cm, Photograph: Fiona Morrison

Territory Impressions III, 2010-11, Lithograph and embossing on Arches paper, 38cmx50cm, Photograph: Fiona Morrison
Territory Impressions IV, 2010-11, Lithograph and embossing on Arches paper, 38cmx50cm, Photograph: Fiona Morrison

Territory Impressions V, 2010-11, Lithograph and embossing on Arches paper, 38cmx50cm, Photograph: Fiona Morrison

Connecting Homes (detail), 2010-11, Woodblock print on silk paper, 16cmx16cmx6cm each, Calligraphy and embossing on Xuan paper, Photograph: Fiona Morrison
In Search of Home (detail), 2010-11, Woodblock print and watercolour on Xuan paper, 46cm x 64cm, Photograph: Fiona Morrison

Leaving Home (detail), 2010-11, Woodblock print and ink painting on Xuan paper, 46 cm x 69 cm, Photograph: Fiona Morrison

Rue de San Roque, (2011), screenprint on BFK Rives, 50cm x 66.5cm, Photograph: Glynis Lee

Made in Australia 2012, audio-visual work on silk paper screen, 56cm diameter.