

The Impact of a Study Abroad Program in China on Its Participants'
Attitudes towards China

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Abstract

China is becoming an increasingly popular study abroad destination for outbound students in the United States. There is, however, a lack of research on study abroad in China and its impact. This dissertation seeks to illuminate the influence of a short-term study abroad program in China on its participants' attitudes towards China. The case this study focuses on is a three-week faculty-led and non-language-based study abroad program in China. The Foucauldian theory of power and knowledge, Said's Orientalism, and the social psychological theory of attitude and attitude change are used as the theoretical framework for this study. Qualitative methods are mainly used to collect qualitative data and a quantitative survey is used to select interviewees who represent a maximum range of participants and identify the sources of information students had used to learn about China.

Focusing on the image and knowledge of China emerging from the spoken and written texts of the students and reflecting the students' attitudes towards China, this study looked into the representation of China in mainstream discourse in the United States with which the students were familiar. The findings demonstrate that the students' attitudes towards China and how the students interpreted their experiences in China were shaped by how China has been represented in the mainstream discourse in the United States, which is influenced by the ideological difference and power dynamics between the two countries covers more negative news about China. This then is reflected in the students' surprises about China and their "This is China" moments. Setting China at the opposite to what the United States is and viewing American knowledge system as the authority, many students used "face" and government control to decode what they had seen and learned in China. These two concepts prevent these students from learning about China from the local perspective. This study also illuminates the effective and ineffective elements in changing students' attitudes towards China. The source of a message, the way a message is delivered and the students' related prior experience and knowledge all play an important role in the effectiveness of a message.

These findings have significant theoretical, practical and policy implications. The influence of the unbalanced representation of China in the mainstream discourse of the United States needs to be counterbalanced by more local perspectives and a deeper cultural understanding students can acquire during their study abroad trip. Also the Chinese government needs to improve its image in the West through enhancing its public relations strategies and its way of handling problems existing in China.

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CHAPTER I: INTROUCTION

The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes.

-- Marcel Proust

This dissertation aims to delineate the influence of a study abroad program for American university students traveling to China on its participants' attitudes towards China. In this chapter I first discuss the purpose of the study along with its significance and research questions. I then address the assumptions behind the research questions and the limitations of the study. Finally I define the key terms used in the study and lay out the organization of this dissertation chapter by chapter.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of a short-term study abroad program for American university students to China on its participants' attitudes towards China. In Fall 2009 I conducted a critical discourse analysis of the travelogues kept by 22 participants of "Made in China," a study abroad program organized by the Learning Abroad Center and Carlson School of Management of the University of Minnesota. The critical discourse analysis was conducted in conjunction with two qualitative methods course I was taking. This analysis was my first opportunity to have a close look at China through the eyes of the participants of a short-term study abroad program. The most recurrent theme describing their feeling of seeing China was *surprise*, which is common among study abroad participants. I was surprised, however, by what surprised them. Very

prepared to see surprise or shock at cultural differences like Chinese food and the sense of space, I did not expect to discover that they were surprised to find Chinese people were living a peaceful life. As a result of this study, I became curious about what the participants had known about China before they went to China, what they thought of the China they saw while they were there, what they think of their own thinking about China, and what influence a study abroad program like “Made in China” has in the whole process of knowing China. My curiosity turned into an academic interest and this dissertation is the result.

Significance of the Research

Along with my personal and academic interests in the influence of a study abroad program on its participants’ attitude towards their host cultures, increasing concern about American students’ intercultural competence and interest in China attracted my attention and made this study a potential contribution to the field of study abroad.

Higher education has been called on as a solution to face great national challenges in the history of the United States. When most Americans were farmers and found higher education either too high-brow or expensive, the Morrill Land-Grant Acts shifted the purpose of high education from classical studies to more applied studies. It also made higher education more accessible to people from all classes and increased the country’s productivity (Safransky, not available; Commission on Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program, 2005). When Americans were worried about the employment of millions of World War II veterans and the possibility of economic slowdown, the G. I. Bill fueled one of the greatest economic booms in American history (Commission on Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program, 2005; Verstegen & Wilson, 2001).

The terrorist attacks on September 11th have raised Americans' concern about the isolation of the United States in terms of its understanding of other cultures in the world. This lack of global knowledge poses potential danger to the national security and global economic and political competence of the country (Commission on Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program, 2005; NAFSA, 2009; Simon, 1980). Again higher education is pushed to the forefront as the primary means to cultivate global literacy for the next generation. Study abroad has been viewed by politicians, business leaders, scholars and educators as one of the most direct and effective ways to fulfill this aim (Commission on Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program, 2005; NAFSA, 2009). The advocacy of the importance of global competence for both individuals and the nation has witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of American students studying abroad. *The Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*, the annual Institute of International Education (IIE) (IIE, 2011) statistical survey of U.S. international educational exchange, reports that 270,694 American students studied abroad in the 2009/10 academic year, which is nearly four times as many students as ten years earlier. Figure 1 shows the number of the U.S. students studying abroad in the past 12 academic years.

Among various genres of study abroad in terms of duration, the short-term study abroad program has become the choice of the majority of U.S. students participating in study abroad due to its flexibility to fit into student and faculty schedules as well as its affordability (IIE, 2008). Short-term study abroad programs, however, have not been studied to the same extent as long-term ones according to Nam (2010). The current research, which focuses on the influence of a three-week study abroad over its

participants' attitudes towards the destination country aims to contribute to the impact studies of short-term study abroad.

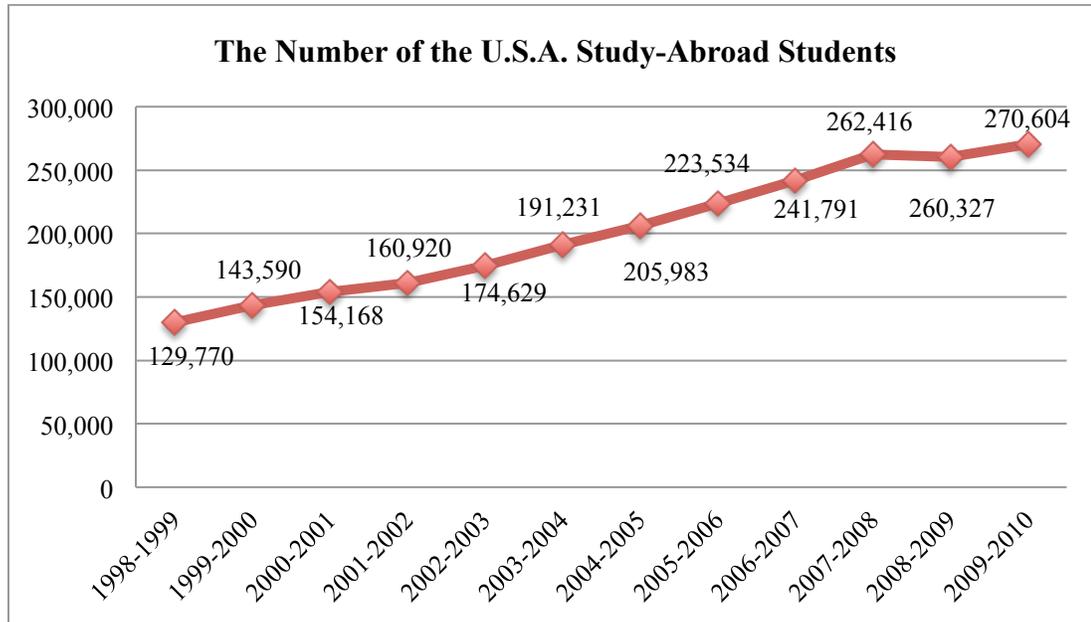


Figure 1: The Number of the U.S.A Study-Abroad Students (IIE, 2001, 2010b & 2011.)

The retrospective perspective I take in this research differs from many impact studies focusing on the growth of students' intercultural competence (e.g., Bates, 1997; Carison, Burn, Useem, & Yachimowitz, 1990; Haddis, 2005; Hutchins, 1996; Maddux & Galinsky, 2009; Nam 2010; Price & Hensley, 1978, April; Schertzer, Schuster & Zimmerman, 1993;). By examining the students' attitudes towards China reflected in their journals and interviews, the research aims to direct attention to the influence of the representation of China in the discourse in the U.S. as part of the students' mindset-related attitude development.

While study abroad is gaining in popularity in general among U. S. American students, more and more students choose China as their study abroad destination. The increasing international attention drawn by its rising economic power and lower cost of living than traditional European destination countries make China an increasingly popular

study abroad destination for students in the United States. Figure Two shows the rising trend of the number of U.S. American students choosing China as their study-abroad country from 1998 to 2010.

According to the *Open Doors 2011* report published by the IIE, the number of students who chose China as their host country for study abroad grew from 2,949 in the 1999/2000 academic year to 13,910 in 2009/2010, an increase of about 500 percent (IIE, 2011). China is now the fifth leading host country for outward-bound U.S. American students, the only non-European country among top five (IIE, 2011). With its increasing

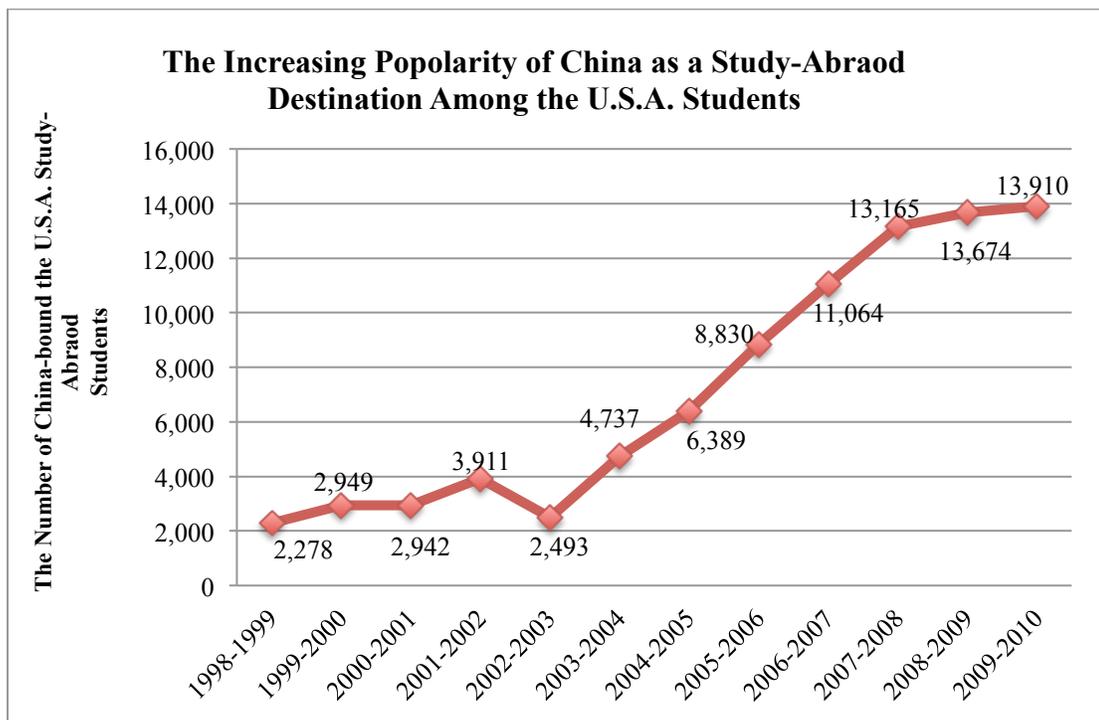


Figure 2: The Increasing Popularity of China as a Study-Abroad Destination Among U.S.A. students (IIE, 2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002 & 2001.)

economic and political influence and the important and complicated relationship between China and the United States, the U.S. government launched the 100,000 Strong Initiative to cultivate more cultural understanding of China that “underpin effective diplomacy and foreign policy” and enhance the U. S. American students’ “ability to succeed

academically and professionally in the global economy” (U.S. Department of State, not available).

As China becomes an increasingly popular study-abroad destination, this research tries to contribute to the limited amount of research on study abroad to China and help institutions better understand their students’ international experiences in China. The increasing popularity of short-term study abroad and China as a study-abroad destination calls for empirical research focusing on study abroad to China. The examination of students’ old attitudes as a reflection of the representation of China in the U.S. will potentially expand not only the studies of study abroad in China but also the studies of study abroad impact and evaluation in other countries.

Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this study is to explore the significance of “Made in China” to its participants who live in a world with an enormous influx of information about China. The significance of the “Made in China” experience is evaluated in terms of the participants’ attitudes toward China. With this purpose of study, this dissertation seeks to address the following questions through an investigation of “Made in China”:

1. What had the “Made in China” program participants known about China before they studied abroad in China? What were their attitudes toward China then?
2. What did the program participants think of the China they saw while they were in China as compared to the China they had known before?
3. For those whose attitudes towards China changed, what influenced them to change?

The instructor of “Made in China” asked all the participants to contribute anonymously to a reflective journal that was open to peer review. To answer the three questions, I analyzed the journals from cohort 2011, surveyed all the 2011 participants, and interviewed four participants. I also come up with some suggestions to make this program not only a site where participants can learn about China but also become more aware of the influence of the discourse from their own backgrounds. The results of the study are expected to shed light upon the design of similar short-term study-abroad programs that aim at cultivating students’ critical thinking and intercultural awareness.

Definition of Major Terms

The following key terms are applicable to this study:

China

The concept of China in this research refers to the country, the government, its peoples and cultures.

Short-term study abroad program

Short-term study abroad program is defined by Spencer and Tuma (2002) as a “one-to-eight week program (less than a term), usually faculty directed and sponsored by a home institution or a consortium” (p. xiv). In this study, the duration of short-term study abroad is specifically defined as a three-week interim session offered in the May semester between the spring and the fall semesters. It was led by faculty and sponsored by the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, and Tsinghua University, Beijing, China.

Attitude

Attitude is evaluative judgment that integrates and summarizes one's cognitive and affective reactions to an object (Crano & Prislin, 2006). Attitude can exert profound effects on perceivers' attention, comprehension, interpretation, elaboration and memory of their social world (Olson & Zanna, 1993). In this study, presuppositions, perception and knowledge are considered elements of attitude, consistent with many other researchers (e.g., Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Kruglanski 1989).

Knowledge

The term knowledge in this research means "the confident understanding of a subject," in this case China, "with the ability to use it for a specific purpose if appropriate" (Baker & Griffiths, 2008, p. 62).

Perception

Perception is the result of the interplay of one's past experiences, including one's culture, and one's perspective transformation of the external world (Rummel, 1975). What is relevant to one's past experiences and personality is most likely to be perceived (Rummel, 1975; Russell, 1921). Perception includes the collection, interpretation, and recognition of stimuli or sensation, understanding/knowledge, judgment/attitude (Pappas, 2003). The term perception appears in a lot of literature I have reviewed but I will only focus on participants' attitudes in this research.

Discourse

One of the assumptions of the study is that the participants' attitudes towards China are partially shaped by the discourse they are familiar with in the United States.

Discourse is conceived by Foucault as a system of representation through language at a

particular historical moment (Hall, 1997). Foucault's concept of discourse captures the nexus of utterances and practices that surround a given topic and regulates how that topic can be spoken about, reasoned about, and understood (Hall, 1997). Discourse defines and produces the objects of knowledge, governs the way a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about (Hall, 2001).

Assumptions of the Study

This study assumes that the participants of “Made in China” had certain attitudes toward China before their study abroad trip in China, and this attitude is influenced by how China is represented in the United States. It also assumes that the study abroad trip influenced their attitudes regarding China.

The assumption that the participants of “Made in China” had certain attitudes toward China before they went on their study-abroad trip to China is based on the fact that they chose China as their study-abroad destination and paid for this trip as a credit course, which means at the least they viewed China as a place to learn or to have fun. This assumption is also based on the increasing attention China has been drawing due to its increasing economic and political influence in the international arena. “Made in China”, the name of the program, echoes the great number of products imported from China to the U.S. market and into Americans’ daily life. The media coverage of China is also assumed to inform and impress the participants in certain ways. Lastly, the pre-departure orientation and required readings of the program were employed to inform participants about China and their trip. Thus, this assumption is definitely not a bold one. Related interview questions designed in this study, however, are not assumptive and allow the participants to say that they did not have any attitude towards China.

The second assumption is that the participants' attitudes to China prior to the study-abroad trip were under the influence of the representation of China in the discourse of the U.S. This assumption is in line with the social constructive conceptual framework underlying this research, which holds that individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences. Before their trips to China, most of the participants who had never been to China before their "Made in China" trips most likely learned about China from reading, watching and experiencing the representation of China in the United States. Their experiences with these available discourses about China in the US were assumed to be the source of social information that they drew upon in the processes of attitude construction. Related interview questions designed in this study, however, allow other possibilities.

The third assumption of this study is that a study-abroad trip to China influences its participants' attitudes towards China. This assumption is based on many studies showing that study abroad or intergroup contact increases, changes or confirms its participants' knowledge of another country or culture, and therefore changes or confirms their attitudes towards it. Baker (1934) believed contact between races under conditions of equality would only breed "suspicion, fear, resentment, disturbance, and at times open conflict" (p. 120). Others proposed that interracial experiences could lead to mutual understanding (Allport, 1954; Fry, Paige, Jon, Dillow & Nam, 2010; Lett, 1945). Related interview questions in this study are designed to explore multiple possibilities of the impact of a study abroad on its participants' attitudes towards China.

Outline of the Project

The following chapter reviews the literature on ideological production through discourses at different levels and establishes a theoretical framework to guide subsequent analysis. Chapter three explores the research philosophy that underlines the methodology and methods of the project. Chapter four summarizes the findings of the study and chapter five discusses implications of this study for the field.

Chapter II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

*“The use of traveling is to regulate imagination by reality, and instead of thinking
how things may be, to see them as they are.”*

- Samuel Johnson

This chapter provides a review of theoretical and empirical literature related to discourse, studies of the representation of China, study abroad, the impact of study abroad over attitude towards the host country and study abroad in China. The theoretical grounding for this study includes the theories of discourse, Orientalism and the theory of attitude and attitude change. Empirical literature in the representation of China in the United States and the impact of these representations upon the American public are examined as background for this research. A review of the general study abroad literature and literature on the impact of study abroad on its participants' attitudes toward host countries contextualizes the current research into the challenges study abroad is facing in the age of globalization. The review of related literature on study abroad to China reveals the need for research in this field. The review of these broad topics is not exhaustive but informative.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The influence of a study abroad program in China on its participants' attitude towards China is both a psychological and cross-cultural issue. Students' attitudes towards China had been developed over a long time before their trip to China. How China was represented in the discourse that the students are familiar with is one of the factors that shaped the students' attitudes and influenced their attitude change. Foucault's theory of discourse and Said's Orientalism provide theoretical guidance on how certain attitudes and attitude changes about China demonstrated in the written and spoken discourses of students had been influenced by the representation of China in the discourse in the United States, and how this discourse had been formed. This study also draws upon the psychological findings and theories of attitude and attitude change to elaborate on the students' processing of information during their "Made in China" trip. The three theoretical underpinnings are interrelated. Attitude is embedded in a discourse, which in turn shapes attitude. Orientalism is an attitude, which according to Said (1978) is embedded in the discourse of Western colonialism and still infests Western attitude towards the East and reinforces colonialism in discourse.

Foucauldian theory of discourse and Said's Orientalism

Foucault's theory of discourse provides theoretical guidance for this study to recognize how certain attitudes and attitudes changes about China shown in the written and spoken texts produced by students have been influenced by the representation of China in the discourse in the United States. Additionally, it provides theoretical guidance on how this discourse has been formed. Foucault problematizes the traditional dimension of inquiry and links discourse to power. Discourse, according to Foucault, governs the

way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about, and influences how ideas are put into practice and used to regulate the conduct of others (Hall, 2001). Discourse, Foucault argued, is not just one text, one action or one source (Hall, 1997). The same discourse can permeate various texts in different forms in a wide range of institutions in a society; knowledge acquires its authority from discourse (Foucault, 1980). Power, instead of the individual, becomes the center of the discourse. Individuals may produce particular texts, but they operate within the limits of the regime of truth of a particular historical and cultural context (Foucault, 1980). In “The Subject and Power,” Foucault (1980) regards individuals as being subjected to the discourse regime. The discourse also “produces a place for them in which the knowledge and meaning makes sense” and produces perspectives for individuals to view the world (Hall, 2001, p. 80). Foucault warns us of the force of discourse which conditions and restricts our thinking, and encourages us to challenge the concealed presuppositions justified by the discourse (Healy, 2005).

Foucault’s concept of discourse and the deconstruction of knowledge is one reason I have come to be interested in attitude and attitude change through a study-abroad program, a site where at least two discourses collide. The study abroad participants come to a new structure of power and discourse with knowledge about the destination they gained from the discourse they are familiar with, and this discourse has shaped their attitude towards the destination culture. In this study, this Foucauldian lens is used to examine how the representation of China in the discourse in the U.S. has influenced students’ attitudes toward China.

Like Foucault's theory of discourse, Said's Orientalism can also provide a guide to ascertain how students' attitudes and attitude changes about China have been influenced by how China has been represented in the United States. Numerous scholars have been inspired by Foucault, the most cited scholar in the humanities (*The Times Higher Education Guide*, 2007). Edward Said's (1978) *Orientalism* owes a clear debt to Foucault as well in linking the domains of culture and political power to explain the operation and influence of discourse.

Said (1978) contextualized literary representation of the Orient into Western perceptions of the Orient dating back to classical times, and contextualized these perceptions into the history of colonialism, imperialism, and neo-colonialism. Orientalism is the discourse that set up binary distinctions between the West and the East, and portraying the East as mysterious, exotic, sensual, splendid, cruel, despotic, sly, backward, and in decay (Said, 1978). The reiteration of these images across time and space made the Orient into an inferior antonym of the West. Through these images, descriptions and representations, Orientalism "confined [the Orient] to the fixed status of an object frozen once and for all in time by the gaze of Western percipients" (Said, 1978, p. 201).

Although his argument specifically regarded the construction of West Asian civilizations by the West, Said's idea is applicable to other countries and racial groups that are constructed as others through the legacies of colonial discourse, including countries like China (Chu, 2008; Mackerras, 1999). According to Mackerras (1999), an overwhelming majority of Western images of China reflect feelings of superiority in an

Orientalist style. Vukovich (2005) argues that there is a new Sinological form of Orientalism at work in the world:

“[O]ne that takes as its object an ‘Other’ that since 1970s has occupied an increasingly central, paramount place within the world system and within Western minds or intellectual-political culture: the People’s Republic of China” (p. 1) .

The binary of “Orient” and “Occident” demonstrates the link between power and knowledge regarding China in the West. According to Vukovich (2005):

“The West, and the U.S. in particular, is what China is not, but which the latter must, and will someday become. So too, it is part of a geo-political project: not just the accumulation of knowledge about an “area” and the production of a discursive formation ensconcing it, but the would-be-management and administration of the area for economic and political benefit” (p. 1).

The students’ travelogues reflected some images of China constructed in the U.S. media and history textbooks, like abuse of human rights, cheap labor, brainwashed people and a violent history. Some of these images were challenged, some reinforced, and some were negated by their own experiences in China. This study does not suggest that any negative attitude towards China or Chinese is Orientalist. How these attitudes are negotiated is one question this research wants to answer.

While identifying the image of the Orient in the Orientalist discourse he examined, Said essentialized the West and denied the validity of the representation of the East in the West. In the process of accusing the West of essentializing the East, Said has produced a stereotypical picture of Western culture which is unchanging and monolithic (MacKenzie, 1995). Albert Hourani (1979), a leading Orientalist, in a review of *Orientalism* held that

Said has fallen exactly into the trap into which he accused the Orientalist of falling, i.e., essentializing and freezing the West. As Macfie (2002) argued, whatever the position may have been in the 19th century, no respectable Western scholar would portray the East in the way Said had criticized. Denying the validity of the Western representation of the East, Said's criticism also leads to a conclusion that the West can never truly represent the East. This denial of Western episteme of the East in the case of this research would lead to a presupposition that the students' knowledge obtained in the U.S. about China is all untrue. I agree that some of the students' knowledge and ways of knowing China need to be challenged but I do not agree that all the knowledge the students have learned in the U.S. about China is tainted with Orientalism. Cross-cultural awareness and intercultural competence, which many study abroad programs aim to promote, means being capable in two frames of reference, not destroying the frame of one's origins.

Social psychological theories of attitude and attitude change

Allport (1935) regards attitude as the "most distinctive and indispensable concept in social psychology" (p. 798). Charged with emotion and categorized through experience, attitude is an idea that predisposes an individual's reaction to its related objects and situation (Allport, 1935; Crano & Prislin, 2006; Gellman, 1960; Olson & Zanna, 1993; Triandis, 1971). We learned certain attitudes toward certain attitude objects from other people and through direct exposure to the attitude object (Abrams, Wetherell, Cochrane, Hogg & Yurner, 1990; Sherif, 1935; Triandis, 1971). Other people can be family, friends, teachers and writers and they compose the discourse one is familiar with. Direct exposure to an attitude object includes experiences like tasting, smelling, talking to and interacting

with it. Study abroad is a case in which its participants were exposed to the country they want to learn about.

It is widely accepted in social psychology that attitude has cognitive, affective, and behavioral components (Crano & Prislin, 2006; McGuire, 1985; Triandis, 1971). The cognitive component is how one thinks, the affective part is how one feels, and the behavioral part is how one behaves. How one behaves includes what one does, says and writes. In this study, what “Made in China” participants wrote in their journals, indicated in their survey and said in their interviews about China are the behavioral aspects of their attitude to China. This aspect resulted in part from how they think of and feel about China.

The change of attitude is related to the function of attitude (McGuire, 1985; Snyder & DeBono, 1989; Triandis 1971), the source and content of the message (Maddux & Rogers, 1983; Triandis 1971), the channel the message is conveyed through (Smith & Shaffer, 1989, August; Triandis 1971), and the audience (Srull, 1983, Wood, Kallgren & Preisler, 1985; Triandis 1971) Attitude functions as an individual’s knowledge to understand the world and adjust, to defend ego, and to express value (Triandis, 1971). Attitude with a knowledge function will change to increase one’s understanding of the world; an attitude defending one’s ego or expressing one’s value is hard to change unless this person’s attitudes towards himself or related values are changed (Triandis, 1971). Attitudes of all of the four functions can be found in the texts produced by the students of “Made in China,” especially those functioning as knowledge and expressing their values.

The source of attitude change can be people such as friends, family and professors, and media such as news and movies, literature, non-fictional or fictional and experience

such as friendship or travelling (Allport 1954; Amir 1969; Thyne, Lawson & Todd, 2006). According to Triandis (1971) the influence of the source of message over a perceiver's attitude is related to its competence, attraction, hostility, power, credibility and familiarity. The source's characteristics like race, age, sex, attitude, and past behavior are anchors of perceiving the source and therefore influences the perceiver's attitude towards the message the source conveys (Triandis, 1971). During their trip in China "Made in China" participants had many sources of learning about China., such as their program instructor, Chinese professors, documentary and the director of documentary film, and their required readings. John Pomfret (the author of one of the readings), factory representatives and tour guides. The students did have different reactions to the messages from different sources and the characteristics of the sources did play a role in the students' reactions.

The content and channel of the message are very influential in terms of the effectiveness of changing the audience's attitude. How the message is structured, styled and conveyed influences how its audience will receive it (Triandis, 1971). Messages in the style of persuasion and warning tend to nullify the communication and fear appeals (Triandis, 1971). Data from students' journals proves well this rule. The different communication styles, which are the channels of the message, between Chinese and American also influenced how the message delivered by Chinese speakers were received by the students.

The same message can be received differently by different audiences. The audience's prior knowledge, personality and intelligence are important audience factors that influence how they perceive to the message (Srull, 1983; Triandis, 1971). This study shows that students' experience and knowledge related to the message subject played

important roles in their reception of messages.

The above theories of attitude change delineate how a message itself and audience decide the effectiveness of a message in changing the audience's attitude. This guides me to pinning down the reasons behind successful message conveying and an unsuccessful one among those delivered to the "Made in China" participants during their study abroad trip in China. The audience's personality and intelligence, which Triandis (1971) emphasizes, however, will not be the focus of this research. The aim of this research is to provide some suggestions to enhance the design of short-term study abroad programs, which serve students of various personalities and intelligence styles. Examining program design tailored to individual student's personalities and intelligence styles demands a study with more experimental and psychological methods and data.

While deemphasizing the element of personality and intelligence styles of the students, this study takes experiences, such as non-lecture study abroad experience and the influence of discourse on attitude formation and attitude change into consideration. Besides "who says what" this study views what students have seen, felt and done as sources of message and attitude change (Triandis, 1971, p. 145).

Literature Review

Empirical research grounded in the theories of Foucault and Said

In the field of China studies, the Foucauldian theory of power and discourse serves as a theoretical framework for many studies of the representation of China in the U.S. and its influence. In *American Images of China, 1931-1949*, and *Western Images of China*, Jespersen (1996) and Mackerras (1999) state that the dominant images of China have tended to align with the interests of the main authorities and governments and there has

been “a regime of truth” about China. This regime of truth concerning China raised the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true about China (Mackerras, 1999). Mosher’s (1990) *China Misperceived: American Illusions and Chinese Reality* adds a new dimension concerning the influences of power relations and interests to different stakeholders. Mosher (1990) argued that the representation of China and the U.S. scholarship of China studies before the Tiananmen Square event in 1989 had been softened by the indebtedness many scholars felt towards the special treatment they had received in China, and the fear that they might not be allowed back to China if they represented China in a negative way. Theoretically grounded in the Foucauldian theory of power and representation, these studies contextualized the images of China represented in the U.S. or the West into the historical and cultural milieu of China and the U.S. and also the political and economic relations between the two countries. Contextualizing the images of China in the power relations in and between China and the U.S. in these studies explains the authority and dominance of some of the images, like the evil Red Communist China in the McCarthy era and the democratizing China before Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Said’s theory of Orientalism can be found in the analysis of the images of China reflected in the media and historical texts of many studies on the representation of China in the U.S. as well. Jespersen (1996) points out that the debate about “who lost China” in the 1950s after the Communist party won the Civil War in China indicates an Orientalist sense of patronage from the U.S. Mackerras (1989) also thinks that a majority of Western images of China sit very comfortably with Said’s Orientalism. Madsen (1995) holds that there has always been a liberal myth about China in the U.S., which made the victory of

the Communist party of China and the Tiananmen Square event in 1989 so dramatically tragic. This myth, Madsen (1995) argues, helps sustain an American sense of hopefulness about its self-identity of a democracy. This idea echoes Said's (1978) argument that Orientalism is a self-sustaining myth the West holds of the East and psychologically it should be seen as paranoia. In *Chinese Dreams*, Hayot (2004) thinks that Orientalism in the works of the authors who he examines in the book is obvious. Hayot (2004) agrees with Said that their fantasies about China were grounded in a sense of self, i.e., the West's definition of rationality, philosophy in usefulness and sense of reference in language, in the case of Pound, Brecht and *Tel Quel*, an avant-garde magazine for literature in Paris. In *Distorted Mirrors* Davis and Trani (2009) trace Americans' perceptions of Russia and China throughout the 20th century by examining media representations of China and some important literary and historical texts by prominent figures like Pearl Buck, John Dewey, Henry Luce, and Edgar Snow in the past century. Differing from the above-mentioned scholars, Davis and Trani (2009) argue that Americans have held a positive view of China because of the "Oriental mystery" and the "American missionary zeal" to convert China into a democracy (p.177). Davis and Trani (2009) do not refer to Said or Orientalism in this book, but the will to improve China so that it can be like "us" they pointed out in the American view of China is a typical Orientalist complex which Said (1978) terms "positional superiority" (p. 7).

The absence of attention to individual agency of the audience of discourses characterizes the aforementioned studies grounded in the Foucauldian theory of power and discourse and the Saidian theory of Orientalism. Among these studies, only Madsen (1995) has actually interviewed about 75 Americans on their ideas about China.

Jespersen (1996), Mosher (1990) and Mackerras (1999) focus on how power or the interests of authority concerning China work through historical texts, literary works, and media. Hayot (2004) focuses on literary texts and translations of Pound, Brecht and *Tel Quel*. What Americans think about China and themselves is assumed to be in line with the writers of these texts. Jespersen (1996) said in *American Images of China, 1931-1949*: “...though China certainly has changed over the past one hundred years, the basis for Americans’ understanding of that nation and its people has not” (p. 188). Mackerras’s (1999) assumption of the causality between the images of China and the response of the audience to them can be seen in the following statement:

“More and more Westerners have been prepared to see originality and creativity in Chinese history. But the more creativity one is prepared to see, the stranger it becomes that China failed to make the breakthrough which resulted in the Industrial Revolution” (p. 148).

How the audience perceives the images criticized by the two writers is not shown with empirical data. Acknowledging that images resulting from particular power relations do not necessarily exercise a decisive impact on individuals, Mackerras (1999) and Jespersen (1996) argue that quantifiable research on the impact would be hard to obtain. Later researchers interested in the impact of certain images upon the audience, however, perform both quantitative and qualitative studies on it.

The line of qualitative studies using interview as a main research method that investigates attitudes of Americans towards China emerged in the 1960s with Harold Isaacs’s (1958) *Scratches on Our Minds*. During 1954 and 1955, Isaacs (1958) interviewed 181 Americans leaders in academia, the media, diplomacy, politics, business,

and missionary work to determine Americans' attitudes towards China and India and the sources of these attitudes. Isaacs presents candid stories from the perspective of the individual about perceptions of China and the possible influence from representations of China in the discourse they were familiar with. He also uses the images emerging from his interviews as an index to the cultural, political and economic interactions between America and the two countries. Isaac's method of selecting his interviewees is snowball sampling. Many of the interviewees were his friends or friends' friends. Since he believed that leaders in the above-mentioned fields were most influential and sensitive to foreign policy, his interviewees were prominent figures, with only thirteen women and seven African-Americans. So his research results do not actually achieve what he wanted in the title-- Scratches on "*Our*" Minds.

Madsen's (1995) *China and the American Dream*, is another study on Americans' attitude towards China which uses interviews as the primary source of data. Besides the scholarly texts, Madsen (1995) concentrates on observation and his interviews of about 150 people, half in America and half in China who are at a middle-management level in the fields of academia, diplomacy, business and missionary work. In this book, he does not use many of his interviews as evidence for the conclusion he draws that American dreams about China are more a projection of America than of China itself. Madsen's conclusion is based more on his analysis of scholarly literature than the data provided by the randomly chosen interviewees. Demographic information is not given in his research. Thus I still categorize Madsen's (1995) as research theoretically framed in Said's theory of Orientalism, which does not shed light on individual agency and difference, though he uses interviews as a way to hear the popular voice. His interviewees, whom he does not

directly quote much in the book, like Isaacs's, were those who were at the management level, and do not represent all.

Both historians who are interested in the role popular attitudes towards China have played in policy-making, Isaacs and Madsen used interviews as a way to collect data, in addition to the scholarly texts. The informants they chose were therefore leaders in the fields of business, diplomacy, and missionary work. They chose the elites as their subjects because their professions were more concerned with China and U.S.-China relations and their leadership positions were influential to the foreign policies of the United States toward China. Both scholars reveal both positive and negative ideas their subjects had about China and discuss the origin of their opinions. The American elites' representativeness of American, however, is questionable. Though representativeness is an issue facing many qualitative studies. Isaacs (1958) and Madsen (1995) could have done better work in providing more demographic information about their informants and correlating their background information with their opinions of China.

The research conducted by the Committee of 100 (C-100) has a wider coverage and better representativeness than that of Isaacs (1958) and Madsen (1995). One of the most consistent and well-known studies on Americans' opinion of China and the Chinese has been done by C-100, a national organization of prominent Chinese-Americans. Since 1994, C-100 has conducted three surveys on American attitudes toward China. In the latest study about American and Chinese attitudes toward each other (C-100, 2007), a national, statistically representative sample of 1,650, Americans throughout the United States were surveyed through phone interviews on their opinions toward China. Differing from the survey done by Isaacs who interviewed leaders in certain fields, the general

public comprises 73% of the sample of this survey. Opinion leaders, business leaders and congressional staffers were also surveyed and their professional backgrounds and social status information were used as dependent variables correlating to their attitudes towards China. The survey asked questions about Americans' overall impressions of China, attitudes towards China's rise and its implications for U.S. - China relations, attitudes towards common issues influencing U.S.-China relations and domestic issues in China (C-100, 2007). One of the findings of the survey is that the majority of Americans who have visited China hold a more favorable opinion of China as a result (C-100, 2007). Less than a quarter of respondents, except the congressional staffers, have travelled to the other country (C-100, 2007). So the survey suggests that more opening up opportunities for the general public to travel abroad, the "more balanced cross-cultural perceptions" they will achieve (p. 17). This suggestion is in line with Allport's (1954) contact theory and Pettigrew's (1998) intergroup contact theory, which assert that contact and communication increase chances of cross-cultural understanding. This suggestion is also related to the research question of this study, i.e., the influence of representations of China in the U.S. and a study abroad trip to China on its participants' attitude towards China. The C-100 survey cannot sufficiently answer this question. How the messages gained through a trip in China interact with the attitudes towards China that students had formed before the trip is not answered by this quantitative survey.

The recent research carried out by Gries and his colleagues has referred to the survey results of C-100 as an extant polling data but with more specific foci. In "Political Orientation, Party affiliation, and American Attitudes Towards China", Gries and Crowson (2010) surveyed 1,650 adult Americans to determine the impact of the political

orientation and party affiliation of ordinary Americans on their perceptions of China. This study has empirically shown the correlation between the two but did not explain why. Categorizing people into the mere categories of different levels of liberalness and conservativeness excluded other possible reasons for one's attitude towards China, such as a trip to China or having a Chinese family friend. Gries, Crowson and Sandel (2010) also did a quantitative and longitudinal survey during and after the 2008 Olympic games to determine whether the increased exposure to China during the two and half weeks of the Beijing Olympics had an impact on American attitudes towards China. This study shows that news coverage about China and the Olympics was followed by deteriorating American attitudes towards China during August 2008 (Gries, Crowson and Sandel, 2010). Personality and ideology are also taken as possible reasons for this change of attitude. This study shows one of my presuppositions that representations of China in the American discourse including the media has an impact on people's perceptions of China.

Compared to the research of Isaacs and Madsen, quantitative surveys done by C-100 and Gries, Crowson and Sandel include the non-elites in their respondents to achieve more external validity. They showed what the Americans' or a certain group of Americans' perceptions of China are and some correlations between these perceptions and their backgrounds. In the C-100 survey, experience in China was suggested as a means for improving mutual cultural understanding but not as a dependent variable. In the studies done by Gries Crowson and Sandel, life experience or a trip to China is not mentioned as a possible reason for certain attitudes their respondents have towards China. Study of the influence of a study-abroad program to China on its participants' attitudes

towards China will contribute to the understanding of how different attitudes and attitude changes about China are possibly influenced by going there.

Study Abroad

Study abroad in general

Travel, often viewed as a process of spiritual purification and enlightenment, is given great significance in learning in both the East and the West. Gu Yanwu, a towering Chinese philosopher in early Qing scholarship, epitomized Chinese belief in the equal importance travel has to book knowledge in his saying, “To become wise, you must read 10,000 books and walk 10,000 miles.” In St. Augustine’s words, “The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page,” travel outweighs other ways of learning. Study abroad which formalizes travel into school learning is as old as recorded history (Nam, 2010). During the reign of the Emperor Asoka the Great of India (273-232 B.C.), Taxila University, one of the oldest known universities in the world, attracted students from all over Asia Minor and made study abroad a requirement for its students’ journeys of learning (Furnham & Bochner, 1982). Alexander the Great provided for a kind of Rhodes scholarship in his will and encouraged international teachers to come to Rome (Furnham & Bochner, 1982).

In the 1920s study abroad started with some wealthy students in foreign language programs and women’s college in the U.S. (Nam, 2010). It was during the mid-1950s that study abroad became a more accepted and general educational instrument for many Americans (Abrams, 1968, p. 24). With many international students coming to the U.S. for their education as well, research in students’ adjustment to a different culture emerged in the 1960s (Furnham & Bochner, 1982).

Increasing concern about the insularity of America and the lack of intercultural competence among Americans has been raised since September 11th, 2001 (Jackson, 2005; Mestenhauser, 2011). International education is widely believed to be essential to enhance the country's international competence and competitiveness as the Association of International Educators (NAFSA) states:

“We believe that it is through international education that we can, as a country, grow our capacity to listen to, understand, and communicate with the rest of the world and be part of advancing a shared future of peace, security, and well-being” (2009, p. 2).

As increasing global competence in the next generation has become a national priority and an academic responsibility, study abroad has been viewed as a main way to attain internationalization (Mestenhauser, 2011). Study abroad programs have also become a recruitment tool, as prospective students make institutional selections based on study abroad opportunities as well as academic offerings and campus life (Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen & Hubbard, 2006; Nam, 2010).

Much empirical research supports the validity of study abroad to fulfill the above expectations showing that it enhances students' self-confidence, maturity, creativity, intercultural competence, global engagement, and critical thinking. Research shows that a comparatively more independent life in another country creates a sense of accomplishment. Living away from a familiar environment and the self-reliance one has to have in a different culture help them achieve more sense of self-efficacy than those who don't have these experience (Carison et al., 1991; Carlson & Widaman, 1988; Cash, 1993; Drews, Meyer & Peregrine, 1996; Hutchins, 1996; Gmelch, 1997; King & Young, 1994; McCabe, 1994; Milstein, 2005; Thomlison, 1991; Tomlison, 1991; Waldbaum,

1996; Bates, 1997; Ybarra, 1997; Zhai, 2000). Intercultural experience also enhances one's creativity because it provides chances for those who are exposed to other cultures to think outside of the box and build a repository of many creative possibilities, according to Maddux and Galinsky (2009). Living in another country which has a different language can also give students more opportunity to use another language and therefore enhances their language learning (Berg, Conner-Linton & Paige, 2009, Fall; Brecht, Davidson & Ginsbergs, 1993; Brecht & Robinson, 1993; Carison, et al., 1990; Ginsberg, 1992; Ginsberg, Robin & Wheeling, 1992; Iino, 1996; Jones & Bond, 2000; Kline, 1993, 1998; Parr, 1988; Rivers, 1998). As Gustave Flaubert says, "Travel makes one modest; you see what a tiny place you occupy in the world." Study abroad helps students realize the interconnectedness of different countries and learn about narrowness and the problem of geocentricism, i.e. being ethnocentric eccentric as a nation (Bates, 1997; Berg, et al., 2009, Fall; Carison, et al., 1990; Haddis, 2005; Hutchins, 1996; Price & Hensley, 1978, April; Schertzer, et al., 1993). The shift of the frame of reference during a study abroad trip often results in students' obtaining the insider's perception of the host culture (Carison, et al, 1990). The shift of the frame of reference can also defamiliarize students with their own culture and enable them to view it in a more critical and reflective way (Carison, et al, 1990).

Challenges posed by globalization and individual factors, however, have obstructed the occurrence of many positive effects of study abroad programs. Globalization and the availability of American culture including food and language enable some students to visit other countries and still not learn anything about the country's culture (Citron, 2002; Engle & Engle, 2002). If participants in study abroad programs stay together instead of

spending time with local people, those students will not gain the insider's perspective about that culture's values and beliefs or view themselves from the cultural lens of the host country (Citron, 2002; Engle & Engle, 2002). Even if they tried to interact with the local people, according to Dolby (2005) "American students' strong national identity often prevents them from exploring the possibility of global affiliation" (p. 101).

The sense of national identity and the ensuing ethnocentric way of thinking are not unique to American students. Group identity makes an individual survive and function in his or her group (Allport, 1954). By conforming to a group norm one gets a "social entrance ticket" (Allport, 1954, p. 286). Group conformity, however, does not necessarily mean a deliberate attempt to maintain a chosen ethnocentric creed (Allport, 1954). Sometimes it is the direction of one's attention and the way one interprets information, which is defined as "mindset" (Maznevski and Lane, 2004, p. 172). In addition mindset can alter and revise the cognitive structure one has with new experiences (Maznevski & Lane, 2004). So an individual is not merely a product of one's culture, although he or she needs to conform to the culture in a certain way to survive. Individual agency and transforming life experience can alter the direction of attention and the way of interpretation.

A study abroad program is meant to expose its participants to different perspectives and criteria and give them chances to interpret the world in a way that is independent from the assumptions of their country, culture, or context (Maznevski & Lane, 2004). Studies about the interaction between the mindset individuals acquire consciously or unconsciously from their culture and the influence of a study aboard program have been predominantly focused on the impact of a study abroad on its participants' intercultural

competence (e.g., Anderson, et al., 2006; Chieffo and Griffins, 2003; Nam, 2010; Wortman, 2002). The mindsets of students and the frame of reference with which the students are familiar, however, are not examined in these studies. According to Mestenhauser (2011), mindset is like:

“... thick cognitive maps that individuals developed over a long period of time through socialization and acculturation and from experiences, media, and relationships with other people...” often subconsciously (p. 17).

Study abroad is an opportunity for the dispositions accumulated unconsciously through time in students’ own cultures to be constantly challenged (Mestenhauser, 2011).

The moment of two conflicting frames of reference encountering each other, resulting in self-awareness and embracing or refusing a new perspective usually is not shown in a quantitative measurement of the students’ intercultural competence progress or attitude change. Qualitative data, such as students’ travel logs and post-trip interviews, collected in this study capture how the “Made in China” participants negotiated between their old attitudes and new experiences during their trip in China.

The impact of study abroad programs on its participants’ attitude towards the host countries

The impact of study abroad programs on their participants’ attitude towards host countries has been examined by many studies. Allport’s (1954) contact theory has been used in many of these studies that focus on the correlation between study abroad participants’ interaction with local people and their attitudes towards the host culture. The impact of a study abroad trip on its participants’ attitudes towards the host country varies depending on: 1) the destination country (Marion, 1980; Salter & Teger, 1975); 2)

country of origin (Litvin, 2003; Sellitz & Cook, 1962); 3) the number of countries they had been to before their study-abroad trips (Marion, 1980); 4) participants' expectations (Caton, 2008; Herman, 1970; Marion, 1980; Martin, Bradford & Rohrlich, 1995; Nyaupane, Teye & Paris, 2008; Smith, 1955; Watson & Lippitt, 1957); 5) reaction to overall experience (Nyaupane, et al., 2008; Salter & Teger, 1975; Vornberg and Grant, 1976); 6) personality (Watson & Lippitt, 1957); 7) housing during the trip (Dowell, 1996; Schmidt-Rinehart & Knight, 2004); 8) local language proficiency (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2003); and 9) social distance (Nyaupane, et al., 2008). These studies show that studying abroad constitutes a complex and dynamic learning environment (Sato, 2009). Participants' attitudes toward the host country are influenced not only by the trip but also by many other non-trip related elements.

When it comes to how the participants' attitudes towards the host country are influenced by study abroad, some studies find that study abroad experiences increase the positivity of participants' attitude towards the host country (Chen, 2007; Herman, 1970; Hofman & Zak, 1969; Kamal & Maruyama, 1990; Litvin, 2003; McGuigan, 1959; Salter & Teger, 1975; Smith, 1955). Some studies find the opposite. Study abroad sometimes brought up negative attitudes among participants towards the host country (Litvin, 2003; Marion, 1974; Nash, 1976; Smith, 1955; Salter & Teger, 1975; Yachimowicz, 1987). And other studies find participants' pre-trip attitude unchanged (Kafka, 1968; Lumkes, Hallett & Vallade, 2012; Pizam, Jafari & Milman, 1991; Sato, 2009) and even reinforced (Marion, 1974).

Among all the research, studies on how the participants' expectations of the host country influences their attitude and attitude change regarding the host country proved

one of the assumptions of this study, i.e., students usually come with certain attitudes towards the host country and these attitudes influenced how they interpreted their experience during their study abroad trip and how they viewed the country (Caton, 2008; Herman, 1970; Martin, Bradford & Rohrlich, 1995; Nyaupane, et al., 2008; Sellitz & Cook, 1962; Smith, 1955; Watson & Lippitt, 1957). Limited research has been found examining on how pre-trip expectations and attitudes, a research question of this study, are formed (Nyaupane, et al., 2008; Sellitz and Cook, 1962; Caton, 2008).

Nyaupane, et al. (2008) find that students' pre-trip attitudes are influenced by social motivation, such as social ties. Sellitz and Cook (1962) acknowledge that power relations between the origin country and destination country affect study abroad participants' attitudes towards the destination country. Caton (2008) views study abroad as a process of discursive production of the others under the influence of the discourse of mainstream tourism, starting from program promotion to the participants' interpretation of their study abroad experience. Sellitz and Cook (1962) and Caton (2008) both discussed the discursive influence of power relationships over students' pre-trip attitudes and expectations, which is what the current research attempts to discern. Sellitz and Cook (1962) do not, however, provide concrete examples to illustrate how the power relations between countries influence students' attitude towards their host country. Caton (2008) contextualized the study abroad program's discursive output, such as yearbooks and brochures, "within larger regulatory systems in which it operates", such as a media "riddled with colonialist fantasies and a neoliberal capitalist economy in which both educational institutions and tourism brokers must compete for 'customers'" (p. ii). Caton's (2008) study sheds light on the interpretive dynamics when Western students

encounter the Other. Since the program Semester at Sea, which Caton's (2008) study has focused on, has multiple destinations, Caton does not look into the power dynamics between a given country with the United States. The current research will do so with China and the United States.

Data on attitude studies in the context of study abroad are from four main sources: 1) pre-and post-trip surveys are conducted to compare the attitudes of participants before and after the study abroad experience (Carlson & Widaman, 1988; Hofman & Zak, 1969; Kafka, 1968; Kamal & Maruyama, 1990; Leonard, 1964; Litvin, 2003; Lumkes, Hallett & Vallade, 2012; Marion, 1974; Martin, Bradford & Rohrlich, 1995; Nyaupane, et al., 2008; Pizam, et al., 1991; Salter & Teger, 1975); 2) pre-and post-trip interviews (Garraty & Adams, 1959; Liljenstolpe, 2002; Watson & Lippitt, 1957); 3) qualitative data such as travel logs (Dekaney, 2007) and trip pictures (Caton, 2008) of students and promotional materials of the study abroad program (Caton, 2008); and 4) mixed methods with pre-and post-trip interviews and surveys (Herman, 1970; Pfnister, 1972; Sato, 2009; Smith, 1955). Data used in this study include course materials, student journals, post-trip interviews and post-trip survey. Instead of just focusing on what happened during the trip, I bring the discourse texts outside of the trip such as news, textbooks and movie into my analysis of the context of the students' attitudes toward China.

Study abroad to China

The dramatic increase in the number of American university students choosing China as their study-abroad destination is not accompanied by an equal increase in the amount of research focusing on study programs to China. Very limited literature on American student studying in China is found (Boultbee, 1996; Byrnes, 2005; Chen, 2007;

Evans, 2004; Foster, 2001; Kulacki, 2000; Le, 2004; Liu, 2009; Lumkes, Hallett & Vallade, 2012; Sato, 2009; Warner, 2009; Wells, 2006). Research focusing on the impact of study abroad in China on its participants' attitude towards China is even more limited (Foster, 2001; Kulacki, 2000). Due to the limited literature found on this topic, a study by Hutchings, Jackson and McEllister (2002) on the impact of a study abroad trip in China on a group of Australian university students' growth in cross-cultural understanding is also included. Done in the study abroad setting, Hutchings, Jackson and McEllister's (2002) study relates to the current research in that it examines how the study-abroad participants reacted to the cultural differences they had experienced in China, which is one of the questions the current research aims to address.

Boulton (1996) evaluates the orientation of a study abroad program in China from both the students' and sponsor's perspectives by interviewing students, staff and related personnel before, during and after the trip. Boulton (1996) also included participation observation, and content analysis of related documents. Findings of this research confirm the importance and relevance of a well-designed and implemented orientation program (Boulton, 1996). This study focuses on the orientation instead of the overall experience of students on a study abroad trip.

Evans's (2004) study evaluates how a study abroad trip to China has influenced 22 teachers' professional and personal developments. Through post-trip surveys, travel log analysis, participation observation, and analysis of the curriculum units developed by the participants after the trip Evans collected the data for the study. Attitude towards China is not specifically studied in this research, and the subjects of the research, a group of teachers, are different from that of the current study, i.e., a group of university students.

Byrnes's (2005) study is based on his participants' observations and his own travel log kept when he led a group of students to study abroad in China. After a detailed recollection and reflection of the cultural adjustment stages he, his family and his students experienced, Byrnes (2005) comes up with an "other-regarding travel" strategy emphasizing "cultural differences as opportunities for heightened self-understanding and fostering good will rather than ill-will among locals" (p. 239). Attitudes towards China and attitude change reflected from the stories Byrnes (2005) has documented are not analyzed from the angle of discourse or external factors that made attitude change happen. Instead, Byrnes (2005) focuses on how study abroad participants should think from a local perspective and understand the cultural differences between China and the United States.

Wells (2006) studies not only study abroad in China. He discusses study abroad programs in non-traditional locations including China by comparing the benefits of and rationale for these programs with those in traditional locations (Wells, 2006). This study serves as a good background information source to the current study in terms of understanding the increasing popularity of China as a study abroad destination among outbound U. S. American students.

Le's (2004) study investigates American college students studying Chinese in China, their beliefs about language learning and their foreign language anxiety. Le's (2004) study sheds light on the backgrounds, language learning beliefs and foreign language anxiety of a less commonly taught foreign language learner but lends little guidance to the current study of how a study abroad trip influences its participants' attitudes towards China.

Kulacki's (2000) study compares the influence of a study abroad trip to China on students who major in Chinese studies or East Asian studies with those who do not, and concludes that broad-based liberal arts preparation makes a far better prerequisite for study abroad than area studies courses. "Broad-based liberal arts preparation helps students to think about their individual identity, the meaning of life and their relationship with others and their larger place in the world" (Kulacki, 2000, p. 42). Area studies, often concerning theoretical speculation on the reasons behind cultural differences, tend to lead students to take some subjective and tentative conclusion about cultural differences as objective and scientific facts, and resolve intercultural problems with them (Kulacki, 2000). As an instructor for study abroad to China for ten years, Kulacki (2000) based his study on his experience and memory working with students from both area studies and other backgrounds. Observation is the source of his data (Kulacki, 2000). He analyzed the area studies paradigms of the Chinese experience and found connections between these paradigms and the area study students' intercultural performance on their study abroad trips (Kulacki, 2000). The current study shares the same theoretical basis as Kulacki's (2000) study that former knowledge about China can limit or improve student intercultural understanding of China when they are in China. His focus on the influence of area studies, however, ignores the influences of other discourse like media, textbooks and personal experiences. So his conclusion that non-area study majors have less stereotypes about China and Chinese might ignore the influence of these other discourse. His conclusion, moreover, is merely based on his memory and personal observation. Students' voices and perspectives are needed to illuminate their own thinking and processes of perceiving China and the Chinese.

Foster's (2001) study relates the details of an intensive language-training program in Nanjing, China and concludes that the practicum contributed substantially to both the development of students' language skills and their cultural understanding of China. His conclusion about the improvement of students' cultural understanding of China is based on the fact that the students have attended a lecture on Chinese culture, history, or society every week and completed homework on these topics (Foster, 2001). Lectures and homework on Chinese culture are good ways to increase students' knowledge about Chinese culture but knowledge does not necessarily lead to understanding as Kulacki (2000) found in his research.

Warner's (2009) phenomenological study finds that three tiers of transformational learning emerged among a short-term study abroad program in China although not every participant experienced all the three tiers in this study. In the first tier, participants used their experience to reinforce their prior perception of China, showing minimal attitude change; in the second tier, participants changed their perceptions to hold a more global view, and in the third tier, some participants incorporated their learning experiences into their lives and made changes as a result of their experiences (Warner, 2009). Warner (2009) acknowledges that greater prior relevant knowledge contributed to greater understanding of phenomenon but she does not discuss the influence of skewed prior knowledge and perception as Kulacki (2000) does in his study about how strong background knowledge of China can limit students' intercultural growth during their study abroad trip. Discourse is not a focus of this study, so Warner's concept of prior knowledge is confined to school courses and Chinese heritage and family background. In

the current research, knowledge and perception are believed to be gained from a broader learning setting than just family background.

Sato's (2009) research studies how short-term study abroad programs transform college students' attitudes about their host country and their international outlook, as well as intellectual, social and personal understandings. Data for this study was collected from surveying and interviewing alumni of five-week summer programs in China, France, Italy and Spain and the faculty directors of each program. Sato (2009) finds that study abroad has some influence on academic choices and career development, but more influence on personal and social development, especially self-confidence, self-awareness, maturity and tolerance of conflicting opinions and the complexity of international outlook. Re-entry adjustment stress was found to be more influential on attitude change than stress experienced during the study abroad (Sato, 2009). Attitude towards the host country in the context of China is only a very small portion of Sato's (2009) study. No details are found in this study analyzing the discourse reason behind students' cultural shock or re-entry stress.

Lumkes, Hallett and Vallade (2012) examined the impact of a two-part course entitled China: Globalization, Agriculture and Environment. The first part of the course was taken in the classroom and the second part was a 16-day study abroad course in China following the classroom part (Lumkes, et al., 2012). An identical questionnaire on knowledge and attitudes about some thematic issues in China was completed by the students at the end of each part of the course (Lumkes, et al., 2012). The study finds that study abroad contributed minimally to the students' knowledge of Chinese agriculture and environmental issues or to their understanding of the general nature of the global

economy, but profoundly altered the students' cultural self-awareness and outlook on global political issues (Lumkes, et al., 2012). Lumkes, Hallett and Vallade (2012) conclude that "the specific subject studied during study abroad experiences may be less important than the very fact that study is undertaken abroad" and "significant personal development can be achieved even on very short study abroad experiences" (p. 151). The attitude questions this study has asked its participants are about how American students view America and their American identity, which is different from the attitude questions on how American students view China that this study asks. Though the two approaches can reach the same answer sometimes when that how American students view America is how they view China from another perspective, Lumkes, Hallett and Vallade (2012) emphasize how study abroad in China influences student views of the United States in a global context, and the current study emphasizes how study abroad experience interacts with students' former knowledge and perceptions of China they gained in the United States. The qualitative approach of Lumkes, Hallett and Vallade's study fails to present the individual differences the current research plans to capture.

Liu's (2009) study describes a model that integrates an at-home preparation program with a short-term study abroad summer program to increase students' Chinese language proficiency, cultural awareness, and personal career development. Liu (2009) defines cultural proficiency as one of the multiskills of language proficiency and uses SAT Chinese scores, the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview, and portfolio writing in Chinese to assess it. Language is part of culture but language and cultural proficiency are not always positively related. High proficiency in language, like other knowledge about China, does not always mean a deep understanding of the culture where the language is

spoken as Kulacki (2000) has stated. Foster (2001) and Liu (2009) offer study abroad models for the improvement of Chinese language skills and intercultural understanding. How the students' intercultural understanding is improved, however, is not adequately shown in their studies. They assume that the more the students know about China the more they will understand China. This assumption emphasizes the input of knowledge more than how students use or interpret this knowledge. No attention is paid to the knowledge students had before they went on their trip to China and how this knowledge would influence their perceptions while they were in China.

Hutchings, Jackson and McEllister's (2002) study with a group of Australian students studying abroad in China relates to the current research in that it also examines how the study-abroad participants react to the cultural differences they experienced in China. The study, however, does not ask further question about why some students failed to cope with certain local culture even though they thought they knew it, such as *guanxi*. Students' mindsets are not studied to explain their reactions to what they had experienced in China in this study. This very question is one of the foci of the current research.

Thus far, empirical studies on short-term study abroad programs have focused predominantly on the impact of study abroad on students' intercultural competence growth and future development. Retrospective examination of the images participants bring from the United States to China is rare. Examining participants' attitude changes and the development of intercultural understanding only in the context of study abroad trip to a certain extent ignores the power of students' former learning about the world, the host country and themselves. Looking into the discourse which forms students' attitudes towards China before their trip to China, the current research not only expands the

limited pool of research on study abroad in China but also deepens the understanding of where the students are from and the possible reasons behind their reactions to what they experienced in China.

CHAPTER III: EPISTEMOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

This study examines the impact of a short-term study abroad program in China on its participants' attitudes towards China. The epistemological perspective of this research is social constructivism. Qualitative methods are mainly be used for data collection and analysis. Journal reading, survey and interview are used to collect data. Critical discourse analysis will be used for final data analysis.

This chapter explicates the epistemological perspective underlying this research and the methodological approach the research undertakes to understand how “Made in China” has impacted its participants' attitudes towards China. By examining the written and spoken texts produced by the participants of “Made in China”, this research endeavors to address the following questions:

1. What had the “Made in China” participants known about China before they studied abroad in China? What were their attitudes toward China then?
2. What did the program participants think of the China they saw while they were in China compared to the China they had known before?
3. For those whose attitudes towards China changed, what influenced them to change?

The following part of this chapter demonstrates the epistemological perspective underlying the study, justifies the methodology and methods used to address the research questions and details the research design at the levels of data collection, management and analysis. Finally, the validity and limitations of the study is discussed.

Epistemological Perspective: Social Constructivism

Drawing on Said's (1978) Orientalism as part of its basic theoretical framework, this research is not an attempt to show that "Made in China" is an Orientalist exploration of China. Individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. What I want to explore in this study is how discourse about China in the United States contributes to "Made in China" participants' attitudes towards China and to what extent study abroad can influence their attitudes towards China during the trip. The written texts, i.e., travel journals and survey responses to short-answer questions, and the spoken texts, i.e., the interviews, are used as constitutive of reality, i.e., the participants' attitudes and attitudes change. Social constructivism is the epistemological perspective underlying this research.

Social constructivism assumes that individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences. Reality is created in the liminal zone between a perceived external reality and a subjective meaning-making process (Daly, 2006). Individuals seek understanding of the world and develop subjective meanings of their experience (Merriam, 2009). They weave their personality and biographies into their decision making of reality subject. Social constructivism argues that there is a fundamental difference between the physical and social worlds: unlike the physical world, the social world is comprised of human agents who are, by nature, interpretive beings who engage in meaning-making (Lincoln, 2005). So the subjective meaning they have developed out of their experiences varies, which leads to the complexity of views (Cresswell, 2007). Acknowledging both the influence of social context and the agency of individual subjectivity, I believe that the attitudes towards China of "Made in China" participants, who are individuals of agency

and subjectivity, are socially constructed. The discourses about China available to them are the source of social information that they draw on in the process of constructing their attitudes towards China. How these individuals come to certain attitudes and what a study program means to their ongoing sense making process about China are the foci of the research. With these two aims, this research relies heavily on the discourse the students produced, i.e., travel journals, interviews and survey, as the basic medium for analysis.

Case Study Methodology

The methodology of case study is utilized in this research. This choice is based on the research questions investigated, the rationale and nature of this research and the nature of case study methodology.

Case study methodology fits the purpose of this research. According to Yin (2009), “how” and “why” research questions are likely to favor the use of case study. The three research questions of this dissertation are posed in order to answer how “Made in China”, a short-term study abroad to China, impacts its participants’ attitudes towards China. Many “why” questions will be asked in the data collection and analysis process in order to answer this “how” question. Case study methodology fits this study also because this study focuses on contemporary happenings (Yin, 2009). In this research, the subjects of this study went to China in 2011, and they are the latest cohort of the “Made in China” program when this dissertation started. Their written texts, the journals they kept during their study abroad and their survey responses, and spoken texts from interviews the researcher conducted with four of them are contemporary and retrospective. In a case study I have little control over the relevant behaviors (Yin, 2009). Without being able to

do participant observation, I have no control or influence over the program and its participants.

Examining the “particularity and complexity of a single case”, case study methodology fits the overall goal of this study, i.e., to gain an in-depth understanding of how a study abroad program in China could influence its participants’ attitude towards China (Patton, 2002, p. 297). The case study structure – “the problem, the context, the issues, and the lessons learned” also fits the rationale of this research (Creswell, 2007, p. 93).

The Case: “Made in China”

“Made in China” is a global seminar program organized by the Learning Abroad Center at the University of Minnesota. It is a three-credit May/June session course led by a professor from the Department of Marketing/Logistics Management. During the pre-departure orientation, students were assigned readings and informed of program requirements.

The 2011 “Made in China” cohorts had 26 participants. Nineteen of them were female (73%), and seven of them male (27%). All of them were undergraduates. Fifteen of them (58%) were from the College of Liberal Arts; eight of them (31%) were from the fields of business and economics. There was no documentation of their ethnic backgrounds. The survey, to which 16 of them responded (a 62% response rate), shows that 59 percent of the survey participants were white. The other 41 percent included Chinese, Hmong, and Ethiopian.

During their three-week program in China, the students spent two weeks in Beijing where they lived on Tsinghua University campus, and visited historical sites like the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, the Summer Palace, Chairman Mao’s

Mausoleum, a cooperative farm and a modern art district, Factory 798. After Beijing, the students went to Shanghai, the economic hub of China, by train. In Shanghai, they visited Shanghai Museum, Shanghai Urban Planning Exhibition Center, a store of Häagen-Dazs and Shanghai Deep Water Port and did a river cruise in Huangpu River along the Bund, one of the most dynamic parts of Shanghai. During their stay in Shanghai, they went to Anji County in Zhejiang province by bus and did four site visits at the bamboo factories there. All the site visits during the “Made in China” trip were led by the Chinese representatives from the sites.



Figure 3: The Travel Route of “Made in China” on the Map of China



Figure 4: The Travel Route of “Made in China” from Shanghai to Anji

Besides sightseeing and site visits, the students had four guest lectures on China’s economy, freedom and space of artists and Chinese history theming around the Great Walls, founding of the People’s Republic of China and the Cultural Revolution. All but one speaker was Chinese. Peng, the speaker of China’s economic policy was from the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) of China, a macroeconomic management agency under the Chinese State Council, which has broad administrative and planning control over the Chinese economy (NDRC, not available). The speaker on the political space of artist in China is a director of a documentary on Factory 798. Speakers on Chinese history were university professors. John Pomfret, an American journalist who had study abroad in China in the early 1980s gave a talk about his experience in China. Pomfret is also the writer of *Chinese Lessons* (Pomfret, 2006), a book on the reading list of “Made in China” program. The students also had dinner meetings with two expatriates from the United States, one living in Beijing, another one in Shanghai. During the three-week trip, Seth, the instructor of the program, gave three

lectures to the students. One lecture was given at the very beginning of the study abroad trip in Beijing introducing China in a general way; one was given in Shanghai on China's economic development; and the third one was given one day before they left China on the future of China.

During the whole trip the group traveled by air, rail, boat, bike and public transportation (in cities). Students were given time for personal exploration in addition to the group activities related to the course topics such as lectures, meeting expatriates and site visits. During their travels in China, the participants were required to keep journals anonymously. The instructor gave them numbered notebooks, numbered the participants and therefore knew the authorship of the journals. After the participants had written the first journal entry in their notebooks these notebooks were rotated among the participants. Each time they received a different notebook they responded to the last journal entry in that notebook, and then wrote a new piece.

I chose "Made in China" to address my research questions for the following reasons. First, a short-term faculty-led non-language based study abroad program such as "Made in China" is a typical study abroad program format in the United States, and the findings of this research should be meaningful to many other programs using similar formats. Second, the design of this study abroad program allows its participants to experience different aspects and different facets of China, urban and rural, economic, political and cultural, and have more chances to obtain a holistic view of China. Third, the fact that the instructor asked the participants to keep journals and has kept all these journals provides a rich pool of first-hand data.

Methods

This research relies on the texts produced by the participants as an empirical indicator of their reaction to the social and political context as a partial contribution to their perceptions and attitudes about China. After reviewing the travelogues and identifying categories based on the recurrent themes in the journals, I surveyed all the participants to collect the demographic information of the participants, ask them to identify the sources of their knowledge and attitudes of China and collect more surprises, “This is China moments,” basic impression of China and their evaluation of this study abroad program (See Appendix I). A Likert scale was also included in the survey to ask them about their attitudes towards certain issues of China. This scale is used to select interviewees who represent a wide range of attitude tendencies toward China. Interviews were used to obtain an in-depth understanding of their sense-making process about China before and through the study abroad program (See Appendix II). I also asked my interviewees to show me five or six pictures they took in China, which they thought would best represent China, and to speak about it. Critical discourse analysis was used to analyze these pictures and the related discussion. The current section is therefore dedicated to a discussion of the data I selected for inclusion in this study and of the methods I employed in order to make sense of the data.

Data Collection

Fortunate to be in the same Ph.D. program with Seth, the instructor of “Made in China”, I had full support from him in obtaining permission from all the students to access their journals and to send them the link of the online survey for this project after the project proposal is approved by Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Journal Analysis

Student journals are my first source of data. The themes emerging from my analysis of these journals served as a pool of items from which I selected and constructed my survey items and interview questions. My journal analysis began with a thorough reading using the method of critical discourse analysis, and followed by coding and mapping of the themes that emerged. The items in this pool are mainly the attitude-related image of China, such as what surprised them, shown in the journals. The pilot interviews I had preliminarily done with four participants of a similar study abroad program in China were also used to compose this item pool.

Survey

After a preliminary critical discourse analysis of the student journals, I conducted an online survey titled “China in Your Eyes” to identify the sources of the students’ perception of China, give students a chance to talk more about their surprises, “This is China moments,” basic impression of China and their evaluation of this study abroad program.

As to the source of perception of China, news, movies and school textbooks were identified as the three main sources. Among all the newspapers and online news mentioned by the students in the survey, *The New York Times* was shown in the survey as the most popular source of information for “Made in China” participants to learn about China. Its website is the most popular American online newspaper website as well (Russell, 2011, January 24). So in this research I chose *The New York Times* as the new media representative of the American discourse to examine. The database I used to search

The New York Times articles was LexisNexis that covers the most years among all the databases available to me.

A Likert scale was included in the survey to obtain a quantitative view of their attitudes towards certain controversial issues about China in order to select interviewees who represent a wide of attitudes. Sixteen students responded to the survey, which constitutes a 62 percent of response rate.

Demographic information was also asked in the survey to identify interviewees. At the end of the survey I asked those who wanted to be interviewed to leave their contact information. Among those who did, I selected four participants who represent the widest range of the characteristics of the participants in terms of ethnicity and attitudes towards China. A Likert scale of attitude was included in the survey in order to obtain a view of the participants' attitudes towards China now, and was used to selected interviewees in a wide range of attitude tendencies. The statements listed in the scale are from the pool of topics that emerged from my journal analysis and from the pilot interviews I had done with people who had similar study abroad experiences in China. This scale mainly helped me to identify interviewees who represents a wide spectrum of attitude tendencies from being very positive to very negative.

Interview

I used semi-structured interviews to obtain an in-depth understanding of the students' sense-making processes about China before and through the study abroad program. this kind of interviews created more space for the voice of the participants themselves. Since the travelogues were written by the participants one year ago, the

interview will also be an opportunity for me to know their continuous sense-making processes about China after the study abroad trip to China.

Maximum variation sampling was used to select four interviewees from 10 survey participants who were willing to be interviewed about their “Made in China” trip. Maximum variation sampling involves “a deliberate hunt for negative or disconfirming instances or variations of the phenomenon” (Merriam, 2009, p. 79). The first criterion I used to choose interviews was their ethnic background. The 2011 “Made in China” cohort is a diverse group. The four interviewees I chose represent the majority group, i.e. white American, as well as the minority groups, i.e., Chinese American, African American and Hmong American. Ethnic background is part of the discourse that formed an individual and his attitudes. Having interviewees from as many ethnic backgrounds as possible enabled this study to include the discursive influence of ethnic background. The second criterion I used to choose interviewees was the attitude tendencies the survey respondents who were willing to be interviewed had shown on the attitude Likert scale in the “China in Your Eyes” survey. I chose both the majority and minority whose attitudes about China varied from being very positive, somewhat in between to very negative on the attitude scale. Interviewee one is a minority on the attitude scale in the survey 60 per cent of time, and 70 per cent of time her attitudes towards China was positive and somewhat positive. Interviewee two is a majority on the attitude scale 71 per cent of the time, and her attitudes were 57 per cent positive and somewhat positive. Interview three is a 43 per cent of the time with the majority on the attitude scale and 47 per cent of her attitudes about China were positive. Interview four is a majority 50 per cent of the time,

and her attitudes were 30 per cent negative. One limitation of my interviewee choice is that I did not have a male

	Percentage of being with the majority on the attitude scale	Percentage of having positive attitudes on the attitude scale
Interviewee 1	60	70
Interviewee 2	71	57
Interviewee 3	43	47
Interviewee 4	50	30

Table 1: the interviewees' attitude tendencies on the attitude Likert scale in the survey

participant on the list. None of the survey respondents who were willing to be interviewed was male. Although 73% of the 2011 “Made in China” cohort was female and gender difference is not a focus of this study, having a male interviewee would enhance the maximum variation sampling I used to achieve a better validity of the study.

Because of the variation among the four interviews in terms of their ethnic background and attitudes I customized interview questions to each of the four interviewees by asking them to talk more about some of their attitudes reflected from their survey responses. I also asked my interviewees to show and talk about five or six pictures they took in China and which they think would most represent China as the opening of the interview and help me visualize their experiences. Critical discourse analysis with a semiotic emphasis on photo elicitation is also used to analyze these pictures besides the interpretation of their narratives of why they chose these pictures and the stories behind them.

Data analysis: critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis is be used to analyze the spoken, written, and visual data produced by “Made in China” participants. Critical discourse analysis examines how social and power relations, identities, and knowledge are constructed through discourses,

i.e. written, visual, and spoken texts and discourses such as the contexts of production and consumption of these texts (Lewis, 2006).

Discourse

Discourse is defined by Du Gay (1996) as a group of statements that provide a language for talking about a topic and a way of producing a particular kind of knowledge about the topic. Thus the term refers both to the production of knowledge through language and representations, i.e. the texts, and the way that knowledge is institutionalized, and shape social practices (Du Gay, 1996). Fairclough (1992) simplifies discourse as language use seen as a type of social practice.

Gee (1999) made a distinction between little “d” and big “D” discourse. Little “d” discourse refers to language bits or language-in-use, such as the grammar of what is said, and capital “D” discourse refers to the ways of “representing, believing, valuing, and participating with the language bits” (Rogers, 2004, p. 7). It is hard to get a whole view of the capital “D” discourse but traces of it can be found in the texts, i.e. discourse, that help to constitute it (Ainsworth & Hardy, 2004). Discourse analysis focuses on the interpretation and reflection of the significance and structuring effects of these traces. In this research, texts produced by “Made in China” participants will be used to trace the Discourse in which their attitudes have been contextualized. This Discourse includes the representation of China in the United States, and distribution, consumption and reproduction of these representations. Their study abroad trip to China is under the influence of the Discourse. “Made in China,” however, led them into a different frame of reference, a new culture or a new Discourse. How this study abroad program influenced

their attitudes about China they had acquired and/or learned before their trip is the focus of this study.

In order to make this study more accessible to readers who are not familiar with theories of discourse and critical discourse analysis, I will use text to represent the little “d” discourse Gee (1996) has defined and discourse for the capital “D” discourse.

Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis involves discourse analysis with a critical perspective to interrogate social phenomena. According to Rogers (2004):

“Critical discourse analysis is different from other discourse analysis methods because it includes not only a description and interpretation of discourse in context, but also offers an explanation of why and how discourses work” (p. 2).

Critical is used in the sense of aiming to show up the connections between language, power and ideology, which are usually hidden from people (Fairclough, 1992).

I chose to use critical discourse analysis instead of just discourse analysis because critical discourse analysis views language as always being political, interwoven with and influenced by power (Martinez-Roldan, 2005), which fits the conclusion of some research that the representation of China in the United States has been influenced by the U.S.-China relationship (e.g., Jespersen, 1996; Mackerras, 1999). Critical discourse analysis, moreover, draws upon the work of Foucault and emphasizes the socially constructed nature of truth. This emphasis is in line with Saidian debunking of the Western constructed images of the Orient. Assuming that the representation of China in the United States, fluctuating with the U.S.-China relationship (Jespersen, 1996; Mackerras, 1999), has influenced “Made in China” participants’ attitudes towards China,

I take the political power stance of critical discourse analysis and chose it as the method of data analysis.

One critique often made of critical discourse analysis is that social and political ideologies are projected onto the data rather than being revealed through the data (Rogers, 2004). This means that analysts simply confirm what they originally suspected. It is criticized as “a tool that someone ‘in the know’ uses to examine the words of someone who is less aware, less critically ‘evolved,’ thus reproducing the power relations that critical discourse analysis is meant to disrupt” (Lewis, 2006, p. 359). In this research I take this charge seriously and set out to explore the relationship between discourse practices, rather than simply demonstrate how power is used through linguistic analysis of texts produced by the students, while having the exposure of power relations as one goal. By doing so critical discourse analysis helps me and instructors of similar study abroad programs to understand the way in which students make and remake themselves as they go through complexly interwoven ideologies before and through a study abroad program. The focus of this research is to use critical discourse analysis to reveal how the participants come to certain perceptions of China rather than how their perceptions are embedded in macro-hegemonic structures.

Critical discourse analysis tool: discourse model

The critical discourse analysis tool this study uses is discourse model (Fairclough, 1992). Discourse models are defined by Gee (1999) as “‘theories’ (storylines, images, explanatory frameworks) that people hold, often unconsciously, and use to make sense of the world and their experiences in it” (p. 61). They are out of one’s taken for granted assumptions about what is typical or normal (Gee, 1999). Gee (1999) claims that even

theories in science are discourse models useful for some purposes and not others, which is also in line with Foucauldian theory of socially constructed truth. Part of the function of discourse models is to “set up what count as central, typical cases, and what count as marginal, non-typical cases” (Gee, 1999, p. 72). Social injustice will occur if some unfair, dismissive or derogatory assumptions about other cultures are implanted (Gee, 1999). In this study discourse models emerged from the analysis of the participants’ spoken and written texts. I coded and categorized all the related models first and then chose the most recurrent ones and the discrepant or negative ones.

Validity and Reliability

Merriam’s (2009) suggestions to promote the validity and reliability of qualitative research are used as strategies to enhance the validity and reliability of this research. The eight strategies offered by Merriam (2009) are triangulation, member checking, adequate engagement in data collection, researcher’s reflexivity, peer review, a detailed account of the methods, procedures, and decision points in carrying out the study, thick descriptions, and maximum variation. The following section describes the way in which I tried to maximize the validity and reliability of the research at various stages of the research.

Multiple methods, i.e., survey, interview and travel journal analysis used in this study triangulate the emerging data. Inclusion of the participants’ feedback into my analysis of their spoken and written texts would ensure the plausibility of the interpretation. My self-reflection upon my assumptions, worldview, possible bias and influence over the data was noted and considered in every step of data collection and analysis. To obtain peer reviews I reviewed my data and analyses with several members of my doctoral cohort and writing group during the stages of research design, data

collection, data analysis and writing up. Faculty and my dissertation committee members' critique and feedback are also valuable to check on my own assumptions or flaws in logic or methods. Maximum variation sampling this study used to sample interviewees deliberately included discrepant cases and reduced possible bias as much as possible. With no chance to participate in the study abroad with "Made in China," I conducted in-depth interviews to try to offset the lack of observation and participation on the site of "Made in China" in this study. The pictures the interviewees provided also helped me to contextualize and visualize their experiences.

In terms of reliability, the methods, procedures, and decision points in carrying out the study were detailed to enhance the reliability of the study. Rich description was utilized in data analysis as a way to "provide enough description to contextualize the study such that readers will be able to determine the extent to which their situations match the research context, and, hence, whether findings can be transferred" (Merriam, 2009, p. 229). Maximum variation sampling that purposefully seeks variation or diversity in sample selection allowed for a greater range of application of the findings by consumers of the research (Merriam, 2009).

The chapter provides an overview of the epistemological perspective underpinning the research and research process involving multiple methods. The research design, data collection techniques, and analysis all worked to minimize the limitations to the study. The following chapters are findings from data analysis and discussion about these findings.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

“I thought I knew how life in China would be like, or at least should be like, but I didn’t.

Everything I knew or saw was different from my first-hand account experiences—of course, there is so much more to an image...there is so much more to China than the Great Wall, the One-Child Policy or its history.”

-- Journal 5, entry 19

In chapter four, the results from the study design presented in chapter three are shared. This study was conducted to answer the following three research questions:

- 1) What had the “Made in China” program participants known about China before they studied abroad in China? What were their attitudes toward China then?
- 2) What did the program participants think of the China they saw while they were in China as compared to the China they had known before?
- 3) For those whose attitudes towards China changed, what influenced them to change?

This chapter involves two parts, the identification of major themes and data analysis related directly to the three research questions. The first part provides an overview of how five major themes emerged from the students’ journals, the survey and interviews. The second part presents the findings related to each research question and draws upon the course syllabi and curriculum, journals, the survey and the interview data.

Data analysis of this research began with reading, coding and categorizing of student journals. While reading carefully through the 26 journals kept by the 2011 “Made in China” participants during their trip in China, I transcribed portions related to the topic and research questions of the study, and identified some recurring themes. Then

transcribed journals were grouped together by date and by description of the same activities in order to compare students' reactions to the same activities and phenomena. To ascertain individual differences and prepare for interview questions, I also grouped each student's journal entries spread in all the 26 journal books together according to the handwriting styles of each students and double checked with the record of authorship kept by the instructor of the program. Five major themes emerged when students' narratives were reviewed event by event. The themes can be described as follows: surprise (91¹), Chinese people (36), face (35), "This is China" moment (25), and government control (23). What emerged with the themes of "surprise" and " 'This is China' moment" answers research question one about the participants' pre-trip attitudes towards China. Their impression of Chinese people, use of "face" and government control to interpret their experiences in China answers research question two about the students' interpretations of the China they saw during the trip and the China they had expected before the trip. All the five themes help answer research question three about what leads to student attitude change during the trip.

Research Question One:

What had the "Made in China" program participants known about China before they studied abroad in China? What were their attitudes toward China then?

Surprise

Surprise is a feeling that often occurs when people encounter something unexpected. All 26 students expressed different levels of surprise: they were "amazed," "shocked,"

¹ The numbers after each theme indicate the number of journal entries that discussed the respective themes

“astonished,” and “astounded” at some point during their trip in China. The surprise students expressed in their journals often reflected what they had known about China and their attitude toward China before their trip. What surprised the participants the most were Beijing and Shanghai, the bamboo industry and the reality that Chinese are not brainwashed.

Surprises	Times
<u>Shanghai</u> So developed (24) Trains (4) Futuristic Shanghai (5) Shanghai Deep Water Port (3) Surprisingly clean and well organized Shanghai old neighborhood (1) The highest building designed by Japanese (8)	44
<u>Beijing</u> Modern (1) Tsinghua University (5) Students here play! (1) Bikes unlocked (1) The campus is nice! (1) Tsinghua campus is similar to that of the UMN (1) Modern and hip 798 art district (4) Traffic is less crowded than expected (1) The vendors speak English so well (1) Surprisingly clean and well organized Beijing (3) Clean and neat public transportation (2)	20
<u>The Bamboo Industry</u> Anji, the countryside (11) Technologically-Advanced bamboo industry (12) Working conditions at Chinese factories (10)	33
<u>Chinese have freedom of expression!</u> Artist’s Open criticism of government at 798 (4) Chinese lecturers’ open criticism of the government (6) Chinese can access blocked websites (1)	11

<u>Other</u>	
One child policy	1
Chinese women (2)	2
Seeing African-American arts in China	1
Negative portrait of Americans in the propaganda poster museum	1
Mooncake in Haagan Daz	1
Minorities in China	1
Good experience at the hospital in China	1
So much more about China than what she knew before	1

Table 2: Surprises

Beijing and Shanghai

The city

“Made in China” participants spent 14 days in Beijing and five days in Shanghai. The two cities differed from their expectations in various ways. In Beijing, they lived on the campus of Tsinghua University, and they had some chances to travel around the city. The campus, the Chinese students and the city of Beijing all surprised them.

The development of Beijing was at a scale beyond their expectations:

“When we got outside of the university gate, the size and quality of the building[s] surprised me. I was not expecting Beijing to be this developed. Walking through the smaller neighbor[hood], I realized how much China had grown and modernized” (Journal 17, entry 1).

This writer’s expectations of a Chinese city and Beijing in this case lag behind what it is today. By saying that “I realized how much China had grown and modernized” (Journal 17, entry 1) does not mean that he or she had witnessed what China was 20 years ago. This surprise was from the contrast between this student’s expectations of China’s development and modernization and what China actually looked like. “The size and quality of the building[s] surprised” this student, which shows that this participant was expecting smaller and fewer buildings in Beijing.

Another student was surprised by how less crowded the train station in Shanghai was than expected:

“Today we arrived in Shanghai via the overnight train. I immediately was surprised with what I saw and for my first day in the city, many of my perceptions were destroyed. The first thing that I saw when getting off the train was a vast station which had much less [sic] people than I expected. ...” (Journal 18, entry 13).

The expectation of China to be crowded and not highly developed and modern is shown in the above quote. Seeing Shanghai “destroyed” the participants’ prior perceptions (Journal 18, entry 13). The word “destroy” instead of “change” indicates how wide the gap is between this student’s expectation of Shanghai and experience in Shanghai.

Surprise at the scale of Chinese cities and the density of high building in these cities could also be caused by the students’ limited experience with cities of this scale. The following student’s surprises at Shanghai could be caused by limited information about China and limited experience with cosmopolitan cities:

“As we drove into the city, I was in far [sic] even more surprises. I was shocked by how many skyscrapers we saw and just how modern the city was. I have never seen a skyline as vast as Shanghai’s” (Journal 18, entry 13).

Having “never seen a skyline as vast as Shanghai’s” indicates that this person was not solely inadequately informed about urban development in China but also that of the world.

Similar quotes like the two above are quite common in the student journals. Beijing and Shanghai are the two most developed cities in China. The students, however, did not exempt them from their general attitude towards China, i.e., a country with only some

degree of modernity and development. Limited life experience with cities with such high density of high building might be another reason for the students' surprises at the scale of Beijing and Shanghai. Chinese cities are quite different from American cities and many other Western country cities in terms of size, population and the density of buildings and traffic. Considering the ubiquity of media and the Internet, this kind of surprise, however, still reflects the finding that the students are informed about China as well as the world outside of the United States in a highly limited way. Study abroad presents them with a valuable opportunity to witness what is absent from the discourse they are familiar with in the United States, such as the level of development in big Chinese cities as one student wrote:

“We hear about the size of China [and] the increasing global impact China has on the world, but you really do not have a firm grasp on what this truly feels and looks like until you experience it first hand” (Journal 17, entry 1).

Another thing thought provoking about the above quote is not only that this student had known about China's development, but also that the key words of this student's knowledge were “the size of China” and “the increasing global impact” of China. These two images of China speak more about what the economic rise of a large country means to the world. Being large is always a typical image of China, indicating that China is a huge market, has a huge pool of cheap labor and consumes huge amount of energy. “The increasing global impact” of China as a rising power is one of the most important reasons behind the theory of “China threat” in the United States (Al-Rodhan, 2007; Kagan, May 15, 2005). “A Public Opinion Survey of Canadians and Americans about China (Ipsos-Reid Report, 2005) shows that 31 per cent of Americans believed that “China will soon

dominate the world,” and 54 per cent believed that “the emergence of China as a superpower is a threat to world peace” (p. 1). China is portrayed from the perspective of how it will affect the United States, which is true for international news about other countries in the United States as well (Gans, 1979). This student did not regard rising China as a threat but the image of China reflected from the quote accentuated two of the key words, the theory of “China threat”, i.e., large and increasingly influential. In this quote this student also acknowledged the significance of study abroad, i.e., it helped them “experience it first hand” and “have a firm grasp on what this truly feels and looks” (Journal 17, entry 1). It is also clear that this person felt having a firm grasp on what he or she had learned about in the United States, not how Chinese and China felt about being large and rising. It is a process of confirming old knowledge and attitude instead of discovering the local perspective.

Tsinghua campus and its students

Besides the city of Beijing itself, the campus of Tsinghua University and the students there also surprised “Made in China” participants. The well-planned landscape of the university surprised some students. One of them wrote:

“There have been several things in the past day that have shocked me and shocked me in a different way than I thought China would. One thing about the physical university was the amount of green space and tree there are. The actual campus is very nice and there are trees planted every five feet or so” (Journal 14, entry 1).

The fact and image of China having had severe problems of pollution and deforestation have been reported widely in the world. China the biggest greenhouse gas emitter, is believed to be trying to evade responsibility to limit emissions by the United States and

has been under constant criticism (Broder, 2011, December 7). So it is not surprising that the student was surprised by the green space and density of trees on Tsinghua campus.

Besides the physical campus, people and bikes at Tsinghua also surprised some students. One student was surprised to see students on Tsinghua campus playing soccer, and wrote:

“I agree that it feels like we are still [on] a campus in the U.S. especially with the students outside playing soccer and the club activities that take place on campus. I guess I thought it was all studies here and no play. I was wrong! ☺” (Journal 1, entry 1, response).

This student’s feeling of still being on an American campus was especially intrigued by seeing “students outside playing soccer and the club activities.” The big difference between American Universities and Chinese universities in this student’s eyes was whether their students are active outside of the classroom. The stereotype of all-work-no-play Chinese students had been this student’s expectation of Chinese university students. Another student was surprised to see unlocked bikes on campus:

“I’ve always thought the Chinese are very cautious of their property/assets, but I was very surprised to see the bikes unlocked” (Journal 11, entry 1).

The sense of security Tsinghua University students felt about their unlocked bikes was not what this student expected. This surprise could be caused by either this person’s impression of China being insecure or experience in the United States of locking bikes on campus. Either way, the secure side of China was not in this student’s image of China.

The train

After two weeks in Beijing, the students took a high-speed train from Beijing to Shanghai. The train turned out to be “way better” and a big surprise to many students (Journal 9, entry 12). One of them wrote:

“Going into the trip on a train, I was expecting very poor conditions and being very condensed into a small area. I was very surprised when [we] boarded the train and found out how nice and spacious the accommodations were” (Journal 26, entry 11).

This student’s expectation of a Chinese train was very clearly stated in the quote, i.e., “very poor conditions” and crowded. This kind of train actually still exists in China. A Chinese train is usually compartmented into soft class sleeper, hard class sleeper, soft class seats and hard class seats sleeper. On the same train, one can find these different conditions. Millions of students and migrant workers in China have to take the hard seats or stand on the train to go home during winter vacations. China’s modern, high-speed trains, a stark contrast to the train the student were expecting, however, do exist in China and have been enjoyed by millions of Chinese people too. The single-faceted nature of this student’s expectation of China can be found in many “Made in China” participants’ surprises and “This is China” moments.

Shanghai Deep-Water Port

In Shanghai besides the city itself the students were very surprised by the Deep-Water Port. The Shanghai Deep-Water Port is an important transport hub for the Yangtze River region and one of China’s most important gateways for foreign trade (Shanghai International Port Group, not available). The annual import and export trade through this port accounts for almost a quarter of China’s total foreign trade (Shanghai International Port Group, not available). The Deep-Water Port is also the largest container port in the

world (Shanghai International Port Group, not available). Visiting this port was intended to give students a perspective on the scale of foreign trade in China. The scale of the port turned out to be such an eye-opener. One student wrote, “The port of Shanghai is an incredible human achievement. The idea of building a road 25 miles into the ocean still is hard to comprehend” (Journal 14, entry 14), and “[t]he vast amount of activity at the port was mesmerizing” (Journal 14, entry 14, response). The size of the Deep-Water Port was eye-opening to the students and visiting the port substantiated the concept of “Made in China” in terms of its scale, which students might only know with numbers before.

Japanese built the highest building in Shanghai

The highest building in Shanghai built by the Japanese also turned out to be a big surprise for many students. The highest building in Shanghai is the Shanghai World Financial Center. It has the world’s highest observation deck and is next to the former tallest building in Shanghai, which was built by the Chinese. The students were amazed by how “futuristic” (Journal 20, entry 13) the architecture was, as well as the fact that it was built by the Japanese, given the historical enmity and diplomatic disputes between China and Japan. One student wrote:

“The Shanghai World Financial Center was amazing. I was very impressed with the architecture and how futuristic it is. How the Japanese were able to build it right next to the previous tallest building in Shanghai baffles me” (Journal 12, entry 13).

Another student was baffled too:

“I still think it is ironic that it was built by the Japanese taller than China’s tallest building, and looks like a blade. The relationship/ history between China and Japan is always an interesting topic for me” (Journal 20, entry 13).

The Chinese-Japanese relationship was expected to be strained to the extent that the Chinese would not allow the Japanese to build the highest building in China. In the eyes of the second student, the building “looks like a blade”. Which reflect the student’s image of Chinese-Japanese relationship, i.e., hatred and violence against each other.

Discussion

The surprises presented above reveal what these students’ expectations of China and Chinese people were before their trip to China. They expected big Chinese cities to be crowded and less modernized, the Chinese university campus less green and safe, Chinese students nerdy and less active, Chinese people in general more nationalistic in terms of their attitudes toward Japan. Their expectations of China were a “less” and a far different version of China than the China they saw and experienced. When it comes to the Chinese-Japanese relationship, they had a simplistic idea of how Chinese should feel about Japan and the Japanese, and did not expect to see and understand that the Japanese built the highest building of China. These perceptions of China as “less” and single-dimensional are the result of the students’ lack of information or their exposure to outdated or unbalanced information about China in the United States. These perceptions also echo the discourse model of China in the discourse with which students are familiar.

The survey and interviews show that the students’ three common sources of information about China are movies, history classes, and the news media. The discourse model of China that appears in American pop culture is “about as modern as Arthurian England” (Poniewozik, 2008, July 31). In Hollywood movies about China Kung Fu, ancient civilization and “exotic” culture are big selling points. Recent box office hits with a Chinese theme or setting like *Kung Fu Panda*, *Mulan*, and *Crouching Tiger, Hidden*

Dragon, were all set in pre-industrial China (Poniewozik, 2008, July 31). If one learned about China from Hollywood movies, his attitude towards China would be very likely skewed because China is seldom depicted as a modern country in these movies.

School textbooks, which the students had identified as another major source of learning about China, also turned out to be very limiting as Kulacki (2000) has proved in his research. To see how China is represented in history textbooks in the U.S, the social studies textbooks and supplementary reading textbooks for Asian Studies used in a public school in the St. Paul district of Minnesota were evaluated. In these textbooks the modern history of China received less detailed treatment than ancient history. This recent history, moreover, is presented as bearing the imprint of violence and savagery on a massive scale rather than the imprint of modernization: the Boxer Rebellion (1900), the Second Sino-Japanese War (1936–1945), the rise of Communist China (1949), the Great Leap Forward (1958–1962), the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), and the Tiananmen Square Event (1989). China in the 21st century is not in these textbooks. Besides textbook, the school activities about China are also mainly about the traditional festivals of China, such the Chinese New Year celebration with dragon dance. Learning about a country's tradition and history is very important to understand the country and why the country is where it is today. If the students are not informed about where the country is today, the learning of history and tradition loses half of its meaning, and can be misleading. The students' expectation of China rested on the images of these school textbooks had presented. There is a void of where China is now in these images, and the void is reflected in the "Made in China" participants' surprises and "This is China" moments.

As Benjamin and Adorno (Lonitz, 1999) point out history is a documentation of civilization as well as barbarism. This rule applies to the media, another important source of learning about China indicated in the survey, as well. Human rights issues such as the Tibet issue, the Tiananmen Square Event and arbitrary government are topics heatedly discussed in the United States media about China (Ash, 2009). The economic progress of China, which is often discussed in the news, however, frequently serves as a background to many new problems such as the environmental crisis, the widening gap between the rich and the poor, and sweatshop working conditions. “Made in China” participants all knew that China is much more economically developed than it was before, but none of those who had not previously been to China had a clear idea about how developed China was. None of their surprises was that China was *less* developed than they had thought. All of them were surprised that China was more developed than they had realized.

Besides human rights issues in China, the media “should be writing more about the other stories that make up China’s complex unfolding drama” (Ash, 2009). The students’ understanding of Chinese-Japanese relations also reflects the one-sidedness of the reports about China in the American media. A search of Chinese-Japanese relations² in *The New York Times* finds that hostility and historical tension between China and Japan is the most persisting topic (Figure 5). The Japanese invasion and occupation of China in the 1930s and the territorial dispute between the two countries in 2010 are the most intensively reported events. There were 18 articles about the territorial dispute concerning Diao Yu Island, also known as the Senkaku Islands in Japan, between China and Japan in 2010. An evaluation of the 18 journals finds that they are mostly thoroughly fact-checked

² The key words used in this search are Chinese-Japanese relations, Sino-Japanese relations and Japanese-Chinese relations.

pieces. Readers of these articles can definitely learn about Chinese-Japanese relations, but they only learn about one facet of the relations between China and Japan, i.e., dispute and tension. This one-sidedness of understanding is the primary reason many “Made in China” students were so surprised that Japanese built the highest building in China.

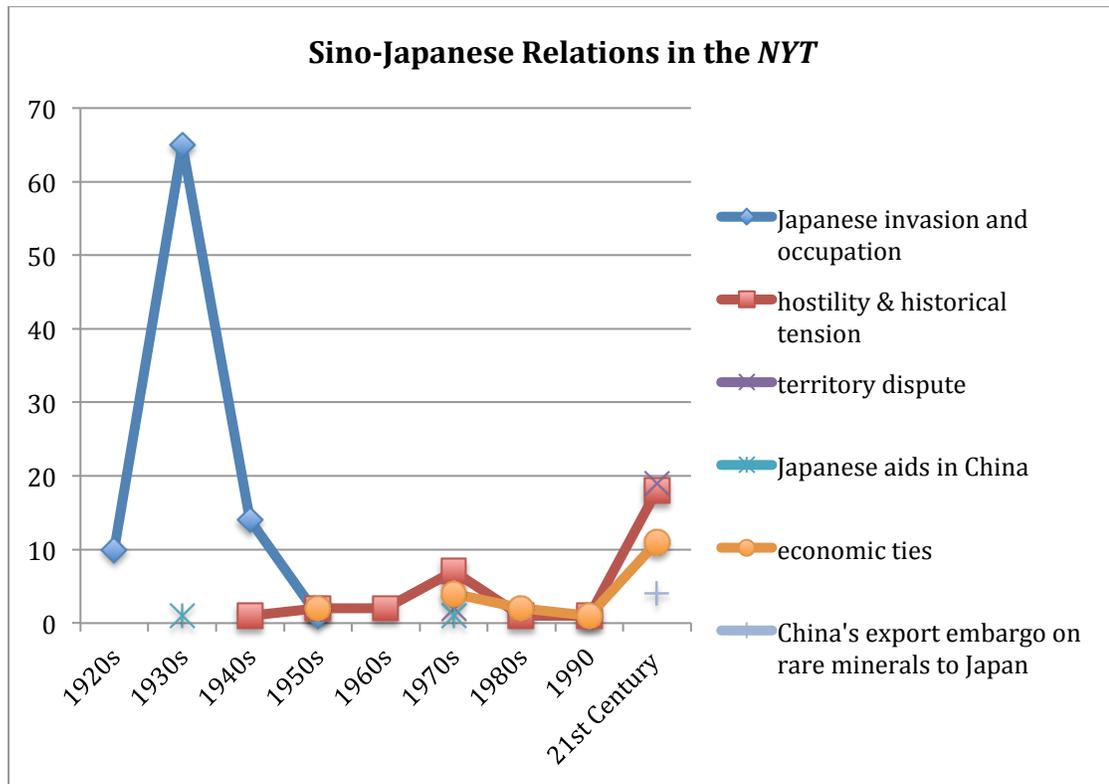


Figure 5: Chinese-Japanese Relations in *The New York Times*

Students who found the highest building in China built by Japanese surprising did not understand that the Chinese-Japanese relationship is complex and multi-faceted. Historically and diplomatically the relationship has been strained, culturally it has been friendly and communicative, and economically it has been very active. Built by Mori Building of Japan, Shanghai World Financial Center is not the only Japanese contribution to and involvement in Chinese events. The general costume designer of the 2008 Summer Olympics opening ceremony was Eiko Ishioka, a Japanese fashion designer. One of the most popular Ping-Pong Players in China is Fukuhara Ai, a Japanese citizen, who was

also one of the Olympic torchbearers for the Beijing Olympic Games. SMAP, one of the most popular Japanese boys bands performed at the 2012 Shanghai Chinese Spring Festival Gala, which was broadcast nationwide in China. Kato Yoshikazu, a Japanese critic and commentator on China, Japan, and Chinese-Japanese relations, publishes his column to many major Chinese media, and has more than 1.4 million followers in his *Weibo* (<http://www.weibo.com/u/1680902912>), the Chinese version of Twitter. The Chinese-Japanese relationship is known for being tumultuous and strained. Japanese products of high quality and Japanese people of talents, however, are very respected and popular in China. The two countries have been closely connected in their economies. China supplanted the United States as Japan's biggest export market in 2009, and China has been Japan's largest import source since 2002 and largest trading partner since 2007 (Masaki, 2010, January 27). Japan and China also help each other in response to devastating natural disasters, such as the 2008 Sichuan earthquake in China and the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan. The news media portrait of China-Japan relationship in the United States misses all the complicated and multi-faceted nature of communication between the two countries, and explains why the students were surprised by the fact that the Japanese built the highest building in China.

The students' three main sources of information about China indicated in the survey explain why the students were so surprised by China. The lack of an updated and balanced narrative about China in the dominant discourse in the United States failed the students in their formal school learning and in their informal learning about China, according to this study.

The bamboo industry

Visiting bamboo factories was an important part of the “Made in China” trip. The instructor wanted the students to substantiate the concept of “Made in China” through visiting different manufacturing stages of bamboo products in Anji County, Zhejiang. Anji County, the bamboo factories and the bamboo products all turned out to be big surprises for the students.

Anji County surprised many students by its size and modern look. “It’s far from the sleepy town” they had expected (Journal 26, entry 15). One student was amazed that “100% of children here in Anji are in school” (Journal 2, entry 15). Another student described his or her similar expectation of Anji in a way quite representative of other students’ surprises of Anji:

“I also thought it would be a much smaller village, with cots for beds, no air conditioning and tons of farms. I was also pleasantly surprised when we saw large buildings, shopping malls and air conditioned building[s]” (Journal 26, entry 15, response).

Like many students’ expectations of Beijing and Shanghai, Anji was expected to be less developed than it is. The images brought up in this student’s journal, “cots for beds,” non-air-conditioned buildings, and “tons of farms” are not groundless. Many villages in China are like this. The fact that none of the 26 students had actually expected a Chinese rural town to be modern indicates that before seeing Anji they did not realize that some rural areas of China are quite developed. Again, their knowledge is skewed.

Besides Anji County where the bamboo factories were located, the quality of the bamboo products was beyond the students’ expectations:

“As I walked through the shop after the production I was shocked by the high quality the materials were. The fabrics were very soft and felt like a mix between cotton and silk” (Journal 16, entry 15).

This shock could be because this writer did not realize this kind of material existed or it might be that this writer did not expect to see this kind of high quality in China. The bamboo factories also surprised the students by their working conditions. One student wrote:

“I had the impression that Chinese factories were barbaric and not good for their workers. I was pleasantly surprised by how good the workers had it at the factories we saw” (Journal 6, entry 17, response).

Another student wrote:

“The working condition of the people seems to be better than I imagined. They don’t seem miserable working there and the space inside the warehouse wasn’t bad at all” (Journal 4, entry 17).

“Barbaric” and “miserable” are two very negative words that many students had used to describe the working conditions of Chinese factories they had expected to see. The sweatshop image of Chinese factories has been ingrained in these students’ minds. Even if some of the factories they had visited were not standardly equipped (Journal 19, entry 17), many students were still “pleasantly surprised” as the above quoted two.

Discussion

“Barbaric” and “miserable” are the two key words that defined the image of Chinese factories in the minds of the two writers and many other students who were surprised by the bamboo factories they had seen. As the image of Chinese villages they had before the “Made in China” trip, this “barbaric” and “miserable” image of Chinese

factories is not all imaginary. Unhealthy working conditions in Chinese factories are often in the Chinese media too. About one million workers in China are suffering from black lung disease caused by the inhalation and accumulation of dust according to Sohu (2005), one of the major online media in China. “Barbaric” and “miserable” could be the right words to describe many Chinese factories. Site visits during “Made in China” though, present a different version of Chinese factories. They are not easy to be found in the American media but they do exist in China where both the government and private enterprises have realized the importance of moving from labor-intensive and energy-driven industries to high-value and technology-intensive production for the sustainability of economic development in China.

The focus of developing science and technology-intensive industry has been formalized in the Chinese government’s 11th Five-Year Plan (2006-2010) and 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015) to bolster a more sustainable economy and create better jobs (Barboza, 2008; Naughton, 2005; *Xinhua News*, 2006, March 16 & 2012, March 16). The bamboo industry with its annual output value of almost three million U.S. dollars is just one example of this emerging economic development trend (*People’s Daily*, 2000; Zhang, 2010). According to *Research Report on Chinese High-Tech Industries* (2009), China’s spending on research and development has increased dramatically in recent years and it has become the world’s largest producer for traditional biotech products such as vaccines, penicillin, and Vitamin C, ranks third in planting transgene plants, and is the first in biotechnology patents growth. China is also considered to be one of the world’s leading countries in the industrialization of nanotechnology (U.S. China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2009). To move from labor-intensive and energy-driven industries

to high-value technology-intensive production, the Chinese government has used incentives to encourage companies to innovate, and discouraged low-end manufacturers from operating in southern China, where the labor-intensive factories have always been located (Barboza, 2008). World-class brands such as Wal-Mart that have outsourced labor-intensive production to China are now searching for alternatives in lower-cost countries, like India, Vietnam or Bangladesh (Barboza, 2008). Moreover, the rapid economic development in China has driven up wages and reduced the incentives for workers to migrate to work in the coastal factories (Pomfret, 2010, January 28).

The sweatshop-style Chinese factories persistently reported in the United States media still exist in China; the new trend of science and technology-intensive industry is comparatively new and less reported. The following figures (6-8) are developed from key words searches of *The New York Times* on Chinese factories.

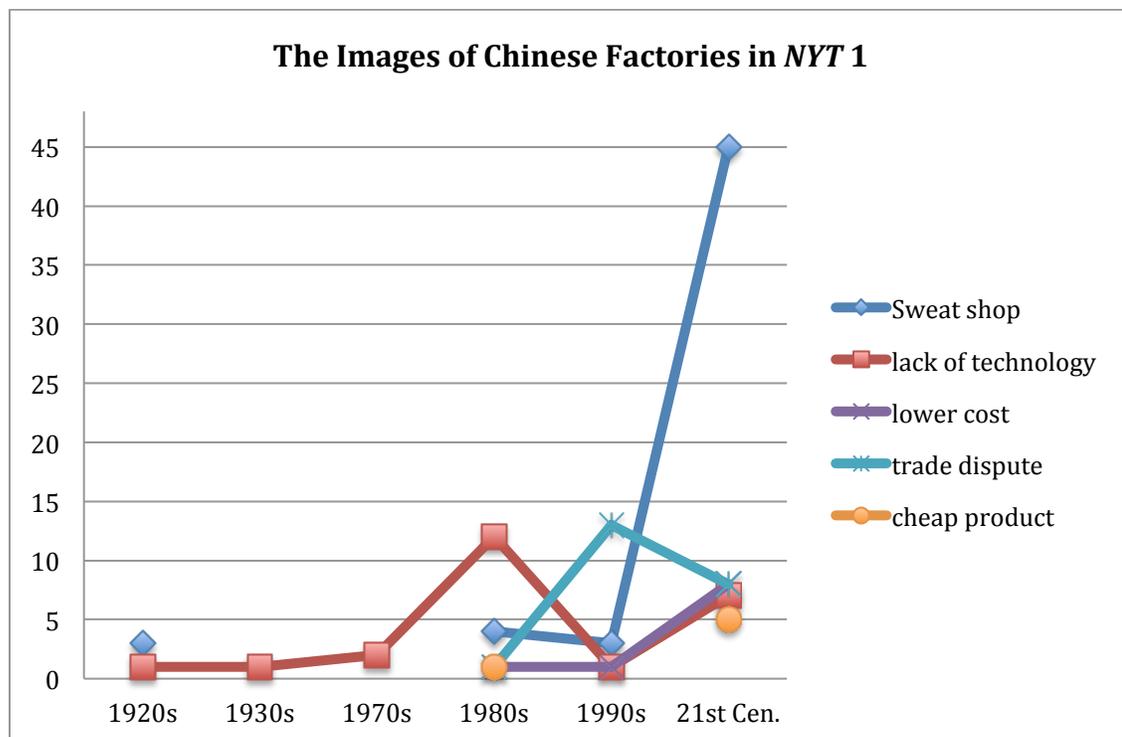


Figure 6: The Image of Chinese Factories in *The New York Times* 1

The image of technologically backward Chinese factories persists through history except during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s when there was no news about the industrial development in China in *The New York Times* (Figure 6). The image of Chinese sweatshops was dominant in the 1920s; was re-sparked by economic reform and China's industrial rise in the 1980s; and then skyrocketed in the 21st century (Figure 6). China as the world factory of lower cost and cheap products became a trend beginning in the 1980s as more and more Western factories started subcontracting to China, and more and more trade disputes arose between China and the United States (Figure 6) as there are more reports about the industrial development in China. In many articles, "Made in China" is perceived to referred as cheap products such as:

"I expected to see stands offering spices and batteries, women dressed in colorful local costumes making tortillas and men buying (and wearing) the cheapest fashions that Chinese factories have to offer" (Kugel, 2010, September 19).

As China's manufacturing industry started booming in the 1990s, issues such as "huge energy consumption," "environmental pollution," "counterfeiting and violation of intellectual property rights" and "product safety" permeated the reports about Chinese factories in *The New York Times* (Figure 7). The concern that "America is losing jobs to China" has also arisen in the last decade. Besides the longtime reputation of being backward sweatshops, Chinese factories have had the reputation of polluting the world, consuming huge amounts of energy, producing cheap knockoffs and poisoning their consumers as well as their pets.

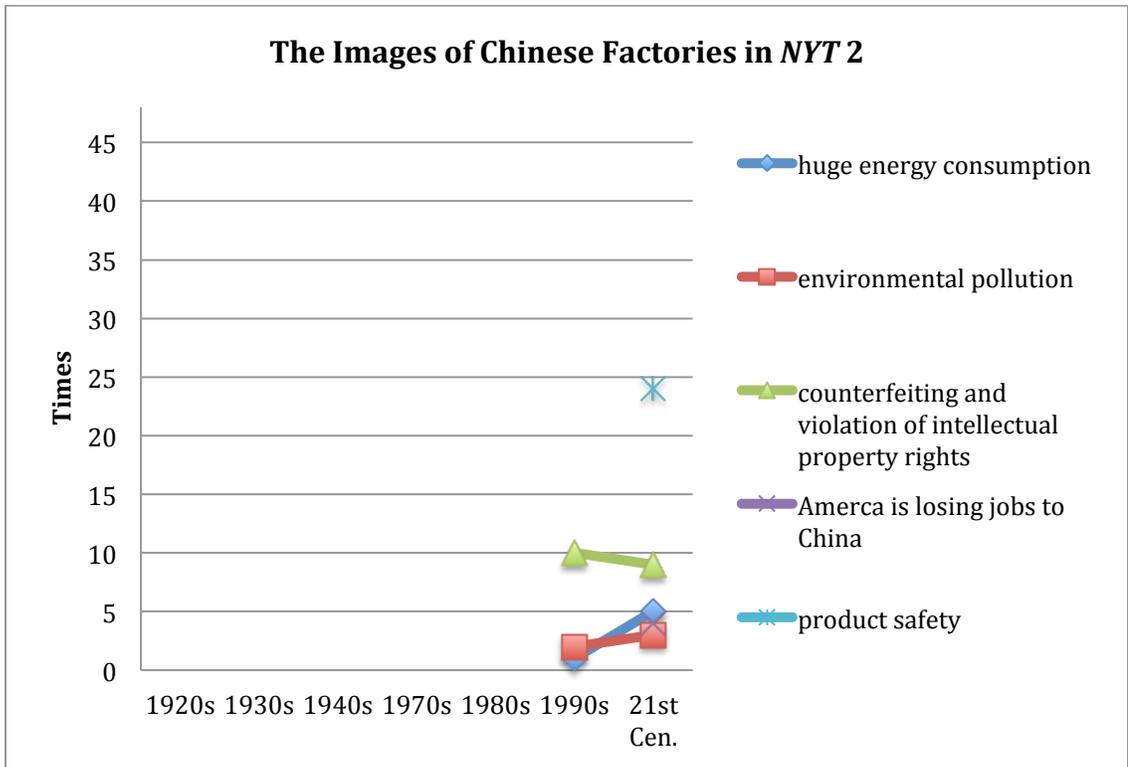


Figure 7: The Image of Chinese Factories in *The New York Times* 2

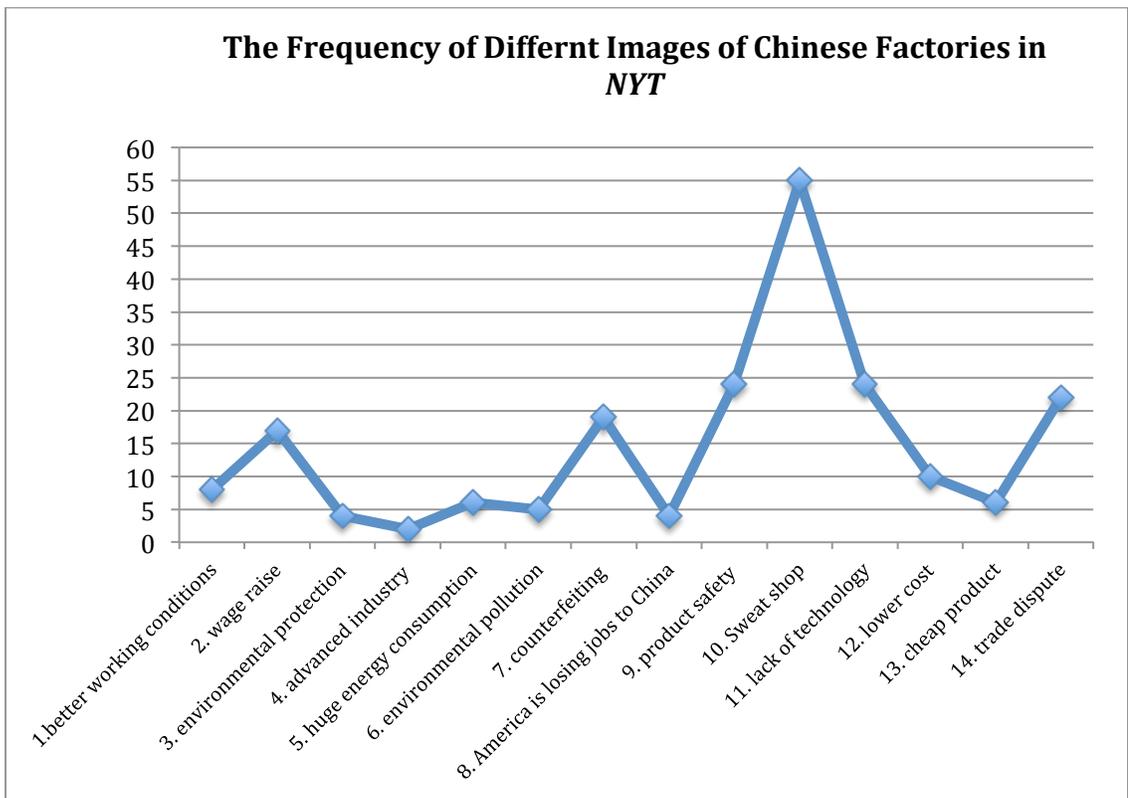


Figure 8: The Image of Chinese Factories in *The New York Times* 3

The New York Times has also caught the new development trend of Chinese industry such as wage raise, working condition improvement, increasing environmental awareness and advanced technology and product quality (Figure 8). The positive and neutral images, however, are still of a much lower frequency than the negative ones of Chinese factories as shown in figure 8. The image of Chinese factories being sweatshops, lacking technology and producing cheap products persists and is the image most frequently reported in *The New York Times*. This image also persisted and was frequently present in the “Made in China” participants’ journals. Their surprises at the working conditions and technology of the bamboo factories came from their expectations of China, which at least partially originated from the media in the United States, such as *The New York Times*.

Chinese people have some freedom of expression!

Three weeks was too short a time to gain an understanding of the Chinese people, especially, when all but two of the “Made in China” participants had limited or no Chinese language skills. Three weeks, however, was long enough for students to draw a sketch of the Chinese people. Based on their time-limited observations and language-limited interactions with the Chinese people, the students’ descriptions of them captures the essence of the Chinese people in their own minds and reflects their own patterns of reasoning about China and Chinese people. The image of Chinese people that emerged from the student texts reflect what the students had previously thought of them and how that contrasted with the Chinese people they saw and met during their trip. The biggest surprise to them was that Chinese people actually have some freedom of expression.

The impression that Chinese have freedom of speech first came from the lectures the students attended during the trip. One lecture was about the founding of the People's Republic of China and one was about a documentary on the 798 Art District in Beijing. Chen, the lecturer on the founding of the People's Republic of China surprised the students by her criticism of the Chinese government. All nine of the students who mentioned this lecture had very similar comments on Chen actually criticizing the current government of China. Here are two very representative quotes of their comments on Chen's lecture:

"I was very surprised by Professor Chen's lecture on the founding of PRC. There are many parts where she criticized China's ruling government and point[ed] out faults" (Journal 21, entry 8);

"I was surprised when Chen Yaping admitted the giant mistakes of the Communist Party" (Journal 5, entry 9).

As many other students, the two students were not impressed by the content of the lecture as much as the fact that Chen criticized her government. The students were most interested in how she approached the topic. One student wrote:

"Because I have had previous lectures on this subject I was more interested in how she approached the [subject] as well as what information she chose to include. I was surprised [at] how critical she was of the imperial period as well as the Cultural Revolution" (Journal 7, Entry 9).

Having had lectures on the similar topic in the United States, this student focused on whether Chen would hide the mistakes made by her government. This participant's expectation was that she would. That was why this participant was surprised when Chen

did criticize the government. In this student's mind, what had been learned in the United States was of more authority than what Chen had delivered and wanted them to learn in her lecture. That is why this student was using the former to judge the latter.

Besides hearing the Cultural Revolution and the current government being criticized in lectures, students also witnessed the same criticism at 798. 798 Art District is an art complex located in a 50-year old military factory building which was established to showcase Communist friendship and technology cooperation between China and East Germany (798 Space, not available). In the 1980s, these state-owned enterprises underwent a decline and were eventually abandoned. Beginning in 2002, artists and cultural organizations began to divide, rent out and re-make the factory spaces, and had developed them into galleries, art centers, artists' studios, design companies, restaurants, and bars (798 Space, not available). The district is often compared with New York's Soho. After visiting 798, the students watched a documentary about the 798 Art District, had a discussion with its director and visited the art zone. The direct criticism expressed in the art pieces there and the openness of the artists about their attitude towards the Chinese government was beyond the students' expectations. As one of them said, "The art museum was a good eye opener on how Chinese are allowed to express themselves" (Journal 22, entry 6).

The first thing that caught their eyes and astounded them was a statue of a headless Mao (Journal 3, entry 6) (Figure 9). One student wrote:

"I never thought such a thing would be on display in China. I mean you have the man's portrait on Tiananmen Square, and his statue. He's on every bill as well. But

then we go into this art district and you see a headless statue of the man” (Journal 19, entry 6).

This statue made this student not only astonished but also confused. As this individual said Mao is still seemingly worshiped in China, a headless Mao publicly displayed is indeed hard to understand. This statue is also conflicting with the warning they had got from their instructor and Pomfret (2006) about government control in China as one student wrote:

“The statue in the art gallery of headless Mao was astounding. I guess I had the idea from Seth’s comments in class about people being watched in general and from Pomfret’s book, made me think that there was not really freedom for self-expression in art” (Journal 3, entry 6).



Figure 9: Headless Mao. Taken by one interviewee at 798 Art District in Beijing

Headless Mao challenged what the students had already known about China in terms of the government’s control of freedom of expression. Many students’ surprises at it proved again the China they knew to be far simpler than the real Chinese society, which is complicated and multi-dimensional.

Discussion

The Chinese government's tight rein on its media, freedom of speech and protest often grabs headlines in American media and therefore becomes the essence of the discourse model of China. Governmental restraints on freedom of expression are still rampant in China, such as the imprisonment of Xiaobo Liu, the Nobel Prize for Peace Laureate in 2011 and Chen Guangcheng, a Chinese civil rights activist; the blocking of websites like Facebook, Twitter, CNN and Wikipedia; and the expulsion of foreign journalists who flout government rules (Simpson, 2011, March 03) "Made in China" participants also felt the presence of government control during their trip when they could not access Facebook (Interviewee 3). It is not very surprising that direct criticism from the lecturers and the negative connotations expressed in the art pieces at 798 surprised many students because in the United States they had learned about the strong government control in China and they had warnings about this control from various people while in China.

When it comes to the lack of freedom of expression in China, the media in the United States focus more on how the Chinese government has restricted freedom of expression and how activists advocate for it. Common Chinese people and the ways they use to gain information and push the boundaries of their government's restrictions are often missing from the media reports. *Weibo*, the Chinese version of Twitter, is an example. A search of "*Weibo*" in *The New York Times* from the LexisNexis academic database shows that only 15 percent of the articles represent *Weibo* as a forum where the non-activist Chinese people can discuss sensitive issues and offer opinions against their government; 38 percent represent *Weibo* as a forum for activists who were either censored or arrested later for fighting against their government; 31 percent emphasize

censorship the Chinese government has enforced on *Weibo*; 16 percent of the reports view *Weibo* from the perspective of business and as a place for Chinese to vent the pressures of daily-life (Figure 10). What was missing from these news articles and from the “Made in China” participants’ knowledge about freedom of expression in China was the will of Chinese people to access information and express themselves in spite of government control; and the space the government has actually allowed for freedom of expression. Criticism of government is not a rare thing in China any more as long as it does not pose real threats to the one-party system of the government. The government

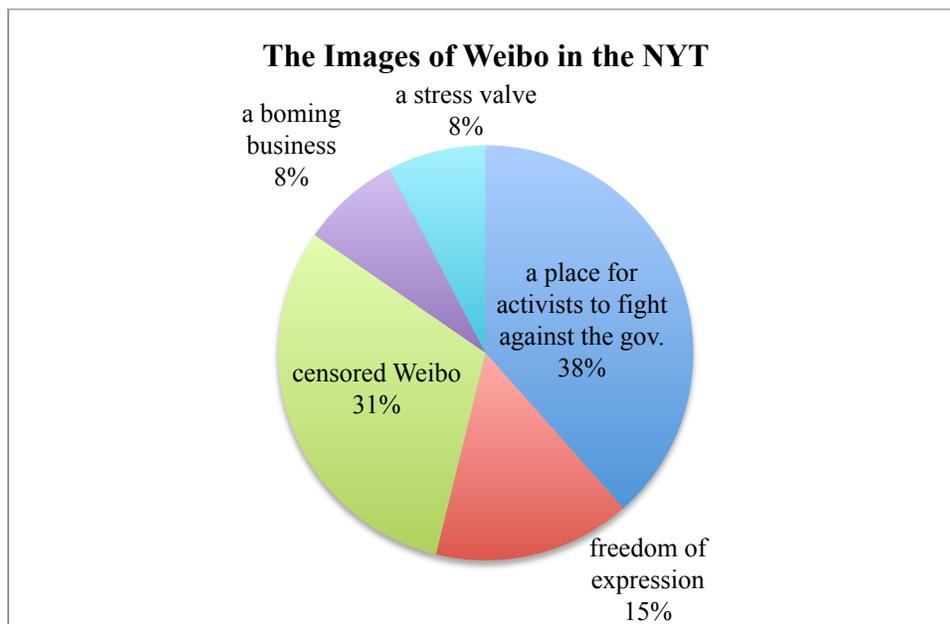


Figure 10: The Image of *Weibo* in *The New York Times*

is also aware that many Chinese use software like Freegate, and virtual private network (VPN)³ to circumvent censors and access blocked websites. Right after Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg’s trip to China in December 2010, one year after Facebook was banned

³ A virtual private network is a secure network that uses primarily public telecommunication infrastructures, such as the Internet, to provide remote offices or traveling users an access to a central organizational network (Wikipedia, virtual private network: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virtual_private_network).

in China, the number of Chinese Facebook users doubled from 300,000 to 700,000 (Wee, 2010).

Besides trying to access the websites blocked by the government, Chinese netizens are also pushing the boundaries of acceptable speech in China, and even pushed the government to react to their online comments. In summer 2011 two public opinion defeats for China's leadership took off on the Internet (Bandurski, December 12, 2011).

Widespread reaction to how the Chinese government dealt with the crashed train in Wenzhou in 2011 on the Internet contributed to the layoff of Wang Yongping, the spokesman of China's Ministry of Railways. He attempted to deny some unofficial reports of this accident posted by micro-bloggers on Sina *Weibo*, the most popular micro-blogging service in China. Micro-bloggers' anger towards Guo Meimei who publicly showed off her luxurious lifestyle and Red Cross connections, pushed the government-run organization to enhance oversight by publicizing information about all donations made to the Red Cross (Zhang, 2012, January 1).

Though government control of freedom of expression is still pervasive, Chinese people are not submissive to it. They keep pushing the boundaries. The government does give some space for the freedom of expression and information. This context makes the candid criticism of government from the lecturers and 798 art district not as bold and surprising as the students thought it was. The inside story of how Chinese people evade their government's control of information and how they can be highly critical of their government is not easy to learn on a three-week trip if there is no pre-trip knowledge about it, especially when none of the non-Chinese participants spoke decent Chinese and had limited communication with local people.

“This is China” moment

Since the instructor asked the students to pay attention to their “This is China” moments during the trip, 54 “This is China” moments were recorded in students’ journals and survey responses. Students’ “This is China” moments happened when their imaginings and expectation of China were met. This moment also happened when they could not explain what they had experienced, and realized they were in a totally different land. Data gathered around this theme answers research questions one and two about the pre-trip China they had previously known and how they reacted to the China they experienced during their trip. Here are the 54 “This is China” moments documented in the students’ texts:

“This is China” moments	Times
Messy traffic	5
Rudeness	4
Kids wearing split pants	3
The presence of government control	3
Style of the lectures: high context, hard to follow	2
Poor working conditions in the factories	2
No American customer service	3
The contrast between old and new worlds	2
People watching	2
Dining manners	2
The lack of dorm amenities	1
Dirty night market with fewer foreigners	1
Urban management officer enforcing laws against unlicensed vendor	1
The Forbidden City and the Great Wall	9
The number of people	1
Rural China	1
Dollar store quality	1
People making things mostly by hand	1
Tiananmen Square	1
“Sold” being the key word	1
Found her lost wallet	1
Chinese dishes	1
Squat toilets	1
Ghost town near Deep Water Port	1

The controversy surrounding much of the modern art unfamiliar to Americans	1
No personal space	1
No toilet paper	1
Strong patriotic attitudes	1

Table 3: “This is China” moments

Out of the 54 “This is China” moments, the students’ expectations of China emerged and are in line with the expectations reflected from their surprises. China was expected to be crowded, less cosmopolitan, more village-like and ancient. The Chinese factories were expected to be labor-intensive and to manufacture cheap products.

One student felt to be really in China at a dirty, narrow and less international area:

“It is full of many similar shops and restaurants; however most of the glitz and glamor was absent. The area was also far more dirty and constricted space wise.... I saw far more local[s] than internationals.... I loved it! It made me feel like I really was in China. This is something I feel had previously been lacking [sic]” (Journal 6, entry 4).

As I have emphasized, China is multidimensional and even self-conflicting. This student apparently was caught in one side of China, i.e., the dirty, crowded and non-international side. “I loved it!” here does not mean this student loves the dirtiness, crowd or having only Chinese around. What was loved at that moment was the sense of justification brought by the part of China that is consonant with this student’s expectation after a long journey from the United States and many “detours” in places with “glitz and glamor.”

Many other students had the similar sense of justification when they saw the part of China resonating with their attitudes towards China. For one student, it is the village:

“Seeing the village was a nice representation of what China is. It’s not skyscrapers and vast cities but a rural agrarian society” (Journal 23, entry 10).

For some, it is the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square and the Great Wall. One interviewee chose a picture of her overseeing the Forbidden City as a picture conjuring up her “This is China” moment because these ancient monuments echo how she had felt about China before her “Made in China” trip. She said:

“I chose this picture because it represents how I felt about China before I went to China because as you can see in this picture there is kind of like a foggy mystical overlay on top of the Forbidden City [and] Tiananmen Square. So it gave a really magical, mystical feel” (Interviewee 3).

The Orientalist image of China is symbolized by these ancient landmarks in China. Students who had this kind of image of China felt excited when they saw them because these exotic places substantiated the China they had learned “through story telling and made-up plays” (Interviewee 3).

For some other students, “This is China” moment was the products found in an American “dollar store:”

“Today’s factory visit was an interesting insight to how bamboo is processed and turned into usable products. However, I wish we would have visited other factories. I think that visiting other types of factories is more appropriate for a class named ‘Made in China.’ Bamboo while big in China is not all that popular in the United States. It would probably be a bit more relevant to us if we managed to visit factories that produce things like the items in dollar stores” (Journal 16, entry 16).

In this students’ eyes the bamboo factories couldn’t represent the technology and quality of Chinese industry, and thus could not represent what “Made in China” is. This student

believed that what was relevant about “Made in China” to Americans was “the items in dollar stores.”

Another two students felt that they were in uptown Minneapolis or New York when they were at 798 art district in Beijing:

“It was cool to see galleries exist in China despite its law. Sometimes I don’t feel like [I am] in China. The art district was kind of like uptown” (Journal 23, entry 5);

“The whole district was very hip and modern. To me it had the feel of some areas in New York or Minneapolis” (Journal 20, entry 6).

The following scene reminded the first student that this was China not in uptown Minneapolis:

“This is when I was reminded I was in Beijing: a guy was selling hats outside his shop, and a guard pulled up in a van and started confiscating his hats. The guy scrambled to grab his merchandise” (Journal 23, entry 5).

The moments of “This is not China” and “This is China” reflected from the above three quotes once again reflected how China has been tagged in the discourse model with which the students are familiar, i.e., violent and suffering people. The cosmopolitan, modern, technologically advanced, and hippy side of China did not fit into this discourse model of China they had known. These images are not congruous with these models, and therefore did not become their “This is China” moments. China in these students’ eyes was backward and nothing “hip and modern” (Journal 20, entry 6). The scene of a guard bullying a vendor fit in their mental map however.

Discussion

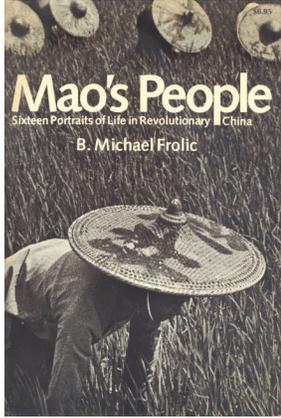
The discourse model can be formed by many elements. Stories from families and friends, textbooks, movies, documentaries, fiction, non-fiction, news and advertisements

can all be source of the images of China in the minds of the “Made in China” participants. The students’ ideas about what China should be could have been obtained through school learning, movie watching for information or entertainment as the students had suggested in the survey. These ideas could also have been obtained implicitly from all the dominant images in the discourses about China in the United States. In order to get an idea about what the dominant images of China in the United States are, I looked into the cover illustration of the books about China on the annual list of Notable Books selected by *The New York Times* from 1980 to 2011. Book covers are designed to draw the attention of potential readers. Books on the list of Notable Books in *The New York Times* are mostly bestsellers. They drew a lot of attention before they got on the list and drew more afterwards (Krakovsky, 2005). If covers of these books are not the only reason for the success of these books, the success of these books spread the images carried by their covers among a larger audience. A summary of the covers of the books about China, which were designed to convey the content of these books as well as to attract readers, shows what sells about China in the United States. The discourse about China reflected in these book covers echoes the “This is China” moments in the minds of the “Made in China” participants.

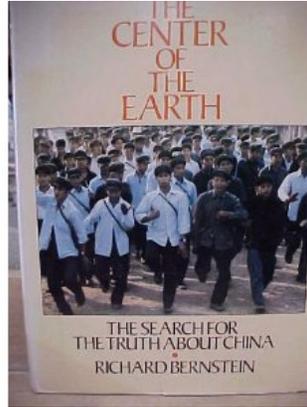
Except for biographies or autobiographies which use the portraits of the subjects of the biography, none of the covers of the other books about China on *The New York Times* Notable Books list present the aspects of China that surprised the students during their trip in China. These book covers are all pictorial, depicting people, objects or scenery. Most of the individual Chinese on these covers look dismayed (1989b, 1994d, 1998, 2000, 2006 & 2008b). Many of the Chinese people in the covers are in Mao suits which are tied

to Mao Zedong and Communism in the Western imagination (1982a, 1982b, 1987b, 1989b, 1993a and 1994d). The closed-up objects and objects in some of these covers, like the pigtail (1999b) and the sword (1987a), the two thermos bottles (2008a), the giant chopsticks (1995) and the oiled paper umbrella (1982b), are strongly suggestive and even stereotypical of China. None of the scenes except the 2006 one with a porter in front of a glittering commercial board depicting the economic development disparity and hard labor in China is about the cosmopolitan side of China. The Forbidden City, which symbolizes the ancient history of China and is identified by many students as their “This is China” moments appeared twice (1988a & 1999a). None of the participants had indicated in the survey that they had read any of these books. The image of China being rural and ancient instead of urban and modern that emerges from these book covers, however, echoes their “This is China” moments. The discourse model of China at the student level echoes that at the institutional level. This image of China is attractive to general Americans and that is why it is on the media. Though they may not have read any of these books about China, the “Made in China” participants are subject to this discourse about China.

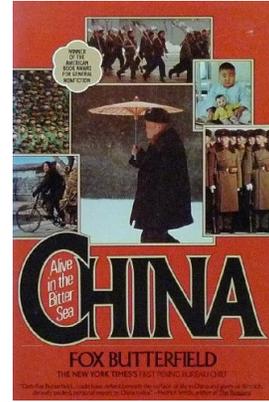
Many of their “This is China” moments are the moments when they realized that China lacked something: the lack of traffic regulation, the lack of manners, the lack of kids’ privacy symbolized by split pants, the lack of customer service, the lack of personal space and the lack of toilet paper. China is a country, which does not have what America has. When students who had “This is China” moments and were intrigued by what China did not have felt “This is China,” they tended to stop analyzing why China was lacking these. For example, none of the five students who claimed the messy traffic as their “This is China” moment had analyzed why traffic in China was hectic in their eyes while the



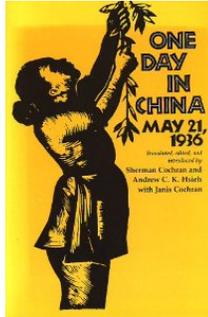
1980



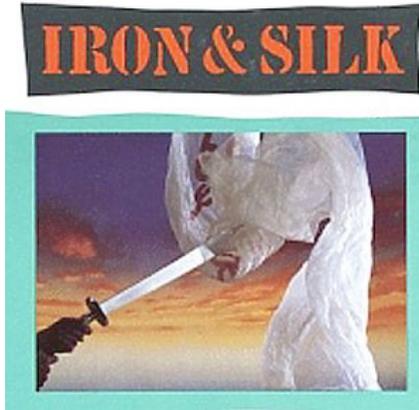
1982a



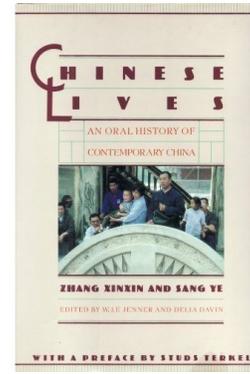
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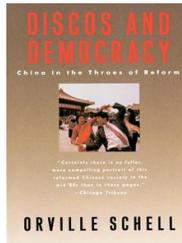
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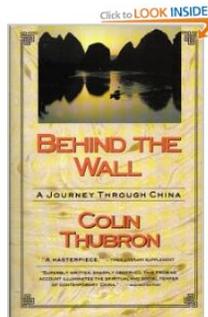
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1987b



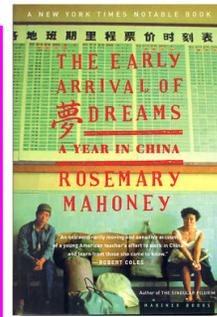
1988a



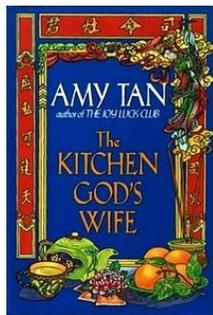
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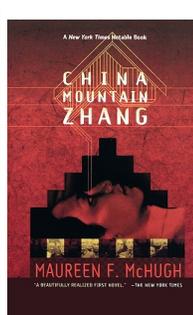
1989a



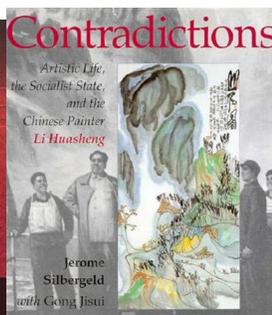
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1991



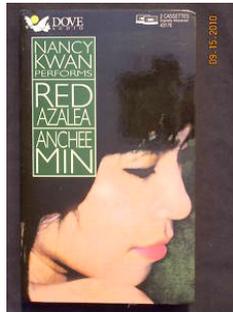
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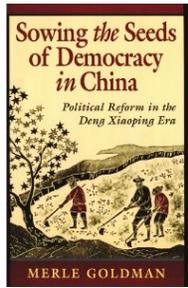
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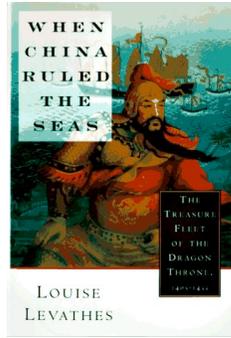
1993b



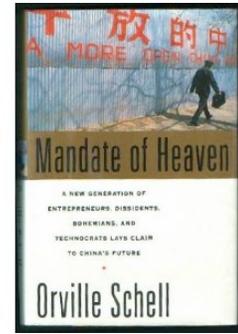
1994a



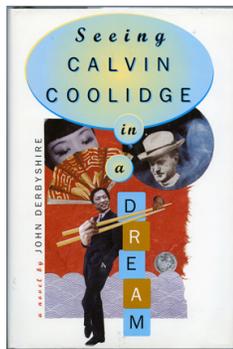
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1994c



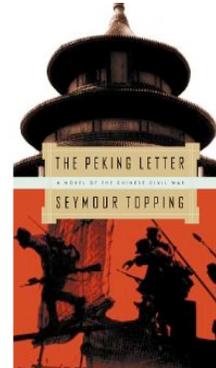
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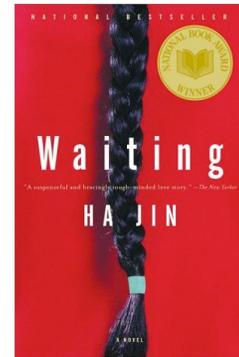
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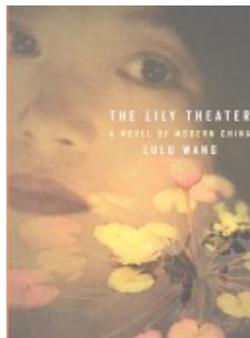
1998



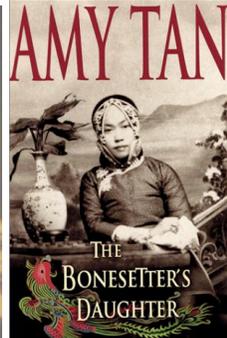
1999a



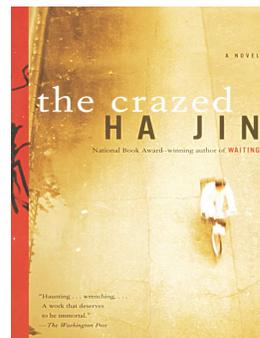
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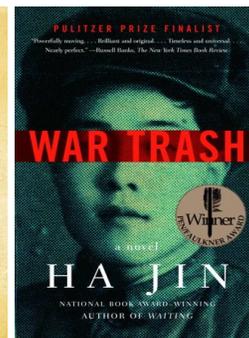
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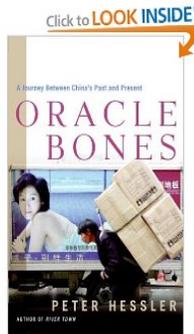
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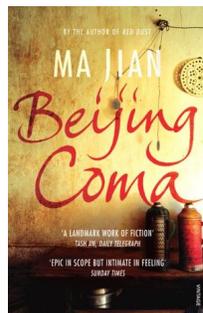
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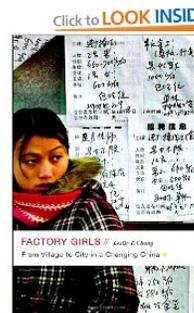
2004



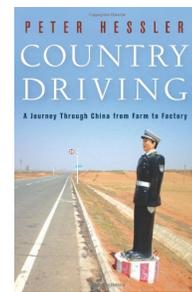
2006



2008a



2008b



2010

Chinese seemed to go by with it. Their knowledge of China in these aspects was still that China did not have such things rather than that China is different in these aspects for

certain reasons. They felt comfortable about concluding by saying “This is China and that is why,” which indicates that the image of China is associated with all the have-nots. This attitude can also answer research question two-- what did the program participants think of the China they saw while they were in China compared to the China they had known before. They saw a China that fits their presupposition, a country that does not have much of what America has, and the explanation they came up with was “This is China.”

“Made in China” participants’ surprises and “This is China” moments well captured their knowledge and attitude about China before the trip and answered research question one on what they had known about China before they studied abroad in China and what were their attitudes China then. The above findings show that their knowledge of China is not very up-to-date and pervasively negative. They expected to see China less developed and modern and people there more controlled by their government. A discourse analysis of the students’ source of information, i.e., school textbook, movies and *The New York Times* articles explained partially the reason behind those expectations and images of China.

Research Question Two:

What did the program participants think of the China they saw while they were in China as compared to the China they had known before?

The Concept of “Face” in China

Students kept mentioning the cultural concept of “face” in their journals, especially when they were visiting Olympic stadiums, 798 art district, bamboo factory, and other cosmopolitan parts of Beijing and Shanghai.

The concept of face is Chinese in origin, and the term is a literal translation of the Chinese *lien* and *mien-tzu* (Ho, 1976). *Mien-tzu* is the kind of prestige that is emphasized in the United States, a reputation achieved through success and ostentation; *lien* represents the confidence of society in the integrity of one’s moral character (Ho, 1976). Nineteen students used the concept of “face” 36 times. Saving face, a common interpretation of what they saw and experienced in China, helps to answer research question two, i.e., what were the program participants’ interpretations of the China they saw. Most of them, however, equated the culture of “face” to posing and faking. One student even claimed that:

“The country’s reputation is essentially a lie, and they refuse to let the world see anything they don’t want it to. ... that will always lead me to be skeptical about what the actual status of China is” (Journal 22, entry 16, response).

The things they had interpreted as “face” in China include the following:

What was taken as “face” in China	Times
Everything is fake	3
Nice campus of Tsinghua	1
Olympic Games and Olympic Game Stadiums	4
The popularity of basketball	1
Dislocation around the Great Wall	1
Chinese government allowing people use software to access blocked website like Facebook	1
Cool buildings	3
Freedom of speech and artist expression at 798	2
Professor left during the movie about the sex industry in China	1
Lecture on the history of China	2
Shanghai	8
1) Shanghai, the face of China	
2) Deep Water Port (5)	
3) Museums	
Chinese Communist Party museum	
Bamboo factories	9

Table 4: What was taken as face in China

The skyscrapers and fancy buildings in Beijing and Shanghai and the bamboo factories they had visited in Anji evoked the concept of face most often. The things they interpreted as “face” put on by China are usually impressive or unexpected at first sight. The disparity between the rich and poor and the ways some Chinese people present what impressed the students often made them feel the impressive elements were mainly there to impress those coming from the West.

The skyscrapers and fancy buildings in China

Examples of modern architecture like the Olympic stadiums, the Egg theatre, and high rises in Beijing and Shanghai turned out to be viewed as showy mostly because of the sharp contrast between these fancy buildings and the bleak side of the cities. After visiting the Olympic Village, one student wrote:

“It is incredible how nice the facilities are around the Olympic village. Seeing all of this really emphasizes the way China put on [a] show for foreigners. Like Pomfret discussed in his book, there are two sides to China, one that the Chinese people see and one that foreigner[s] see. It is amazing the difference that you see when you move away from the tourist spots and into the local area[s] in Beijing. It is like night and day” (Journal 18, entry 7).

The stark contrast of the impoverished neighborhoods to the nice facilities around the Olympic village in Beijing verified what this student had learned from *Chinese Lesson* by Pomfret (2006): “there are two sides to China, one that the Chinese people see and one that foreigner[s] see.” What this student did not realize is that they, a group of foreigners, saw the non-glittering side of China. Another student had a similar comment about Shanghai and also referenced Pomfret:

“I was also surprised at just how Western Shanghai is. ... I believe the city is this way because it is the West’s main gateway into China. Like Pomfret said, the Chinese are very worried about face. Much like the 2008 Olympics, the Chinese see Shanghai as their ‘face’ for the world. This creates many contradictions that lie below the surface” (Journal 18, entry 13).

This student missed the fact that Westernization of Shanghai’s look was first started by the Western colonizers in the early 19th century from their leased territory in Shanghai, “the West’s main gateway into China” from the early 19th century mainly as a colonized port city. Many parts of Shanghai, the students had visited, such as the Bund, used to be leased territory. Shanghai being more Westernized than Beijing, which a lot of students had noticed and mentioned in their journals, is partially because of Shanghai’s colonized history. Urbanization of China and the dominance of Western architects in China also explains why Shanghai looks so Western, which is discussed further later this chapter. This student’s explanation becomes ethnocentric when he or she missed the history and reason behind the Westernization of how Shanghai looks is ignored with a belief that Shanghai becomes so “for the world”, mainly the West, to see.

Viewing skyscrapers and fancy buildings in Shanghai and Beijing as merely a means of showing off to foreigners, especially Westerners, is a simplistic way to interpret the development of China. First of all, China’s development cannot be simply shown off to foreigners through how fancy its buildings are. Besides building glittering skyscrapers and fancy stadiums, China has made tremendous progress in many aspects of human development since China adopted its economic opening up and reforms in the late 1970s (Figure 11 & 12). The improvement in human development shown in figure 11 and the

achievement of human development in literacy rate, life expectancy, reduction of the infant mortality rate and access to electricity shown in figure 12 are progress invisible to many short-term international visitors if they do not have any background information about where China was two decades ago and where it is now.

Figure 1.1 China's rise on the human development index (1975-2008)

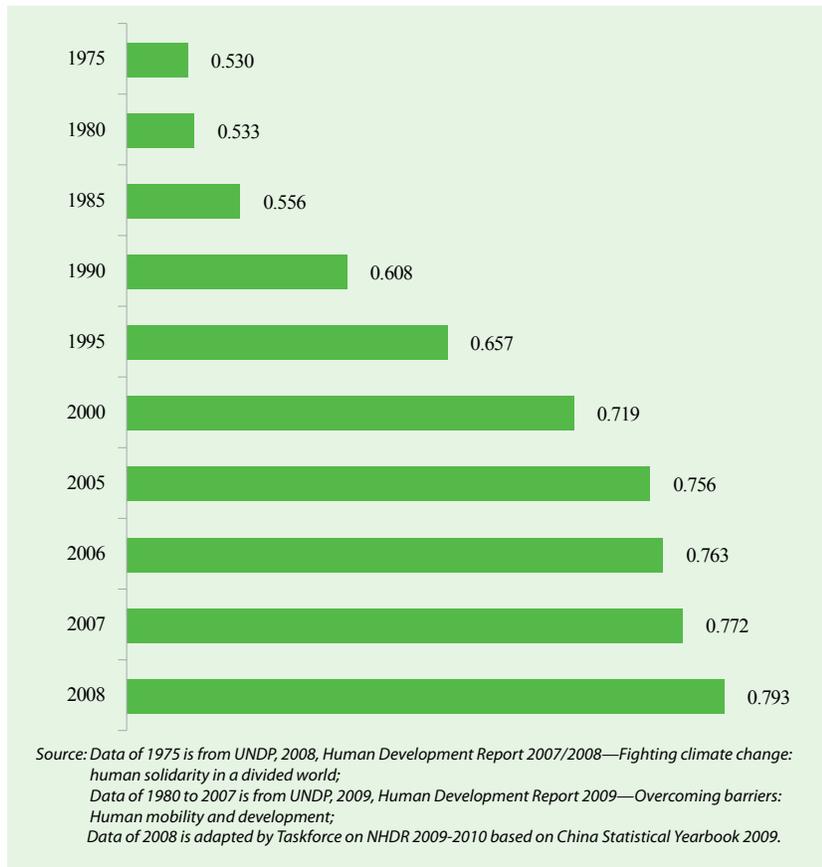


Figure 11: China's Rise on the Human Development Index (1975-2008)

Table 1.1: Human Development Indicators in China	
Literacy, age 15 and over, can read and write (2000 census)	Total population: 90.9% Male: 95.1% Female: 86.5%
Education, school life expectancy (2006 census)	Total: 11 years Male: 11 years Female: 11 years
Life expectancy at birth (2009 est.)	Total population: 73.47 years Male: 71.61 years Female: 75.52 years
Infant mortality rate (2009 est.)	Total: 20.25 deaths/1,000 live births Male: 18.87 deaths/1,000 live births Female: 21.77 deaths/1,000 live births
Percentage of population with electricity access (2008 est.)	National: 99.4% Rural: 99% Urban: 100%

Sources: Central Intelligence Agency, 2010, CIA World Factbook China pages. Available at www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html (last accessed 17 March 2010). IEA/OECD, 2009, "World Energy Outlook 2009," Paris, OECD/IEA.

Figure 12: Human Development Indicators in China (United National Development Program, 2010, p. 8)

Secondly, skyscrapers are natural products of the large population, rapid economic development, fierce competition and urbanization in China. Chinese prefer to live in big cities for better education, convenience and more economic opportunities. Chinese are also used to living in high-density conditions. Having the money and access to required technology, China builds fancy skyscrapers to save space.

Third, in cities where skyscrapers and impressive buildings are everywhere, they try to be eye-catching and avant-garde to sell. China's architectural style had been heavily influenced by the Soviet Union since 1949, and individual charismatic design had been curbed (Liu, 2011, October 16). More than twenty years of economic reform and opening up made the desire to be avant-garde and novel possible (Liu, 2011, October 16). As a result, there has been an outburst of skyscrapers and fancy buildings in China, which cultivates a culture of competition for building even more elaborate structures in order to get attention and sell.

Fourth, the dominance of Western style architecture in China is also a result of a lack of maturity of experience and technology from local Chinese architects. “While building design as a profession has existed for more than 500 years in the West, it has a relatively short history of a mere 30 years in China” (Liu, 2011, October 16). Thus many of the impressive and modern buildings are designed by Western architects, for example the iconic CCTV Tower in Beijing, the Water Cube, the Bird Nest and the National Centre for the Performing Arts, the Egg. Trained in the West, these designers tend to design in a Western way. While China has been modernizing itself, it has become Westernized as have many other developing countries in the world. Viewing all the fancy and Western-styled buildings in China as its way of showing off to foreigners is a superficial way of interpreting the development of China.

Bamboo factories

The second thing which was frequently viewed as related to “face” was the bamboo factories the students visited in Anji, which surprised them by the quality of their bamboo products and their working conditions. The way the Chinese representative from the bamboo factories presented the factories also made some students think that the factories were possibly “putting on a face” for them (Journal 7, entry 16).

Some of them thought this way just because the factories and products were better than they thought. Two of them wrote:

“Seeing the nice area that INBAR has placed us in, and all the high quality areas we are having an opportunity to visit raises the question in my mind of whether or not this is them trying to protect their ‘face’ of which they are so concerned with” (Journal 20, entry 16);

“We were talking about the possibility of the companies putting up a front for visitors like us. SO we could see how ‘well regulated’ their company is. I’m also curious about what they choose and chose not to show us and how it would impact our perception of them if we saw it all” (Journal 14, entry 17).

I interviewed the instructor, and he showed me the pictures he had taken during the visits to the factories. Many of the factory sites were not flattering at all such as the one shown in the picture of figure 13. In figure 13, the factory workers worked in a place with an uncompleted wall, which made air-conditioning impossible. The workers did not wear masks to protect them from the dust of bamboo cutting. The instructor himself believed that they were shown the true face of the factories according to a conversation I had with him. A factory site like this, however, did not make these students believe that they were shown a true face of the bamboo factories.



Figure 13: bamboo factory site visit taken by the instructor of “Made in China”⁴

⁴ This picture was taken in 2010 at a site where the 2011 “Made in China” cohort also visited.

Some of them thought the factories were “putting on a face” because the factories they visited became progressively better. One of them wrote:

“I am also suspicious because the factories we saw get progressively better, with the last one being the equivalent of a modern Western factory. For the most part, however, the factories were much worse and much less safe than factories in the West” (Journal 7, entry 16).

Pictures in figure 14 and 15 were taken at different factory sites that show the different stages of



Figure 14: bamboo factory visits taken by one interview bamboo production. The working conditions in these two sites are better than those shown in figure 13, and the working conditions in figure 15 are better than those in figure 14. As the above students mentioned and the above pictures show, the conditions of factories did become better and cleaner. The visits started from the initial stages of



Figure 15: bamboo factory visits taken by the instructor of “Made in China”

bamboo cutting and cleaning to product stages that are close to the consumers, just like moving from a butcher’s yard to a meat market. As raw products move up the value chain so does the cleanliness and ease of work. If the factories planned to hide and show only the better-conditioned factories, they could have avoided the factories of initial processing. The presupposition of what Chinese factories look like and the lack of knowledge of the chain of production in the bamboo industry led some students into the inadequate judgment that the factories became better one after another because the Chinese wanted to show off.

The way the Chinese representative from the bamboo factories presented the factories also made some students suspicious that the Chinese were posing for their visits. One student thought the representatives answered some sensitive questions too quickly:

“I really was amazed at how far spread and prosperous the bamboo industry is around this area. Even after all the tours, I am still a little suspicious. This may be my Western bias, but I believe that INBAR was in fact putting on a face for us.

Again it may just be my suspicion, but it seemed to me that for questions about hot button issues, they answered a little too quickly” (Journal 7, entry 16).

This subjective judgment was refuted by another student who said:

“I do not think that they were sketchy in their answers about wage and insurance. I think they gave more answers than required. Many companies, even in the U.S. do not want to disclose information about wage and insurance either” (Journal 7, entry 16, response).

The first student’s supposition that the Chinese were putting on a face is not grounded on any solid evidence. It is more like collecting what looks supportive to their presuppositions about Chinese factories posing for their visits. The second student offered a concrete example to prove why he or she did not think the factories were putting on a face, i.e., the factories representatives revealed what many American companies would not reveal. The first student might not trust the answer the factories representatives gave them about the workers’ salary and insurance. Basing judgment on how quick answers were given is too subjective.

Another student doubted whether what they had seen was what these factories truly were because he or she thought that the sale amount given by the representatives was suspicious:

“It is very interesting to have the opportunity to do walk through of all these different factories. There is one idea that seemed to bug me the entire time that we spent in the many factories. I truly do not believe that this is how their factories are in China. There are a few things that make me think this. First with the amount that these men were claiming they had in sales compared to hour efficient the factories

were raised the question. Also most of the facilities were barely used. In a few there was much more open space than space being utilized” (Journal 15, entry 18).

The student who wrote a response entry refuted this by viewing the sales situation of the bamboo factory against the global economic situation:

“I think the sales figure might be high from previous years. Now with housing dumps in US and Europe sales are down. The size of the factories vs. workforce reflects this. I also think the buildings were built for future use and capacity” (Journal 15, entry 18, response).

Different perspectives lead to different perceptions. The first student had been bothered by the idea that what they saw in the bamboo factories were not how Chinese factories really in China “the entire time” they “spent in the factories” (Journal 15, entry 18). The presupposition dominated the discourse model of China this student had known so much that it was very hard to for this student to discover that the evidence used for above judgment were not solid enough. The student even did not bother to ask the representatives to verify when they did have question and answer time and opportunities according to the instructor and the students I has interviewed. This student’s whole reasoning process was closed. The information obtained from factory visits was turned into evidence congruous to the discourse model about what Chinese factories should be in the mainstream discourse in the United State. The factories that were better than they were expected and therefore inconsistent with the discourse model the students trusted proved this student’s perception that Chinese always put on a show for foreigners. This student concluded at last that in order to save face, these Chinese lied:

“I feel that by using this ‘face’ as an excuse, many of these people are telling outright lies. It seems ridiculous to me that lying is more acceptable than being honest and creating a more progressive environment” (Journal 15, entry 18).

This kind of strong and negative conclusion that Chinese “lie” for face was not unique to this student’s factory visit experience. Among all the participants this student is the one who most frequently “posing for face” to interpret China and Chinese. This concept was imbedded in this individual’s attitude towards China. When one student (Journal 15, entry 17) mentioned that there was a very young girl who looked like a child laborer working in one of the bamboo factories, this student responded that if the Chinese factories had used child laborer, they would not let the American students see that (Journal 15, entry 17, response). So this girl was not a child laborer (Journal 15, entry 17, response). This person’s whole reasoning process is around the perception that the Chinese pose for face. When there was something good, it was due to “face.” When there was something negative, it could not be true because Chinese would not allow outsiders to see that.

During the whole “Made in China” trip, the participants saw the glittering side of cosmopolitan China as well the slum side of its big cities. They saw factories at different levels of cleanliness and working conditions. They went to museums applauding Chinese civilization as well as attended lectures criticizing the current government. According to MacLeod (2005) there were 110,000 Americans living in Beijing. It is unrealistic for China to stop them from seeing the dark side of China. Dominated by their attitudes that China fakes for face, many of them failed to realize that China is unbalanced in terms of its economic development and diverse in terms of its people’s political ideology, and has

been making progress in terms of industrial development. At the end of trip, the student who claimed in China “lying is more acceptable than being honest” (Journal 15, entry 18) wrote:

“The thing that will continue to irritate me about this country is the fact that the country’s reputation is essentially a lie, and they refuse to let the world see anything they don’t want it to. ... that will always lead me to be skeptical about what the actual status of China is” (Journal 22, entry 16, response).

After the whole trip, this student still could not believe the China they had seen and experienced was true, and could not figure out how to get to what was true. From this student’s journal I do not see any effort to ask or talk to a Chinese person when there were doubts. It could be that this person did not think a Chinese person would ever share the truth with an American. This person denied the possibility of learning about China from China by using the discourse model that the Chinese lie for face.

This participant is an extreme example. All of the 19 students who used the concept of “face” to interpret their experiences in China, however, tended to simplify what China is and made conclusion in ways that missed the multifaceted nature of the development and history of China. They also simplified the culture of face in China and equated it with posing to look good, which is only one aspect of the Chinese concept of face, i.e. gaining a good reputation through ostentation (Ho, 1976). The other important facet of the concept of “face” *lien* that is gained by the one’s accountability, credit and integrity was ignored (Ho, 1976). *Lien* is “both a social sanction for enforcing moral standards and an internalized sanction” (Ho, 1976, pp. 867-868).

Face has to be eventually gained through personal quality and efforts in Chinese culture, and it is not lying to look good regardless of morality and integrity, though that does happen in China. At the opening ceremony of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, a lip synch girl, Lin Miaoke, was put on the stage instead of the real singer who was claimed not to be pretty enough. This lying to look good, however, was not accepted as a cultural practice or justified by most Chinese people. This aspect of the opening ceremony is a big scandal in China as well. A search of Lin Miaoke on *Weibo*, the most popular micro blog site in China, shows that the poor lip synch girl is still mocked in various ways, mainly as the pet of the Communist party in China. Posing for face and lying are not accepted by Chinese culture as justified practices either.

Claiming the Chinese putting on a face for foreign visitors by presenting them the fancy building and chosen factory sites is too superficial a lens with which to view and understand China. Using the concept of face this way so frequently, the students missed another important aspect of the culture of face in China, i.e., the interpersonal and reciprocal side of this culture. Gaining face and losing face is very interpersonal in China. None of the students had noticed or commented that one of the reasons a Peking University professor volunteered as their tour guide was to give face to the instructor of “Made in China” because of their friendship. No one commented either on how the instructor interacted with all his networks in China in order to make their trip smooth. Face became an easy buzzword for many students. None of their usage of the word, however, indicated that they had truly learned how the culture of face is practiced in China, why this culture is so important in China and how people practice it in their daily lives.

Government Control Is Everywhere

The discourse model of strong government control in China made many students surprised that Chinese people had certain freedom of expression and information, as I has mentioned in the section on surprises. This idea also turned out to be very influential on how students interpreted what they experienced in China and what they learned from these experiences.

Oppressive government is an aspect of China they often think about (Journal 7, entry 18). This aspect of China played an important role in their interpretation of what they learned from some Chinese lecturers.

After the lecture about the history of China and the founding of People's Republic of China given by professor Chen, one student wrote:

“I did get the feeling that she was pro-Mao in the sense that she viewed her country highly. This is understandable, but it was just interesting to hear her use a diction of positivity for China and Mao” (Journal 8, entry 9).

Another student responded:

“I agree with you on the part where the lecturer was very pro-Communist. ... I guess that is to be expected in a country where the state controls all media and tries to censor everything” (Journal 8, entry 9, response).

The first student viewed the lecturer' using a diction of positivity to describe China and Mao as “interesting.” The second students thought her positivity and pro-Communist tendency was a result of the state-controlled media and censorship, which is out of the presupposition that Chinese people are brainwashed by government-censored information.

Some students' surprise at Chen's criticism of her government and some students' judgment of her being brainwashed because of her positive comment to her government imply that the students came to her lecture to observe her more than learn from her. Chen is not a propaganda-machine type of lecturer who can only applaud the Communist Party and the government. What she criticized about the Chinese government and the Communist party, however, was what most of the students from the U.S. would have already known. Many "Made in China" students actually had their own checklists when they sat in Chen's presentation as the following three quotes show:

"Today's lecture by Professor Chen Yaping was very interesting. Because I have had previous lectures on this subject I was more interested in how she approached the subjects as well as what information she chose to include" (Journal 7, entry 9);

"There are many parts where she criticized China's ruling government and point[ed] out faults. ... She did not say much about the faults of the Communist party or Chairman Mao. Also, she didn't mention all the deaths [and] massacre that occurred after the founding of PRC" (Journal 21, entry 8);

"Our lecturer presented the entire story fairly well. I do remember a few key facts being left out of the story" (Journal 16, entry 9).

The fact that this lecturer presented the history of modern China, the Chinese Communist party and the current government "fairly well" did not make the students think that they could learn from her (Journal 16, entry 9). They were first of all mostly surprised by her negative comments about the Chinese Communist party and the Chinese government, with which many students were very familiar. Then they started checking what she covered and not covered from their lists of what they had learned about the Chinese

Communist party and government in the United States. When she presented something positive about the party and government, which did not exist in the discourse models of China they had known, some of them thought it was information manipulated by government control and media censorship, and therefore not worth being taken seriously. Students who thought this way did not learn anything except that this Chinese professor said something negative about the Chinese Communist party and government which they had already known.

Government control of media in China is intended to control what people think, but it is not as effective as what many “Made in China” students thought, especially among young people and the educated in China. Chen and Shi (2001) found that exposure to the state-controlled media in China actually has a negative effect on citizens’ trust in government. People are not passive recipients of information without much giving at thought (Chen & Shi, 2001). The heterogeneous media Chinese people can access through the Internet, the government’s attempt to restrict people’s access to information and the rampant corruption among government officials have led to a decline of trust towards government-controlled media and a rise and popularity of *Weibo*, the Chinese version of Twitter (Lai, 2009).

Access to information the state wants to block, a declining trust in the government, and the rise of non-official media platforms indicates the rise of a critical citizenry in China, which does not necessarily mean that Chinese people would perceive their government and the Chinese Communist party the same way as many Westerners. The Chinese government, especially the central government, enjoys a relatively high level of trust according to several surveys (Drysdale, 2011; Edelman, 2011). The rapid economic

development, the improvement of living standards, and the rising international influence of China are the main reasons the current Chinese government still enjoys a high level of trust among Chinese people. It would be hard for “Made in China” participants to imagine how Chinese people would feel about the vast changes they had experienced during the past three decades, and how these changes would make them feel about their government. So how Chinese feel about their government and the Communist party are the local perspectives worth learning for the study abroad participants. As one interviewee said:

“Before I had a very negative association with the word [c]ommunism. I think a lot of people do and I think that has a lot to do with negatives things I thought about China before I went there. But when I went there, I saw how people were happy, how a lot of them are 100 percent happy with the way the government is. You know it does fit in a negative way that it does to us here. I thought it was very interesting. And I wanted to learn more, and I still want to learn” (Interviewee 3).

Whether the Chinese people this student had seen were truly “100 percent happy with the way the government is” or not, she found out that Chinese people’s state of life under the communist government in China was different from what she thought before. Chen’s lecture with both positive and negative comments about the Chinese government was a special opportunity for the students to learn about how Chinese people view their government and their life under this government. Their preconception that the Chinese people were strictly controlled by their government made them miss this opportunity of learning from Chen.

The fact that the Chinese government has blocked websites like Facebook and expelled foreign journalists like Pomfret made the students suspicious that surveillance might be taking place anytime even though their suspicions were sometimes unfounded or paranoid.

A group of students accidentally went to a Chinese show which they could not understand. Right before they left the show, they saw many Chinese men leaving the show:

“Without understanding what was going on, we were able to make a few observations. One being that many middle aged men got up and left about half way through, possibly because they thought it was disrespectful to the Communist party” (Journal 26, entry 5).

Not understanding what the show was about or why these men left, this student assumed that the show was disrespectful to the Communist party and these men left because of it. This student used strong government control to explain something that could happen for so many reasons. This student could have just asked other audience members after the show about what had happened and whether the show was critical of the Communist party, and either verified their assumption or learned what had actually happened.

One student also used government control as an easy explanation to why the part of the Great Walls they visited was never shown on the Internet:

“I thought the area we went to were off limits. I’m amazed at how even the visual information can form misconceptions. Before yesterday I had never seen any pictures of this area of the Great Wall. I wonder if this information is censored by

‘the great fierce’ wall that we talked about in class or if there is just not a market so it doesn’t exist” (Journal 8, entry 5).

The “great fierce” wall in China would never censor information about the Great Wall because it is a symbol of the ancient civilization of China. Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor of the united China more than two thousand years ago imposed great cruelty and hardship on the people who built it. The current Chinese government is not responsible for it. So there is nothing to hide about the Great Wall. The reason this student had not seen many pictures of the section they visited might be because the Great Wall is 5,500 miles long and the student may not have done enough research to find photos of that section. It could also be that the part they visited was not renovated or protected enough for regular tourist visits. The “great fierce wall” this student mentioned alluded to the firewall the Chinese government has used to block both foreign and domestic websites which have sexually explicit content or content either politically sensitive or threatening to the legitimacy of the current government (Zittrain & Edelman, 2003). This less well-known part of the Great Wall is not the kind of sensitive information or information threatening to the Chinese government that the Great Firewall blocks, and therefore would not be blocked as the student speculated.

One student realized that there might be an influence from the media that made them paranoid about government control in China after this student realized that they were more worried about a film director’s safety than the director was himself:

“It was also interesting how we were more concerned with the director’s safety and the fact that the government might be watching him, more than he seemed to be.

Our Western view of China is heavily based on our media and as we talked about today can make [us] biased one way or another” (Journal 5, entry 12).

It is understandable that the students felt paranoid in China because they had heard numerous stories about strong government control in China from various sources before and during the trip, besides what they had learned about it from the media in the United States. Pomfret told them in his book (2006) and his lecture about how he was followed by the secret police in China and expelled because of his report on the Tiananmen Square event. One interview said Pomfret made her become aware of the day-to-day government in China and started “felt the presence of government restrictions everyday” (Interview 3). The instructor “shut the door and spoke quietly” when he was talking about something politically sensitive (Journal 24, entry 4):

“When Seth shut the door it really was a wakeup call that China is still a place where the government can control whatever it wants. Speaking with Pomfret furthered this idea. China is a place of control” (Journal 24, entry 4, response).

Using government control as a master key answer, an easy answer to explain a variety of confusing encounters, to China apparently prevented the above quoted students from learning about China and Chinese people. Government control exists in China but it does not control everything, and it cannot control everything. The economic development of China requires freedom of information, which is why the government allows the use of VPNs. Chinese people have various ways to access the information they want. The Chinese government reacts to real threats not to a middle-aged man sitting in a show, which might be disrespectful to the Communist party or to an unknown professor who is critical of the government. If the students could have had a way to read *Weibo*, the

Chinese version of Twitter monitored by the government, they would find numerous criticisms from Chinese people towards their government. And if they could have had a chance to talk to some Chinese microbloggers on *Weibo*, they might have been able to learn that the Chinese government reacts to these criticisms sometimes by deleting them if they are protest-arousing, and sometimes by answering them through firing or punishing some corrupt officials. With the legitimacy of its reign and economic development as top priorities, the current Chinese government allows its people to vent and interacts with them as long as their top priorities are not endangered. Government control in China is not a cut and dried situation. To a short-term study abroad student, learning about the nuances of Chinese society from a journalist who had been repelled from China for reporting controversial issues is not enough. It is not enough either to learn from the instructor who had to be extremely careful for the safety of his students and to be able to go back to China to continue his program in the future. Learning from the local Chinese about what they would do or not do cannot be replaced by either of the above two.

While government control is a very legitimate concern of study abroad students in China, it hinders the students from learning about in China in many ways. It reduced the legitimacy of what local Chinese people have said and became an easy wrong answer to many things that needed to be further explored. Learning about something as subtle, controversial and secretive as the government control in China demands local perspectives and up-to-date information about what is going on in China. Capturing this kind of social subtly is challenging for study abroad students who don't speak Chinese

and only stay three to four weeks in China. Communicating with Chinese students in the United States is proposed as a suggestion in chapter 5.

Research Question Three:

What and how can message be effective in changing “Made in China” participants’ attitudes towards China?

The source and channel of message

In analyzing the attitude-change process, social psychologists (Giffin, 1967; Triandis, 1971) emphasize the effect of who says what, and “who” concerns the source of the message. Who delivers the messages makes a difference in how much attitude change is produced as well as how much the audience attends to, comprehends and agrees with the messages. People attend more to messages given by unusual and prestigious sources and containing controversial, interesting, and surprising content; more attitude change will be produced when the source is competent, familiar, attractive, and powerful (Triandis, 1971). During the three-week study abroad program, the participants of “Made in China” had attended seven lectures and four site-visit presentations and some informal tour guide types of introductions. Different speakers had different influences over their attitude towards about China. The students’ reactions to John Pomfret and his *Chinese Lessons* (Pomfret, 2006) and to most of the Chinese speakers manifests how different sources of messages during the “Made in China” trip affected students’ attitudes towards China.

John Pomfret and his *Chinese Lessons*

John Pomfret and his book *Chinese Lessons* (Pomfret, 2006) turned out to be the most popular and influential sources among all the other reading materials and speakers

during the trip. Among all the writers on the reading list and speakers at the lectures and presentations during the “Made in China” trip, John Pomfret, a leading reporter on U.S.-China relations, is the one to which most students referred. All 26 students mentioned him and his book *Chinese Lessons* (Pomfret, 2006) at some point in their journals. Among the 59 journal entries where they were mentioned, 43 of them agree with what Pomfret has said in *Chinese Lessons* (Pomfret, 2006) and his lecture. He is the most convincing and most referenced among all the explicitly mentioned message sources. Two decades of experience in China, the details and familiarity in his description of China and Chinese people, and his “understanding of the tremendous changes taking place” in China render Pomfret a very convincing and charismatic message source among the students (Asia Society, 2004, February 25).

John Pomfret studied abroad in the History Department at Nanjing University in China from 1981 to 1982 as an exchange student from Stanford University. In 1988 he returned to China as a correspondent for *The Associate Press*, and finally became the Beijing Bureau Chief for *The Washington Post* in 1998. As a study abroad student and journalist who spent most of his formative years in China (Pomfret, 2006), Pomfret witnesses China recovering from the wounds of the Cultural Revolution, jumping into the ocean of economic development, deviating from the radical Communist doctrine of social development and being challenged by various social problems caused by her booming economy. He was in the same classroom with the students who got into college by excelling at the entrance exam to college, which was abolished during the Cultural Revolution and restored in 1977. He bicycled to Tiananmen Square before the tanks and soldiers of the People’s Liberation Army arrived there in tanks and military trucks on the

night of June 3rd 1989. Because of his reporting of this event, he became one of the first two foreign journalists expelled from China. *Chinese Lessons* (Pomfret, 2006) contains the life stories of Pomfret's five classmates and himself starting from the Cultural Revolution. His interaction with his Chinese classmates, girlfriends, secret police, student movement leaders, and people on the train or along the streets, along with his insights about China gained through his knowledge of the Chinese language and culture made this book very influential among the students. One student mentioned Pomfret 19 times, and included him in all but one of his or her journal entries. Meeting him became one of the highlights for the students during this trip.

Pomfret's (2006) book *Chinese Lessons* influenced how the students viewed China. Many times, students saw what Pomfret (2006) had described or experienced and then compared it with what they had seen or experienced. *Chinese Lessons* (Pomfret, 2006) set up discourse models of China for the students before they were in China and influenced the way the students interpret and define the China they saw. He influenced the students' attitude towards China by building up students' perspective of China and by serving as details of supporting students' attitudes.

John Pomfret's ways of grounding his attitude and perception about China is problematic, which therefore result in stereotypes and skewed generalization of China. Writing in a very journalistic style, Pomfret does not follow a strict method of explanation. The entire work is based on the experiences of four of his Chinese classmates and himself. In his book, he always outsmarts the Chinese people around him. He labels most of the Chinese women as opportunist except his wife and Little Guan. His widely quoted statement that China is having a rising culture of nastiness after its opening

up is way too generalizing. In *Chinese Lessons* He comes up with way more negative examples of Chinese society and positive ones. Moreover, in this book he used real names of the people he wrote about, which is against the ethics of protecting these protagonists.

By reading and listening to John Pomfret, some students picked up some of his negative perspectives of China, and then tried to frame what they had experienced within these perspectives and form their own attitudes towards China. In the following quote, one student was first informed by Pomfret that there was a new culture of nastiness in China after the economic reform. Without truly understanding what Pomfret meant by a culture of nastiness, this student used it to explain the impatience and lack of enthusiasm of Chinese towards those who were lost, and therefore confirmed this attitude picked up from Pomfret:

“While John Pomfret was here he communicated that he’s seeing a sort of nastiness in China he hadn’t seen before. While I have no point of reference, I now wonder what exactly he meant by this. I am assuming it [sic] a rudeness [sic], or even a ruthless way of doing business or something. But like I said I don’t really know. What got me thinking about this, however, is the difficulties I’ve had in finding locals to help out. Yesterday was another free day and yes, once again we spent a lot of time just trying to navigate our way through. Anyway it was virtually impossible to have anyone stop if we asked for help in getting pointed in the right direction.... I thought English has been taught in the classrooms for quite some time now. Yet no one seems to be able or want to communicate” (Journal 16, entry 10, response).

This student was not very sure about whether this version of nasty culture in China in the quote matched what Pomfret wanted to express in his book. While having “no point of reference,” this student did not negate Pomfret’s statement about the rising culture of nastiness in China. Instead, this student found a not very solid example and unconfidently matched with Pomfret’s observation. The student’s lack of confidence in categorizing people’s lack of patience and enthusiasm for strangers as being nasty is reflected by the word “assuming” and by the statements “I don’t really know” and “I have no point of reference.” Pomfret’s term “nastiness” came as a frame of reference for this student to fill in with experience. Not totally understanding this term or finding a perfect example to prove the attitude picked up from Pomfret, this student maintained this attitude. This student then tried to make the judgment, i.e., the unenthusiastic Chinese were nasty, by carefully using the assumption that “English has been taught in the classrooms for quite some time now.” This assumption makes it more proper to describe those who did not want to communicate with and help the lost foreigners as being nasty. The whole process of attitude formation reflected in this quote is a process of proving Pomfret’s attitudes with this student’s experience that did not exactly resemble Pomfret’s experience.

Pomfret’s (2006) *Chinese Lessons* is referred to 32 times, providing supporting details to the students’ attitude towards China. The fact that the students just read this book and that Pomfret is a powerful message source are two reasons for the students’ frequent references to him and his book. Pomfret’s attitudes towards many issues in China mentioned in his book helped the students to explain and make quicker decisions about similar issues in China.

In the following quote, the student used Pomfret's comment on the individualistic culture in China to explain the stylishness of young Chinese's hairstyles and clothes, and concluded that Chinese hate collectivist culture:

“While riding the subway, I observed many young Chinese sporting extravagant hairstyles and wearing flamboyant clothes. This reminded me of Pomfret's assertion in his book that the Chinese are often more individualistic than Westerners. This ‘myth of the collectivist Oriental’ that the Chinese tend to think and act more as a group is not true because after being put in group forever, they hate them” (Journal 19, entry 7).

The comment that “Chinese are often more individualistic than foreigners” is from Mary who was a friend and roommate of Little Guan, one of the five main characters in *Chinese Lessons* (Pomfret, 2006, p. 105). Mary threw a birthday party for Little Guan and one Chinese student who was invited to the party reported Little Guan to the Communist Party official of the university, saying that Little Guan had a close relationship with a foreigner. This happened in early 1980s when tight government control and mutual monitoring among people, the legacy of the Culture Revolution, was still lingering on in China. Mary's comment was based on her observation of and experience with Chinese who were manipulative, selfish and tended to inform upon others as what they were encouraged to do during the Cultural Revolution. So convinced by the experiences of the characters in Pomfret's book, this student simply drew the same conclusion from some young Chinese's fashion style.

Another example is about the street being hectic. Living in rural area of medium-sized cities in the United States in their formative years, most students felt very

overwhelmed by the busy and fast-paced street scene in China. Instead of taking the density of population into consideration, many students attributed this to the dog-eat-dog culture after China had opened its market, which Pomfret (2006) has mentioned in *Chinese Lessons*:

“It amazes me how the Chinese, or at least in Beijing, do not have any manners of respect towards other citizens. It almost gives you a sense of every person for themselves. It would be interesting to see if the Chinese volunteer or do other things to help others in their community. I’m sure that this attitude of every person for themselves comes from the long history of communism and like Pomfret said in his book, the Chinese can not trust any one else and will do almost anything to get ahead” (Journal 1, entry 4).

Pomfret’s comment is based on his Chinese classmates’ experiences during the Cultural Revolution, a historical period in China during which betrayal of family and friends for the cause of Communism was glorified by the party propaganda. On the fourth day in Beijing, this writer used Pomfret’s judgment based on this historical period to support the hectic nature of the traffic in Beijing, one of the most crowded and busiest cities in the world. These students decontextualized Pomfret’s conclusions about Chinese culture and misaligned these conclusions with their own experiences. Learning from John Pomfret in this sense confined their learning from China.

Pomfret’s extraordinary experiences and his engrossing writing make him a very convincing source of message. The above students’ use of Pomfret’s observations on Chinese behavior is inappropriate for their conclusions of the Chinese behavior they saw on their trips. The decontextualized use of Pomfret’s (2006) observations indicates the

students' lack of understanding of China and the bias of their own observations. Reading Pomfret's book helps the student to learn from his experiences in China. At the same time, the secondary experiences of Pomfret frame the way the reader interprets his or her own experience and expedites his decision-making process, which reduced his or her desire and chance to engage in independent and in-depth thinking. When what they learned from Pomfret was skewed and generalizing, the students' prejudices and misunderstanding were reinforced.

Seth, the instructor

Many students have acknowledged in their survey responses and interviews that the instructor was the most influential source of information during the trip although they did not quote him as much as they do with Pomfret in their journals. Seth was a very convincing source of information among the students. Having led "Made in China" for four years before the 2011 cohort, Seth is very well informed and experienced about China. Having a Ph.D. degree in the field of international education, he is also very aware of the cultural shocks and intercultural learning barriers that his students might encounter during their trip in China. His influence as a source and deliverer of message comes from his knowledge about China and the cultivation of intercultural awareness as one student said:

"I've learned a lot from Pomfret but Seth explained a lot. He elaborated on them and added his own knowledge to it.... He also helped us relate it to them, like pointing things out" (Interviewee 1).

His day-to-day interaction with the students also brought a sense of familiarity and fortified the sense of trust among the students towards him. As another student said:

“He is not biased. He truly knows China. Every time he gives a lecture he makes it real and honest.... I just learned the most from him and you can ask him any kind of question and he answer it” (Interviewee 4).

In their journals, many students mentioned that Seth had informed them cultural backgrounds of many phenomena they did not understand, such as where was continued reverence about Mao Zedong among the Chinese people. Seth told students about Mao’s contribution in bring more equality to women and poor people (Journal 21, entry 2, response). Seth also brought some Chinese local perspectives that he had learned from his experiences in China to the students, such as people in China threw toilet paper in the waste bin because the toilet paper in China could not be handled by the sewage system there . One student wrote:

“I am also glad that he covered why they do things here like throw toilet paper in the waste bin. Otherwise, if I was had no knowledge about it, it would have come off as an odd/quirky oddity” (Journal 26, entry 1).

Seth was also aware of the multi-facets of China. For example, he told the students that there were many religion believers in China, and China was not an atheist country as how many Westerners would view it (Journal 24, entry 7). “There are more Evangelical Christian than the Communist Party members in China” is how one student quoted him (Journal 24, entry 7). He also showed students the nuances of One-Child Policy in China by telling them that certain group of people were allowed to have two children in China (Journal 14, entry 10).

Seth also constantly emphasized the importance of being safe in China, especially being careful with the secret police and government control in China. He closed the door

when sensitive issues were discussed (Journal 24, entry 4, response) as I mentioned in the section of “Government Control Is Everywhere.” He cautioned students about getting on the watch list of the Chinese government (Journal 7, entry 9). This warning caught the students’ attention easily and reinforced their knowledge about the omnipresent government in China.

Seth, instructor of “Made in China”, was highly regarded by most of the students during and after the trip. His experience in taking students to study abroad in China, knowledge in international education and openness to questions made him a speaker of charisma and credibility in the eyes of his students.

Speakers of low credibility

In a contrast to John Pomfret, most Chinese speakers were viewed as propagandists or posing for face in front of foreigners, and therefore were of low credibility in the students’ eyes. The way some Chinese speakers presented information shows that they did not understand their audiences’ general perceptions of China, and sounded propagandist to the students. Therefore, instead of addressing the students’ doubts and questions, they reinforced their negative attitudes towards China.

The accuracy of the information provided by Chinese speakers was questioned by many students. Sitting in a lecture about the history of China led by professor Chen, one student was critiquing what she felt was Chen’s bias and inaccurate presentation rather than learning from her:

“In the first lecture, with Prof. Chen Yaping, I was trying to keep my ears open to the skewed/biased (and regulated?) interpretations and presentations of history.

When she was talking about the Cultural Revolution, she used words like ‘The students criticized their teachers,’ instead of ‘The students were mandated by the

authorities to shun and torture their [teachers] friends and family members.’... I also noted how the whole lecture, the Nationalists were talked about as the enemy and how and why it was such a poor system, while we never got to the part where we talked about the weakness of Communism. I question how much of the bias comes from a worry about Big Brother and Saving Face versus brainwashing and misinformation...” (Journal 26, entry 8).

The way Chen presented information about the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese Communist Party and the Nationalist Party was different from what the student had learned about them. The suspicion of Chinese being brainwashed, controlled by their government and posing for face in front of foreigners made this student interpret the information from Chen as misleading and distorted. This student was not the only one who thought this way. One student thought Chen “glossed over about China’s history” and felt bothered that Chinese people “couldn’t be honest and truthful about what actually happened in the past” (Journal 23, entry 8). Another student thought Chen was selling them the idea that “China is as good as USA” (Journal 2, entry 8).

Chen’s pro-Communist party tone and the students’ suspicion of Chinese cleaning up their history for face made her a speaker of low credibility. None of the students who mentioned Chen and her lecture indicated that they had learned something new about the history of China from her except the surprise when Chen admitted that the Chinese communist party and government had made mistakes. Chen was ineffective in terms of changing students’ attitude toward Chinese history.

Another speaker of lower credibility was one of the bamboo factory representatives who led the factories visits and sounded propagandist in Anji. One student wrote:

“The manager’s statement that we should now go home and ‘tell the truth’ was something I had a hard time just listening to. I feel that by using this ‘face’ as an excuse, many of these people are telling outright lies” (Journal 15, entry 18).

According to Triandis (1971), credibility of a speaker will be reduced if he sounds propagandist. The propagandist dynamism of the speaker when he said to the students to go home and tell the truth undermined his credibility and, hence, reduced the persuasiveness of the information he delivered to the students.

The way another bamboo factory representative delivered information also reduced his credibility. Lack of details and seemingly rehearsed responses reinforced another student’s suspicion that the factories put on a face when they visited them:

“When questioned about aspects of the factory such as recycling, they seemed to have a set of responses and when questioned further, could not or would not go into more detail” (Journal 5, entry 18).

With a suspicion that Chinese people tend to pose in front of foreigners for face, the students quoted above had an image of Chinese people being of lower credibility. The bamboo factory representatives’ unsophisticated ways of presenting information fed evidences into the students’ perception that the factories were putting on a face for their visits.

If the factory representatives had known American communication styles and their American audience better, they could have been more effective in presenting their factories in much the way Jin Peng, a staff member from the NDRC of China, did when he presented on the economic policies of China. Knowing what American students might have known about China’s economy, he “went through and confirmed nearly every one

of the ‘silently arguments’” a student who had studied Finance and Economics had (Journal 23, entry 2). Peng’s knowledge about how China’s economic policies were perceived in the United States was one of the reasons he convinced the one who knew China’s economic policies the most, though he did not convince every student.

Since most of the Chinese factory representatives were viewed as being of lower credibility, the students frequently checked with their instructor about whether he thought what these Chinese representatives said was true. Being viewed as not credible and having an agenda of promoting China, the factories representatives were not taken as someone from whom the students thought they could learn about China.

Students’ prior knowledge

To whom a message is delivered also influences how the message is received (Triandis, 1971). The audience’s mood, family background and prior knowledge all play a role (Triandis, 1971). Different knowledge decides the audience’s motivation and capacity, which in turn influences how an audience elaborates and reacts to certain information (Forgas, 2008). In the case of this research, students’ prior knowledge is shown to be influential over students’ attitude change after they were given certain information.

One particular example of how a student’s prior knowledge influenced their attitude change is how students with different background knowledge react to a lecture on the economic policy of China. The lecture was from Jin Peng whom I compare to some bamboo factory representatives in the last section. He is a staff member from the NDRC of China, a government organization responsible for formulating and implementing national economic and social development policies (NDRC, not available). Six students

mentioned in their journal how impressed they were by Peng's knowledge, and how informed they felt after his presentation about China's economic policies and challenges like GDP and housing. One of them said:

“Going into the lecture I expected to hear mostly pro-China, pro-Communism propaganda, I thought this ‘lecturer’ would behave just like the party officials in Pomfret's book. I expect him to shamelessly promote the greatness of Communism and recite the party's groupthink. As a student studying [f]inance and [e]conomics, I couldn't wait to silently agree all his points in my head. I was waiting to tear apart communist ideology with arguments I have been preparing throughout my studies. When he started talking[,] I couldn't believe how honest and open he was with us.... He went through and confirmed nearly every one of the ‘silently arguments’ I had in my mind. He even introduced me to many new ones I would have never thought of. It was refreshing for me to see an official of the most powerful communist country acknowledge that a market-based economy is better than a communist one. His presentation changed the attitude I have towards Chinese economic policy, and I believe that people like Jin Peng will help lead China to its full potential” (Journal 23, entry 2).

This student's attitude towards Chinese government official was stated in this quote. Before this lecture, this individual believed that Chinese government officials were shameless, soulless and brainless followers and puppets of Communism, and different voices from the government were impossible. Having taking courses in finance and economics, this student also assumed there was not much to learn from Peng. These attitudes reflected the discourse model of Chinese government official the student had

known. Suspicious of the authenticity of the information provided by a sounding-board official is how this student adjusts himself to a “pro-China, pro-Communism propaganda presentation.” This attitude also expressed what this student values and appreciates, i.e., critical and honest opinion and information free from government control and manipulation. No ego-involvement is found from this student’s this quote. This writer quickly and candidly acknowledged the bias and the fact that Peng was very knowledgeable and his lecture was very informative.

Not all students’ attitude of Chinese government officials being dishonest was changed by Peng’s lecture though. When it comes to the issue of Chinese currency and inflation one student felt that Peng was evading major issues:

“The other day in class when Paul asked Prof. Peng Jin (Chinese way of saying Peng’s name) about the way in which China is controlling inflation, I got the sense that Prof. Peng Jin was holding back in his response. Not because he didn’t know the answer, but it seemed as though he was taking his time trying to figure out what, or how much, he could say and then what would be the proper way of relating that to us. Perhaps this wasn’t the case, but it got me thinking... how can China effectively address some major potential issues they face, if they are unable to honestly confront them?” (Journal 12, entry 4)

The way a message is delivered, i.e., the channel of message is mostly likely to maximize its comprehension when it allows its audience to proceed at its own pace (Triandis, 1971). This speculation that Peng “was holding back in his response” was based on this student’s observation of Peng’s pace, i.e., Peng “was taking his time trying to figure out” his answer, not on the content of the lecture (Journal12, entry 4). The student interpreted

the speaker's pondering as his fishing for rhetoric acceptable for American students to beautify the Chinese government's economic policies.

While his credibility was questioned by both students because of his identity, Peng had different influence over the two students. The first student changed his attitude towards Chinese government officials as well as Chinese economic policy, and the second one did not. The factor of the audience member's prior knowledge made major difference here. Variation in capacity of the audience affects the amount of objective elaboration and interpretation the audience engages (Forgas, 2008). "As a student studying [f]inance and [e]conomics," the first student had well-developed prior knowledge about the economy of China, which enabled him to be more engaged with the content of Peng's presentation (Journal 23, entry 2). The second student did not comment on the content of Peng's presentation. Instead, this student's judgment was a "peripheral route processing", a process in which people "pay little attention to the message and rely on simplistic, heuristic cues instead" (Forgas, 2008, p. 145).

Previous travel experiences also influenced how the students reacted to fast-paced street and traffic in Beijing. One student felt that Chinese were selfish and ruthless, and quoted Pomfret to support this view:

"It amazes me how the Chinese, or at least in Beijing, do not have any manners of respect towards other citizens. It almost gives you a sense of every person for themselves. It would be interesting to see if the Chinese volunteer or do other things to help others in their community. I'm sure that this attitude of every person for themselves comes from the long history of communism and like

Pomfret said in his book, the Chinese cannot trust anyone else and will do almost anything to get ahead.” (Journal 1, entry 4)

Essentializing Chinese as being selfish and attributing the selfishness to the long history of Communism, this student failed to see three facts. First, Communism is supposed to promote selfless and greed-free cooperation. Second, the history of Communism in China is short compared to the history of Confucianism, Taoism, imperialism and even capitalism. Third, Communism is more embraced by the Chinese government to justify its political structure in China than a philosophy embraced by Chinese people.

Economically, China is a market economy, which is widely claimed as one of the reasons behind the increasingly competitive society. Blaming Communism for the ruthlessness he or she had observed in China is a cold-war mentality, and lacks an understanding of what China is now politically, economically and culturally.

The student who responded to this journal had previous travel experience in many parts of the world, and had seen similar street scenes in those places. The respondent felt there should be a more complex explanation to the different street scene in Beijing:

“The commuter on the road is very similar to other parts of the world except for the U.S. I’ve been to Europe, Africa and now Asia and they are very similar when it comes to the street being hectic at all times. When it comes to having manners or being respected though, I think it has more to do with the history, culture, and simply because there are so many people. Seth has mentioned many times that people just want to get things done! It may be very true that trust is an issue and that when there is no outside communication with the rest of the world.” (Journal 1, entry 4, response)

More elaboration and perspectives were involved in the responsive student's reaction. The history of isolation, the culture of getting things done, and large population in China were taken into consideration. This student's vast travel experiences enabled him to include more countries into comparisons. The difference between China and the United States was contextualized instead of just being negatively judged.

The value-expressive function of attitude

The reasons for holding or for changing attitudes are also found in the functions attitude perform for the individual, especially the functions of knowledge, adjustment, ego defense and value expression (Katz, 1960; Triandis, 1971). Attitudes serve four major functions for the individual: 1) knowledge function, structuring and organizing one's environment and providing frame of reference; 2) adjustment function, maximizing the rewards and minimizing penalties in their external environment; 3) ego defensive function, proceeding from within an individual and protecting one's ego from internal conflict and external dangers; 4) and value-expressive function, giving positive expression to one's central value (Katz, 1960; Smith, Bruner & White, 1956; Triandis, 1971). Many attitudes can satisfy more than one function listed above. The attitudes reflected from the texts produced by "Made in China" participants were of this category. The lack of interaction with individual students, however, does not give me enough evidence to examine whether how the ego-defensive function influenced the students' attitudes and attitude changes. The knowledge function and adjustment function facilitated many attitude changes. For example, in order to be safe, the students became very cautious about government control in China. Values expressed in many attitudes, however, prevented students from learning from the local people during their trip.

Attitude holders often find a certain attitude hard to change even if changing would improve their understanding of and adjustment to the world because that certain attitude expresses their value about what is wrong or not. The value expressed in an individual's attitude is often in line with the value embedded in the culture from which the individual comes. Changing a value-laden attitude means changing one's frame of reference about how this person has known the world and himself.

Many attitudes towards China the "Made in China" participants had had towards China are attitudes laden with values and knowledge the United States mainstream culture has presented as "true." "The globalization of knowledge and Western culture constantly reaffirms the West's view of itself as the center of legitimate knowledge" (Smith, 1999, p. 63). Many "Made in China" participants had this sense of "positional superiority" when they viewed opinions conflicting with what they had learned in the United States, such as the positive comments from Chinese lecturers on the Chinese Communist, as brainwashed knowledge or propaganda (Said, 1978, p. 109). If their attitude towards the Chinese Communist Party functioned purely as knowledge to understand the world, different perspective of viewing the Communist Party should still be examined in terms of why some Chinese people feel think this way and try to understand it in the local context. The students would not necessarily change their attitude towards the Chinese Communist Party. Disparaging local perspective as brainwashed knowledge or propaganda, however, is the mentality Smith (1999) criticizes: "The objects of research," in this case the Chinese people and their history, "do not have a voice and do not contribute to research and science" (p. 61). So this attitude not only functions as knowledge, it functions as an expression of the value upheld by the United

States against communism, i.e., everything communist is wrong. This value has imbued the dominant American discourse from the First Red-Scare of 1919-1920, and was deepened by the Cold War. Even today, opponents of President Obama call him a communist to defame him. These students' absolute negative view of the Chinese Communist Party is laden with the anti-communism value central to Western democracy and is therefore hard to change.

Adherence to the values one's own culture and society cherish is not necessarily a bad thing if one can keep his mind open to different perspectives about the value he cherishes. "Value-expressive attitude not only gives clarity to the self image but also molds that self-image closer to the heart's desire" (Katz, 1960, p. 173). It is also part of one's socialization process (Katz, 1960). When students take their value as knowledge or truth, however, they tend to be resistant to local perspectives that challenge their value.

Conclusion

This research is designed to investigate the impact of a study abroad program in China on its participants' attitudes towards China. The research started from identifying their old attitudes from the surprises and "This is China" moments the students had during the trip. What they expected and did not expect China to be echoes the image of China in the mainstream discourse in the United States, which represents China in an unbalanced way. How they interpreted their experiences and negotiated their old attitudes is the second phenomenon this study investigates. Data show that the most frequently used two ways to interpret China are "face" posing and government control. Many students are suspicious that the glittering side of China was there to be shown to the world, especially the West. The students' paranoia about government control over

freedom of expression and information led them into disparaging the authority of the information several Chinese speakers had delivered to them. This paranoia also led them into tagging many things that confused them with the label of government control. The two easy answers, preserving “face” and government control, were found to lead students into superficial interpretation of China, which reinforced many of their old attitudes towards China. Study abroad in China helped them to find more evidence to validate and reinforce the attitudes they had obtained from the discourse and media in the United States.

Besides the influence of the discourse in which many of the students’ old attitudes towards China had been formed, the way the students interpreted their experiences, negotiated their old attitudes and received messages delivered to them during the trip was influenced by the elements related to the message itself. The source of a message, i.e. the one who delivered the message, the channel of the message, i.e., the way the message is delivered, and the students’ prior knowledge relevant to the message are proved to be influential over how the students received and judged the message. The students were convinced by speakers of extraordinary experiences, in-depth knowledge and engrossing way of convincing their messages. Speakers who did not know the communication styles and knowledge background of the students often failed to convey their message effectively. The students’ prior knowledge and experiences also affected how much they could engage in objective reflection on the message they received. “Peripheral route processing” happened to those who knew little about the subject issue (Forgas, 2008, p. 145).

One of the major goals of most universities is to have their students develop independent critical thinking. Even though many the students in “Made in China” program may retain distorted views of China, nevertheless in questioning many things presented to them or observed, they did demonstrate a healthy skeptical critical thinking capacity. For example, they certainly seemed to realize that there is both China and the “Other China” (a darker version of conditions in China). They also seem patently aware that their experiences might be carefully selected in such a way as to leave them with positive impressions of China and to see first-hand some of China’s most impressive accomplishments such as the new high speed train they experienced. Interestingly they seemed to develop the capacity to deconstruct the China they were being presented far more effectively than deconstructing Western distorted images or misrepresentations of China. However, as a result of this program, they did come to question the Western assertion that the Chinese people have no freedom of expression at all. For example, they experienced directly Chinese criticism of their government and history.

All in all, the study abroad trip is not an isolated learning process. The prior knowledge and attitudes of the study abroad participants interacts profoundly with their experiences during the trip as shown in figure 16. The examination of how their old attitudes are formed explains why they react to what they have experienced in China in a certain way, and provides insight into some of the challenges study abroad participants face, such as judging the local people with American standards and not valuing local perspectives. Personal elements that play important roles in study abroad learning as some studies have suggested (e.g., Gries, Crowson and Sandel,

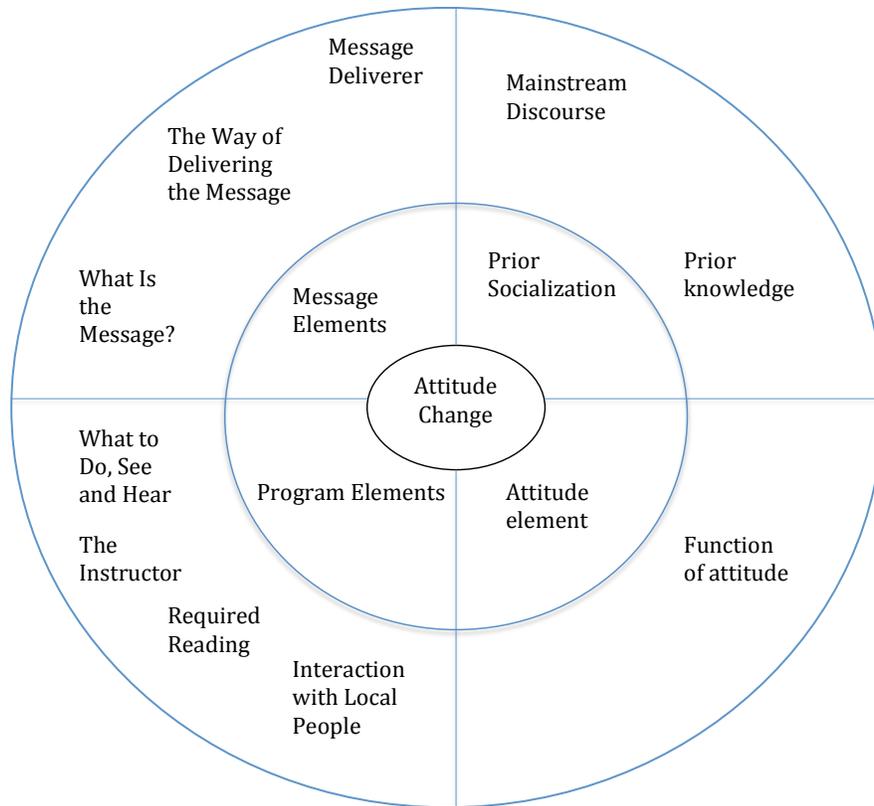


Figure 16: Elements influencing attitude change

2010; Watson & Lippitt, 1957), such as personality and intelligence styles, are not the focus of this research because this research is aimed to improve the design of short-term study abroad programs and serve students of various personal styles. In the next chapter there is further discussion regarding the theoretical, policy and practical implications of this study.

CHAPTER V: CONSLUSION

*China has surprised us and I think that it will continue to.
-- Journal 13, entry 18*

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of a three-week study abroad program in China on its participants' attitudes towards China. The previous chapter provided detailed data analysis related to the three research questions:

- 1) What had the China program participants known about China before they studied abroad in China? What were their attitudes toward China then?
- 2) What did the program participants think of the China they saw while they were in China as compared to the China they had known before?
- 3) For those whose attitudes towards China changed, what influenced them to change?

This chapter presents a synthesis of the key findings first. Suggestions are then presented on how these findings can inform theory, policy, and practice. The chapter concludes with strengths and limitations, recommendations for future research, and how findings relate to the need for both China and the United States to rethink strategies surrounding study abroad in China.

Key Findings

China turned out to be a surprise to “Made in China” participants. The modernity of Beijing and Shanghai, the criticism of their government from the Chinese people, and the development of China’s bamboo industry surprised them the most. Many of moments that struck many students as “This is China” during the trip were opposite to what surprised them, i.e., the less modern and developed part of China and what China lacks

were typical “This is China” moments. These “This is China” moments indicate the attitudes towards China they had carried from the discourse in the United States. This finding also proves the three assumptions of this study, i.e., the students had certain attitudes toward China before the “Made in China” trip; and these attitudes were influenced by how China is represented in the United States.

China was less developed, less modernized and more crowded in most of the students’ minds before they came to China. They did not expect to see the fancy buildings, the hippy-styled 798 art district, the enormous scale of the Shanghai Deep-Water Port, the well-organized train and its train station, the beautiful campus and active students on Tsinghua campus, and the suburban look of Anji County and the high school students there. The China in their minds before their “Made in China” trip was more backward than the China they saw during the trip. This backward image of China is reflected from the discourse at the individual level, i.e., the students’ discourse echoes how the representation of China is unbalanced in the discourse at the institutional level, i.e., textbooks, movies and news, in the United States.

Criticism from the Chinese people about their government expressed in lectures and art pieces surprised many students because of their prior understanding and experience of strong government control in China. The Chinese people’s will, efforts and ways of evading the control from their government were not in the discourse model of China these students had known. This lack of knowledge is again reflected from media reporting about government control in China. An analysis of *The New York Times* reports about *Weibo*, the Chinese twitter, epitomizes the lack of stories about how non-activist Chinese people have developed ways to circumvent government control. The focus of

these reports is mostly how the Chinese government has restricted freedom of information and speech, and how the activists have tried to revolt against these restrictions. When they interacted with the non-activist Chinese people (who are often mute in these reports) on their trip in China, the “Made in China” participants were taken aback by their critical remarks and artistic expression about their government.

The bamboo industry the students visited during their trip surprised many of them by the quality of its bamboo products and the non-sweatshop-styled factories. The trend from labor-intensive and energy-driven industries to high-value and technology-intensive ones that is emerging in China was missing from the discourse model of Chinese industry the students learned in the United States. This trend is not reported as much as technologically backward Chinese factories in the dominant discourse in the United States, like *The New York Times*, either. In many reports, “Made in China” means products of low quality and counterfeits.

The students’ “This is China” moments during their trip in China reflect what is symbolic of China and what differentiates China from the United States in their minds and is in line with the dominant discourse in the United States as well. Symbolic aspects of China reflected from the students’ discourse are the Forbidden City, the narrow and dirty streets, villages, dollar-store products and repression by government officials. The difference between China and the United States reflected from their “This is China” moments is that China does not have what the United States has in terms of traffic rules, customer service and respect of personal privacy and space. These images of China echo the cover of books about China on *The New York Times* annual Notable Book lists. The

success of these notable books to a certain extent increases the popularity of these images of China among readers in the United States.

Having had the attitude that China was less developed, and that the Chinese people were firmly controlled by their government, many “Made in China” participants tended to use the cultural concept of face and the paranoia that Chinese government controls everything to interpret the China they experienced during their trip. The skyscrapers and fancy buildings in Shanghai and Beijing and the bamboo factories that had better working conditions than they had expected were regarded by many as “posing for the foreigners.”

Dominated by the attitude that China fakes for face, many students were unwilling to entertain the possibility of learning about China from China. Government control also became a master key judgment when they heard positive remarks about the Chinese government from the Chinese lecturers, when they found the information of some part of the Great Wall was missing from the Internet and when they saw a Chinese man leaving a show before it is was finished. The label of “government control” reduced the authority of new information and perspective the Chinese lecturers tried to convey to the students. This easy answer also reduced the students’ chances to learn about the Chinese government’s strategy of its control of information and restriction on the freedom of speech from the Chinese people.

Though the concept of face and the fact of government control in China hinder some students from learning from local perspectives during the trip, attitude change did happen among the “Made in China” participants during the trip. Their attitude changes proved the third assumption of this study, i.e., a study-abroad to China influences its participants’ attitudes towards China. The source of the message and the student’s prior

knowledge played a key role in the students' attitude changes. John Pomfret, the writer of *Chinese Lessons*, was a very influential source of the message to the students. His extraordinary experience in China and understanding of the changes China has experienced as reflected in his book made him very convincing to the students, and helped form a lot of attitudes the students held towards China. Many students simply used their experiences to prove what they had learned from Pomfret who is not free from stereotyping and generalizing China. John Pomfret framed the way many students interpreted their own experiences, and reduced their desires and chances to engage in independent and in-depth thinking. Unlike John Pomfret, however, most Chinese speakers were of low credibility in the eyes of many students. Their lack of knowledge about American communication styles and the students' background knowledge, the propagandist tone of lecturing, and many students' suspicion that Chinese lecturers were controlled by their government and their tendency to pose for face prevented them from effectively delivering their message and changing the students' attitudes about their presentation topics.

Besides the source of the message and the way the message was delivered, the students' prior knowledge influenced how they processed new information and made decisions about their attitudes towards certain issues. The more prior background knowledge the students had, the more likely they engaged in objective elaboration instead of judging from some simplistic cues as did those who did not have much background information about topic issues.

Implication For Theory

Based on the data analysis and findings, this section explores the various theoretical implications of the study. Findings related to research questions one and two about the students' expectations of China and what they thought of the China they saw are consistent with Said's Orientalism and Foucauldian theory of Discourse and Power. Findings related to research question three about how attitude changes did and did not happen during the "Made in China" trip is consistent with social psychological theory of attitude and attitude change.

Said's Orientalism

The binary distinction set up between the West and the East and the inferior images of the East in the discourse of Orientalism (Said, 1978) are embedded in the students' attitudes towards China reflected from their spoken and written texts. The Orientalist image of the East fixed in the past, despotic, cruel and backward echoes the less developed and modern, ancient, and totalitarian China in many "Made in China" participants' expectations and interpretations of China. These images persist and outshine the changes China has experienced and the hybridity and complexity of Chinese society. All of the "Made in China" participants were surprised by how more developed China was than they had expected. The Orientalist mentality of some students went so far that they did not take the cosmopolitan side of China as their "This is China" moments. Instead, the scenes of a narrow dirty street and a vender being chased by a security guard are more Chinese to them. The modern and hippy side of Chinese city life made some students feel they were in the United States, which is what Bennett (1993) defines as minimization. Being similar to the United States became a description of how modern a

city can be. The Forbidden City and the Great Wall, symbols of ancient Chinese civilization, were still symbolic of China in many students' minds. All these perspectives of China are attempts to find the images of China in the Orientalist discourse models of China with which they were familiar in the United States. In these discourse models, China is still placed as opposite of the United States.

Another binary distinction set up by the students is China is a country of have-nots while the United States is a county of haves. The difference between China and the United States was often distilled into what China doesn't have as compared to what the United States has. What China didn't have, such as personal space, traffic rules, manners, and customer service, indicated to the "Made in China" students that China was therefore inferior. These "have-nots" in their eyes were explained reductively as "This is China". Whether these "have-nots" are unique to China and absent from the United States, or the reasons behinds these "have-nots" were seldom examined. Defining China as antithetical to the United States demonstrates the distinctions featuring Orientalist discourse about the East and the West.

Another Orientalist feature manifested in the students' discourse is that many students demonstrated the "positional superiority" Said (1978) defines in *Orientalism*, and acted as an inspector or judge instead of a learner in front of the Chinese speakers of the lectures arranged during their trip (p. 109). The students had a checklist to check on what the Chinese lecturers would say or not. When the lecturers sounded critical of the Chinese government and the Chinese Communist party, which was unexpected, some students felt surprised that the Chinese lecturers knew what they had known about China and were not brainwashed by the Chinese government. When the lecturers sounded

positive about the Chinese government and the Chinese Communist party, which was expected, some students felt they said so either for propaganda, out of their fear of government monitoring or because they were brainwashed. The students who had this sense of knowing what the Chinese people don't know about China and what is in the mind of the Chinese positioned themselves as someone who knew better about China than the Chinese people. Using what they knew as an authority to check upon what the Chinese lecturers knew demonstrated the students' sense of "positional superiority of the Western knowledge" over the local knowledge the Chinese lecturers conveyed (Smith, 1999, p. 59). The lecturers were observed as the objects of study instead of experts who could contribute to the students' knowledge system (Smith, 1999). The Chinese lecturers' perspectives were not valued as knowledge worth learning. Complex issues like how the Chinese people viewed the Chinese government and the Chinese Communist party were stereotypically generalized into the cliché about Chinese government and people readily set up in the dominant discourse models of China in the United States.

Foucauldian theory of discourse and power

Discourse about China in the United States heavily influenced what the students expected China to be, how they reasoned about China and what their attitudes towards China are. Behind the discourse is a conflict-oriented agenda due to the overwhelming influence of commercialism and how what happens in China influences the United States.

Western media follows the rationale that good news is not news. American media is no exception. In the United States news stories are newsworthy if they are of "impact, conflict, familiarity, timeliness, proximity, and/or bizarreness" (Yu, 1998, p. 48). These elements sell both for domestic news and international news. When it comes to

international news, sociologist Herbert Gans (1979) from Columbia University identified seven themes international news stories are usually about: 1) American activities in foreign country, 2) foreign activities that affect Americans and American policy, 3) communist-bloc country activities, 4) elections and other peaceful changes in government personnel, 5) political conflict and protest, 6) disaster and 7) the excesses of dictatorship.

China, a communist country (politically) with active economic and political ties with the United States, and a country with complicated internal and external issues, is a country with many newsworthy happenings. China's totalitarian government, human rights issues related to ethnic minorities, factory workers and political dissidents, product safety, violation of the international property rights and tension with Japan are all negative, sensational, typical of China and full of conflicts. These issues also impact the United States in economics, politics and ideology. The one-party system and Communist government restrictions on the freedom of speech and information, and many other violations of human rights are contrary to democracy, the founding principle of the United States. Cheap labor and poor working environments in China not only violate human rights, but also reduced the competitiveness of American products because of the lower cost of "Made in China." Lack of product safety, especially of products imported from China to the United States, can endanger the lives of Americans. The image of products made in China with safety issues also help promotes safe products made in the United States. Counterfeiting in China is against the interest of the United States, a country known for its innovativeness. The strained relationship between China and Japan, an ally of the United States, is not only a topic familiar to American readers but also related to the military and political interests of the United States in the Far East. China, a

huge country with a distinctive culture and social system, increasing influence over the United States, and a lot of conflicts going on, is an easy target for negative reporting in the media of the United States.

The conflict-oriented agenda also makes the news media reports focus much more intensively and persistently on negative issues in China than on positive ones, which explains the “Made in China” participants’ monolithic attitudes towards many aspects of China. The territorial dispute between China and Japan, for example, had been reported in 19 *New York Times* articles within less than two months from September 13 to October 28, 2010. There were three articles about this dispute on the single day of September 24, 2010. When it comes to the close economic ties between China and Japan and the intention to improve the China-Japanese relationship from either or both sides, 13 articles emphasizing these two themes were found in *The New York Times* within 32 years from August 13, 1978 to September 24, 2010. As shown in figure six, sweatshop factories are the most frequently reported theme concerning Chinese factories in *The New York Times*. From 2000 to 2011, 45 five articles on the theme of sweatshop-style Chinese factories are found in *The New York Times*. Only one article mentions that the working conditions in Chinese factories vary. Drama and conflict claim more space in the news media and therefore claim more attention of readers. In this way, the news media influences and even frames the readers’ knowledge of and attitudes towards China-Japan relations. The “Made in China” participants’ one-dimensional knowledge of the animosity between China and Japan and the working conditions in Chinese factories echoes the negative sides of China that dominate the news coverage of China in the United States media.

The conflict-oriented agenda of the media in the United States is also notable for the absence of stories about ordinary people in China. This is reflected in the “Made in China” participants’ lack of knowledge about ordinary Chinese people and nuanced Chinese society, as well as their tendency to generalize about both. Among all the reports concerning Chinese factories in *The New York Times* from 1923 to 2011, only one article focuses on how hardworking the Chinese people are and how their ethic of hard work and discipline have led to the high efficiency of Chinese factories (Fishman, 2004). This article acknowledges that the economic rise and industrial development of China is based on the hard work of millions of the Chinese people. They are cheap labor according to the American standard, but this article views them as highly disciplined and motivated individuals who work hard to take care of their families and pursue their dreams at an acceptable wage in China. This perspective shows the industrial development in China in the light of hardworking ordinary Chinese people instead of merely a massive exploitation of cheap labor. A glimpse of the real life of ordinary Chinese people offers not only different perspectives but also nuances, which many outsiders (including foreign journalists) cannot see.

As discussed in chapter four, many students missed the fact that many Chinese people figured out how to access the government-blocked websites, and they can be critical of their government and in fact are criticizing and pushing their government to change on *Weibo*. When the conflict-oriented media reports on *Weibo*, they focus more on the fact that the Chinese government still monitors *Weibo*, and it is a platform for activists to fight against their government (See Figure 10). Ordinary people are mute in the media representation of China. This helps explain why the Chinese people surprised

many “Made in China” participants by either being critical of their government or by looking quite happy about their life (Interviewee 3).

Social psychological theory of attitude and attitude change

“Made in China” participants’ attitude formation and attitude changes reflected from their journals, survey responses and interviews illustrate what Triandis (1971) and many other social psychologists theorize about attitude and attitude change. Their attitudes are often in line with the mainstream attitude towards China. They changed their attitudes when the source of the message was powerful, when the message was delivered in a way they liked, and when they had enough knowledge to recognize the content of the message was right and accept it. I find in this study that the value expression function of attitude hindered students from learning from local Chinese people. The implication of the current research to the theory of attitude and attitude change is that when students take their value as universal truth they tend to be resistant to knowledge that challenges their value. Students need to recognize two points. First, one can hold his own value while trying to understand other’s value. Not necessarily seeking to change the values its participants uphold, study abroad is meant to improve their intercultural understanding and make them move from being ethnocentric to ethnorelative. Understanding others does not mean giving up one’s value. The second point students need to realize is that the value one holds is not knowledge universally accepted or legitimate everywhere. If they can turn these value-expressive attitudes into a knowledge-seeking attitude, more open-mindedness, willingness to learn from the local and even deep cultural empathy to begin to see the world the way local people do will be achieved.

Implication for Policy and Practice

This study has policy implications for both China and the United States. For China, how to implement soft power more effectively and represent itself in a better way is suggested. For the United States, more thinking should be given to how to make short-term study abroad more meaningful and impactful to counter criticisms that it is superficial and might even be considered glorified cultural tourism.

Policy and practice implication for China

As I said in previous chapters representation of China in the mainstream discourse in the United States, especially by news media, is not necessarily wrong. It is just unbalanced. Conflict-oriented media is one reason behind this unbalanced representation. China is responsible for its own image in the United States as well.

Virtually all nations in the world have the policy to promote their best images and “hide the dark part.” Thailand, for example, presents itself as amazing, friendly, and a place with friendly and smiling people. China, however, is not good at “public relations” although tens of billions of dollars had been thrown at its “prestige deficit” (Pesek, 2012, May 17).

The 2008 Beijing Olympics opening ceremony, for example, a pricy public-relations expenditure, was marred by lip-synching, fake minority ethnic children (Figure 17) and fake fireworks. Putting a “prettier” girl in front the whole world watching China and using another girl’s voice, dressing a group of Han Chinese children in ethnic costumes to “symbolize” the 56 ethnic groups in China and inserting computer graphics into the live coverage electronically are outrageous lies that happened at this opening ceremony of the first Olympic Games held in China.



Figure 17: The Chinese flag is carried by 56 children representing 56 ethnic groups within modern China.

Photo: EPA (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/olympics/2563786/Beijing-Olympics-Ethnic-children-revealed-as-fakes-in-opening-ceremony.html>)

These are all what some “Made in China” participants called “posing for face.” Western media did not fake these in the news. Another example of China’s unsuccessful soft power promotion is that while the Chinese government is spending millions of dollars promoting Chinese language and culture through establishing Confucius Institutes all over the world, Chinese dissidents head to the U.S. embassy for protection from the Chinese government’s abuse of their basic human rights (Pesek, 2012, May 17). Pollution, food-safety issues, violation of intellectual property rights and blocking of foreign websites are not faked by Western media either. They are still happening in China. While the conflict-oriented Western media is always looking for negative news, China constantly feeds it. If I were to suggest how China might conquer these issues, one dissertation would not be enough space. Pesek’s (2012, May 17) suggestion is what China should listen to achieve a better image:

“What the Communist Party doesn’t understand is that for the country to accrue soft power it should close the checkbook. Then it needs to treat its people and its neighbors with respect, and let all the world look on as it does.”

Implication for practice

Significance of short-term study abroad

Short-term study abroad has been the target of many doubts and criticism about the effectiveness of improving participants’ intercultural competence during a short period of time (Dwyer, 2004; Engle & Engle, 2004; Erwin & Coleman, 1998; Fantini, 1995; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Vande Berg, Balkcum, Scheid, & Whalen, 2004). This study focuses mainly on when and how misinterpretations were formed. The lack of pre- and post-trip comparison makes a qualitative evaluation of the program’s effectiveness impossible. The student journals, especially the last entry of each journal book, the survey and interview, however, do show that the “Made in China” participants’ experience had great significance to their worldviews.

The survey shows that 94 percent of the participants agree that “Made in China” expanded their knowledge about China and the remainder somewhat agree:

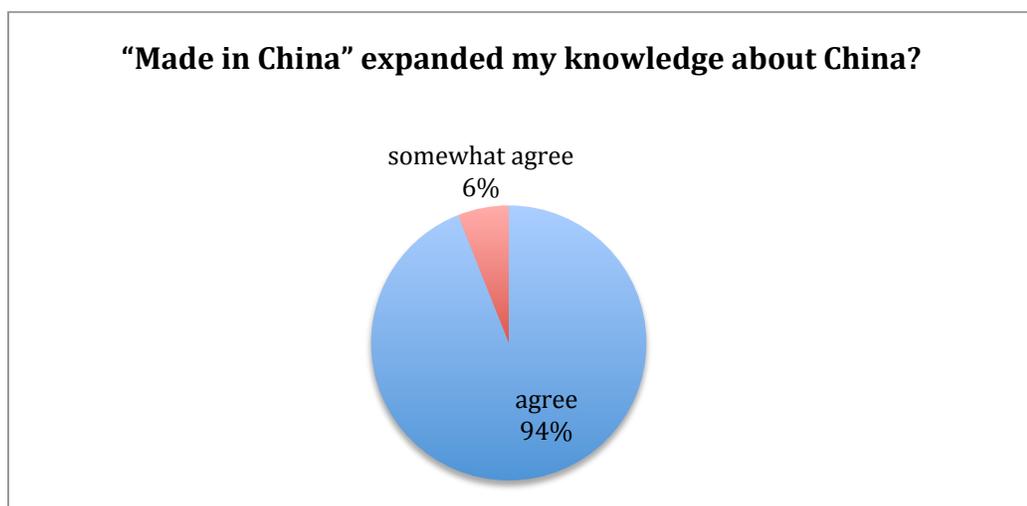


Figure 18: Participants’ attitude about the influence of “Made in China” over their knowledge about China

Fifty-six percent of them agree that “Made in China” made them more aware of their own bias regarding China, and 37 percent somewhat agree. Only 6 percent somewhat disagree:

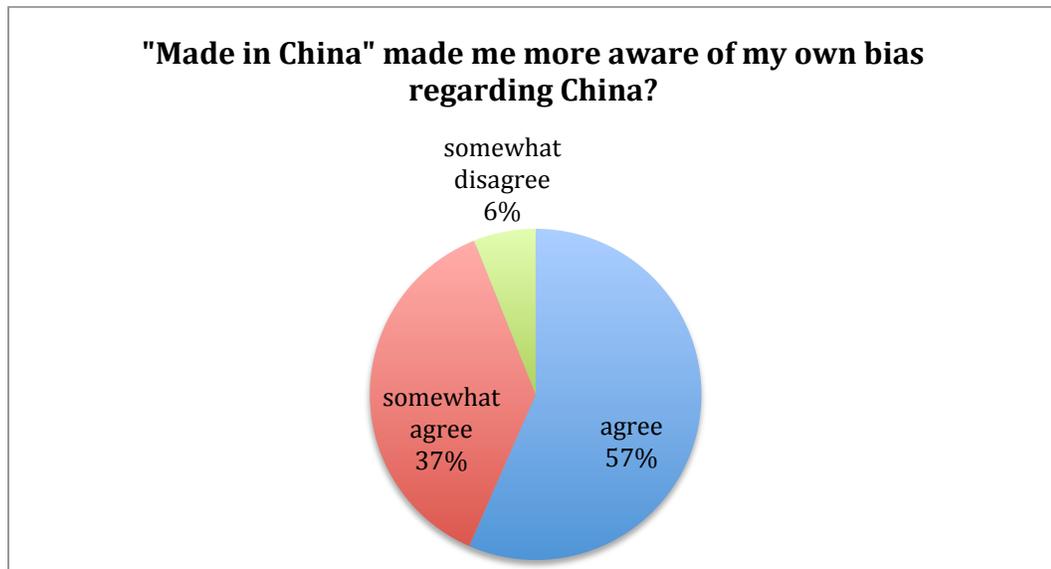


Figure 19: Participants’ attitude about the influence of “Made in China” over their bias regarding China

Fifteen students indicated in their journals that the “Made in China” trip deepened their understanding of the interconnected world, greatly increased their interest in knowing China better, and helped them know themselves better.

One student wrote:

“My three weeks’ experience of China will definitely change my life.... Maybe not something too drastic, but being in China gave me the experience of what it is like to have cultural shock, use a foreign currency/money, the importance of communication skills and what it means to ‘open the door’. I thought I knew how life in China would be like, or at least should be like, but I didn’t” (Journal 5, entry 19).

Another student wrote:

“After spending the past three weeks in China, I have seen how connected the world really is. You can never fully understand this unless you experience it first hand. I

have learned more in these past three weeks than I could ever learn sitting in a lecture. I was doubting whether I wanted to study abroad and I would not change a thing now”(Journal 17, entry 19).

Students also spoke highly of the instructor of the program. All the interviewees agree that he was a very resourceful person about China. One student commented in the survey:

“Seth Werner is a great professor. He is full of knowledge and passion about China. I learned a lot from him and from my experiences in China. I would definitely go back to visit China.”

The success of this program also lies in how well-designed it is in terms of the sites the instructor had chosen and the way he asked the students to keep journals. The whole trip was linked by the theme of “Made in China.” The instructor also created chances for students to learn about the history, economy, politics and culture of China. Beijing is the political center and an ancient city of China. There the students had lectures about the history of China and visited 798 art district, a place full of politically rebellious art pieces. Beijing is also where INBAR, the headquarters of the bamboo industry they later visited in Anji, is located. In Shanghai, the economic hub of China, the students visited the Deep Water Port where huge amounts of “Made in China” products were shipped out of China. In Anji, they visited the bamboo factories that helped them visualize how “Made in China” items were produced in Chinese factories. Asking the students to keep a daily travel log was also very helpful for the students to digest and debrief the intensive days they had during their three weeks in China. It also kept a record of what they had learned and how they had grown in the three weeks. Peer review of these journals gave a chance for

students to discuss and correct some wrong conclusions some of the students had made during the trip, although peer review might have made some students hesitant to share what they truly felt.

Ask the local people

Students should be encouraged to ask the opinion of local people whom they judge and doubt. The student journals and interview show that most of the students had very limited interaction with local Chinese during their three-week trip in China. Most of the time they were observing rather than asking and confirming with local Chinese people when they had the chance about their ideas of what was going on in China.

The instructor of “Made in China” arranged many opportunities for the participants to interact with local Chinese. The students had a basketball game with students from Tsinghua University. They had five Chinese speakers besides the formal and informal tour guides and the factory representatives from the bamboo factories. The instructor also emphasized the importance of interacting with local people and understanding what they think during the pre-trip orientation. The students’ journals and the interviews show that not a lot of efforts were made to truly communicate with the local Chinese they met and that they hadn’t tried to obtain an insider’s perspective.

The reason that students should be encouraged more to ask local people is that most of the time many students were very comfortable with their assumptions, and asking the local people to verify these did not occur to them. Students need to be encouraged more to step out of their own frame of reference and be made aware that the local perspective might be different and that their judgments might be wrong.

Many times, the “Made in China” participants had skewed judgments of certain happenings in China, which could be easily improved by talking to the local people. For example, seeing girls giving bike rides to boys on Tsinghua University camps, one student said that:

“In America, men [are] generally considered gentlemen. They open doors for ladies, offer to pay for dinner, yada yada yada. But here in China, it seems like the roles are reversed. I constantly see girls trying to impress boys. Offering to give a boy a ride of the back of their bike and doing little things to get their attention. Pomfret had said that it was hard for a girl to find a husband back in the day, and I wonder if it’s still the same way. Trying to compete to get the best out there” (Journal 1, entry 2).

Having bicycles as the main transportation tool for decades, the Chinese people offer a bike ride like Americans offer a car ride to their friends. This student was not clear about what other little things he or she had seen Chinese girls were doing to get boys’ attention. Viewing a woman offering bike ride to a man as a sign of Chinese women competing for a husband and Chinese men not being gentlemen is arbitrary. If this student had not been that confident in this judgment by saying “I wonder if it’s still the same way”, he or she could easily have talked to the Chinese students they had met at Tsinghua University during their trip. Why girls offer bike rides to boys is not a sensitive or offensive question. Interesting discussions could spring from it but this student did not ask the local people about it. This student also had a sense of superiority about the type of gentlemanliness American men are supposed to display. They could have learned the differences between Chinese and the American courtesy. The comfort this student had in his or her judgment

stopped him or her from learning. Study abroad students should definitely be encouraged to verify their assumptions with the local people.

As important as encouraging the students to ask the local person who can speak English is to teach them to ask the local people in a skillful and culturally appropriate way. Many times the study abroad students do not ask the local people because they do not want to offend the local people and get themselves in trouble. Knowing how to ask questions to the local people in a tactful way is important.

When some students disagreed with what they heard from the Chinese speakers, they did not question the speakers per se. Instead, they assumed that the speakers were brainwashed, propagandizing, only saying something allowed by their government or just lying for face. No one brought up their questions and doubts to the speakers as they would probably do in their American classrooms. The silent assumptions may have been caused by their concerns about being watched and monitored by the Chinese government if they had brought up sensitive issues and questions. The students may have been concerned about embarrassing the speakers who they assumed would be very sensitive about losing face in front of foreigners. It could also be that they did not think the Chinese speakers would ever offer worthy answers to their questions even if they had asked, which is another aspect of ethnocentrism.

The concern about being watched by the Chinese government is a common concern for international tourist travelling in China. The concern about embarrassing the speakers from a culture where questions can be interruptive and disrespectful is very legitimate. So being careful should always be encouraged. Students, however, should also learn how to ask questions in a skillful and respectful manner in this kind of sensitive situation to

protect themselves and the face of the speakers. Being skillful means being non-judgmental to the values the speakers hold when asking a question. For example, instead of asking “Why do you still highly regard Mao who I know has done a lot of bad deeds during the Cultural Revolution?” students who did not understand why the Chinese people still admired Mao could ask “Can you say more about how the Chinese people or government decided the 3:7 division of Mao’s mistakes and merits⁵?” This way the question about a sensitive issue can be asked in a neutral way that does not involve any negative judgment about government policy and mistakes. Being skillful also means avoiding “embarrassing or antagonizing respondents if they happen to be sensitive about the issue” (Merriam, 2009, p. 97). Merriam (2009) calls this strategy “devil’s advocate questions” (p. 97). Depersonalizing the issue by starting with “Some people would say” is suggested (Merriam, 2009, p. 97). Another strategy for reducing the sense of antagonizing is to have some positive comments about the lecture and then put forward questions. Chinese people call this strategy 先扬后抑 (xian yi hou yang), i.e., praise before you criticize or question. All in all, being skillful when asking questions in a lecture setting means being non-judgmental, avoiding antagonizing, and praising before questioning.

Concern about embarrassing the speakers in a culture where questions can be viewed as interrupting and disrespectful is very legitimate. Therefore, knowing how to ask questions in the destination culture is very important to study abroad participants in order to learn and to be respectful at the same time. Adapting to the classroom culture of the destination country would make both the study-abroad students feel respectful and the

⁵ The three-to-seven division of Mao’s mistakes and merits is the official evolution of Mao’s deeds in the history of China.

local lecturer feel respected. In the case of China, professors and speakers are not as used to questions as American professors. The teaching culture in China is more of a top-down communication rather than a side-by-side communication as it is in the United States (Huijser, Stuck, & Tanaka, 2002). Students usually raise their hands before they ask questions. Jumping in without permission is usually considered rude. More often students are invited to answer questions from their lecturers. After-class discussion is also encouraged in China because it will not take class time. To feel respectful, American students can adapt to some of the Chinese classroom norms, raise their hands when they have questions and ask questions when the lecture is done but before the lecturer leaves. Studying culture can also help American students understand how Chinese students in the United States feel about American classroom culture, as well as how to communicate with Chinese speakers in a formal setting.

To fully understand another culture, cultural immersion is needed, although cultural immersion does not necessarily lead to understanding. To understand another people and culture, one needs to know what their attitudes and views are and why. This knowledge will enable a person to see the world from his or her own point of view but relate the world to people from another culture on their own terms and be able to make judgments based on their criteria. Ignorance of what people from another culture think and merely judging from what one already knows about that culture often reinforces prejudices. That is why communicating with the local people about what they think before making any judgment is suggested.

Interact with international Chinese students in the United States

Interacting with local Chinese people and asking them questions during the study abroad trip are important ways of learning about the China and Chinese perspectives. International Chinese students in the United States are also very good resources for American students to learn about China.

Coming from China and closely connected to China through reading online news and talking to families and friends in China, Chinese students in the United States are valuable sources of information about China American students should use to learn about China. China is a fast-changing society and the culture there has been negotiated all the time in many ways, such as how *Weibo* is used as a forum where ordinary Chinese people fight for freedom, democracy and equal right. These feature of Chinese society demand people who want to learn about China to go there as often as possible, travel as widely as possible in China, learn the language and follow the trends of social changes in China. While traveling and learning Chinese, might not be feasible to all students, international Chinese students on American university campus are a valuable and accessible resource for American students to learn about changing China and how Chinese people negotiate between their culture and the changes the Chinese society is experiencing. American students can easily learn what TV shows are popular in China, what online forums are popular among Chinese young people and what Chinese people think of activists like Chen Guangcheng and Ai Weiwei.

Asking Chinese students in the United States some political sensitive questions will not end up on the blacklist of Chinese government as many study abroad participants have concerned when they were in China. Besides Most Chinese students in the United

States also speak English very well, which will make the communication easier with those American students who don't speak Chinese. If a study abroad trip can become a trigger for students' interest in China, interacting with international Chinese students in the United States to learn about China is suggested.

More in-depth understanding of local cultural concepts

The design of a short-term study abroad program should involve more orientation programming for students to have a more in-depth understanding of local cultural concepts. There are some catch phrases to describe the style of certain social customs or cultural norms in some cultures, such as “Minnesota nice” and “passive aggressive” for Minnesota in the United States, “little man” culture in Shanghai, China, Shintoism in Japanese work ethics, and traditionalism in Britain. These catch phrases often appear on the list of top 10 cultural tips for tourists to that country or region. Their uniqueness and easy literal meaning often make tourists look for evidence to prove their understanding of the cultural norms or social customs, and tagging them with these catch phrases. Sometimes they can be right, but only if the tourists have a deep understanding of these cultural concepts beforehand and try to get a holistic view of the phenomena on which they will put the tags instead of taking a snapshot and tagging it immediately without even verifying whether it is right. More background reading and scenario analysis before the trip, and group story sharing and discussions among peers during the trip are suggested to deepen and verify the students' understanding of certain local cultural aspects.

Mis-tagging happened among “Made in China” participants. The two cultural concepts that frequently appeared in their journals are face and *guanxi*. How some of the

students equated the concept of face with lying has been discussed in chapter four of this dissertation. *Guanxi* is another concept they had superficial understanding of.

“*Guanxi* [sic] is a cultural characteristic that has strong implications for interpersonal and interorganizational dynamics in Chinese society. It refers to the concept of drawing on a web of connections to secure favors in personal and organizational relations.... *Guanxi*...contains implicit mutual obligations, assurances, and understanding” (Park & Luo, 2001).

Mutual obligation and interpersonal exchange of favors are the essence of the concept of *Guanxi*. Some students completely missed the essence of the concept of *Guanxi*. One student who had a tour guide in Beijing who worked in a business-like manner wrote: “Very interesting about the guide keeping the topics on business. I wonder when the idea of *guanxi* [sic] begins?” (Journal 2, entry 1) Chinese people don’t do *guanxi* with everyone, especially not with a student from the United States who will stay in China for three weeks. The only mutual obligation and exchange of favors between the tour guide and the student would be the contract for tour guiding this student who paid for his service. Another example is from a student warmly greeted by a group of young Chinese who bought him drinks and food when they went to a bar together:

“It really was so fantastic but I caught myself wondering throughout the night WHY were they doing this??? I felt bad being so skeptical but it was so unlike anything I had ever experienced back home. In the U. S. it seems that would only happen if someone wanted something from you. Obviously too I was just trying to be smart about being in a foreign and unfamiliar place, but perhaps this is what building GUANXI is all about” (Journal 6, entry 2, response).

Chinese people don't do everything based on *Guanxi*. Inviting a group of international visitors for drink or karaoke often happens because many Chinese people think it is more fun to have foreigner share their fun time. As in the prior example, American students studying in China for a short period do not have enough social capital to make it worth the Chinese people's time to make the effort to build *Guanxi*. A couple of drinks and sharing karaoke are typical moves to build friendship or to share fun in China. The two examples show that some students had a very limited understanding of what *guanxi* means and how Chinese people practice it. This limited understanding led to their misinterpretation of what happened between them and the local Chinese people. Since they had not had any discussion about their interpretations, they carried these misinterpretations back home.

Much research has been done about Chinese social norms and cultural behaviors. Some of the thorough research about Chinese culture can be put on the pre-trip reading list. Scenarios based on past students' misinterpretations can be used for after-reading discussion. During the trip, the "Made in China" participants had peers critique their journal entries. The critiques are not reviewed or critiqued by anyone. Some misinterpretations were not identified. So the suggestion to the instructor is to add some group story sharing and discussions about what happened to the students, what their thoughts were, and what was reflected in their journals. Sharing and discussing can help the instructor to identify major confusion or misinterpretations. Discussion with peers and the instructor can help students to view things from different perspectives. Local Chinese can be invited to this kind of discussion if the students feel comfortable about it, or the

students can be assigned to find answers from the local Chinese about their confusion about certain cultural aspects of China.

Be more mindful of discourse

Another suggestion for the design of study abroad program is to have students read about discourse, power and knowledge. The instructor of “Made in China” had emphasized the influence of discourse on the image of China before the trip. Some students but not all showed their awareness of discourse in their texts. For example, one student wrote:

“I thoroughly enjoyed the visit to Inbar. It was interesting to see the perspective of the people working there that sustainable and environmental development in China is possible. I read so much in the newspaper about pollution in China. It is nice to know that many people are trying to find solutions” (Journal 6, entry 6).

The awareness of the discourse where one is from and different discourses is an important step towards independent thinking. Study abroad is a good site for the interaction of different and even conflicting discourses. It provides a significant entryway into challenging or reinforcing the images of the target culture formed before experiencing this culture. More awareness of discourse and the relationship between power and knowledge can help students step back, critique their own attitudes, and be more curious about the power behind different discourses.

The dialogical nature of study abroad programs destabilizes the discourses about China and the world with which the “Made in China” participants were familiar before the trip to China. That is where their surprises and discomforts originated. Very few students, however, questioned themselves about why they were surprised, and failed to

connect their surprises to the discourse about China in the United States where their attitudes towards China were formed. Study abroad is a good chance for students to learn not only about China but also about themselves and their own culture. Judging the destination culture without reflecting upon their own, students missed half the significance of studying abroad. More awareness of the influence over knowledge formation can facilitate students' taking the chance for dialogue between two cultures, such as at moments they feel surprised and uncomfortable, and learn from these moments to become less entangled in one discourse and acquire multiple perspectives.

Foucault's theory of knowledge and power and Said's theory of Orientalism and even the debate around the theory can be woven into a study abroad program like "Made in China" in the pre-sojourn seminars or readings. This could create a conceptual framework to sharpen students' critical-thinking skills by connecting their everyday experiences with broader discourses and geographies of power, representation, and difference (Ashutosh & Winders, 2009). Critical discourse analysis, as an analytical tool, can be introduced to the students when they critique their fellow participants' travelogues. Debriefing discussions under the framework of critical discourse analysis, Orientalism, cross-cultural awareness or other intercultural communication theories, after writing one's own and commenting on others' journals, would be helpful to make participants more aware of their own level of cross-cultural awareness.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of this study include the lack of the anonymous but open journals, the lack of participation observation, the lack of pre-trip evaluation and reliance on memory, self-selection bias, and the fact that I am not a native English speaker.

The students' journals are anonymous to me but not completely anonymous to their peers and instructor. All the participants knew that their journals would be critiqued by their peer group and the instructor. It is possible that they might not have been as frank as they would have been had the journals been completely private. Participation observation would have provided good complementary data, allowing me to establish valuable contexts and to capture what was missing from the students' journals, survey and interview. My knowledge about China as a native Chinese and my travelling experience in all the places the "Made in China" participants had travelled except the bamboo factories, however, help me to contextualize the narratives of the students about their trips. The pictures the instructor and interviews had taken on their trip also help me to better visualize and contextualize their trips more.

Another limitation of this study is the lack of pre-trip evaluation. Without a pre-trip evaluation about the participants' attitudes towards China, this study relies on the students' memory about their pre-trip attitudes towards China. Memory sometimes fails and can be mixed up with other experiences and even with imagination. In this research I did not use data based on participants' memory to confirm or establish empirical truth. Instead I viewed memory as a way the students represent themselves as Keightley (2010) points out:

"Remembering, whether involving individual, social or cultural representation of the past, is a process which involves selections, absences and multiple, potentially conflicting accounts" (p.59).

The surprises and “This is China” moments in the student journals written when they were in China comprised what might be missing from memory and what a pre-trip evaluation could have brought out.

The survey and interview participants are self-selected in this study. Self-selected participants usually have a stronger opinion or more interest in the survey subject than those who choose not to participate in the survey and the interview. The diverse backgrounds of the self-selected participants of this study, however, still allowed me to achieve maximum variation in the selection of interviewees. As a Chinese who speaks English as the second language, I may have missed some nuances in the participants’ travelogues and interviews. I minimized this possibility by peer review.

Recommendations for Future Research

For future research on similar topics, pre-trip and post-trip evaluation, participant observation, and random and purposeful sampling methods are suggested to improve the validity of data and add a larger quantitative dimension to similar kinds of research.

Pre-trip and post-trip evaluations are suggested, and an attitude scale can be developed and used in both evaluations in order to have a quantitative measure of the impact of a study abroad program on its participants’ attitude change about the destination country and culture.

Traveling with the group and participant observation are suggested if funding allows. As is mentioned before as one of the limitations of this study, participant observation would have allowed adding more contextualizing details to the data collected through student journal, surveys and interviews. It would also have allowed me to have

more chance to interact with the students and conduct interviews at critical moments during the trip, which produces different data than the post-trip interview.

Random sampling and purposeful sampling of interview participants at the same time are also suggested if the pool is big enough to allow both. Random sampling would increase the validity of the study and purposeful sampling would still allow the research to focus on the individual cases that help answer the research question.

Conclusion

Lieutenant Colonel Susan M. Puska (1998) has said, “The perceptual gap has been a ubiquitous feature of U.S.- China relations since at least the 19th century” (p. 2). I believe education and educational exchange are the best ways to reduce this perceptual gap between the two countries. This study was done to measure the impact of a study abroad trip to China on its participants’ attitude towards China, and to see whether and how study abroad can improve mutual understanding between the two nations.

Looking into the students’ travel logs, and communicating with the “Made in China” participants through a survey and interviews, I find that the image of China in the mainstream discourse in the United States has a powerful influence over how the students imagined China before the trip and interpreted China during the trip. China turned out to be a big surprise to most of the students. The students’ surprises reflect what is missing from the representation of China in the American discourse - a complex and multidimensional China. The students’ “This is China” moments reflect one dominant image of China in the American discourse, i.e., a deficient China that is at the opposite of the United States in many ways. The two most frequently used labels to explain the unexpected sides of China are face posing and government control. The Chinese

government's restriction on the freedom of speech, the hesitance to step out of their comfort zone and the possible concern of stepping on the local people's toes made the participants lose many chances to ask them and verify their judgments of certain phenomenon in China. One practical implication of this research would be to encourage study-abroad participants to talk more to local people. When it comes to what works in changing students' attitude, data in this study show that the credibility of the speakers determines how influential the message they convey will be on the students' attitudes. Students' prior knowledge also determines whether they can engage in an objective reasoning of the information they get and reach a well-grounded attitude.

Study abroad provides an opportunity for students to be exposed to different perspectives and for students to become the medium of dialogues between the discourse they are familiar with and the discourse of the destination culture. What happened to the "Made in China" participants was that they ran into surprises one after another, which shows the conflicts between two discourses about China in the United States and in China itself. Study abroad provides valuable opportunities for its participants to look into their own reactions and interpretation of the destination culture, and to learn about local perspectives and what kind of discourse has formed these local perspectives. This study also reinforces the importance of critical thinking in developing intercultural competence and multiple cultural perspectives.

This research relates directly to major challenges facing both China and the United States as they move forward in an increasingly culturally complex and globally interconnected world. China is clearly committed to the use of soft power but, based on the results of this study, the Chinese seem relatively ineffective in communicating their

messages to young American students spending a relatively short period of time in their country. China must rethink the way it presents itself to the outside world. For the United States, with the serious commitment to increase greatly the number of students it sends abroad to places like China (see e.g., The Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Act), it also must rethink the way it prepares its young people for study abroad to give them the critical skills to deconstruct distortions both from their home and destination countries. Hopefully the results of this dissertation may inform efforts to rethink and implement study abroad in China more creatively and competently.

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Appendix I

Survey: China in Your Eyes

I. Greetings and Consent Form

State of Consent Form

I have read the above information. By replying and submitting this survey, I indicate my consent to participate in the survey.

II. Survey

1. Which year did you participate in the “Made in China” study-abroad program and go to China?
2. What year were you when you participated in the “Made in China” program?
3. Have you been to any other countries (including China) other than your own for any reason before you traveled to China with the “Made in China” group?
If you chose yes to the above question, please specify country, duration and type of experience. If more than 20, please add more as you answer question 21.

	Country	To live as a resident (either temporary or permanent)	Studying	Working	Traveling	Other (Please specify)
Duration						
Duration						
Duration						
Duration						
Duration						
Duration ⁶						

4. How would you classify the place where you primarily live up to age 18?
5. What is your mother tongue?
6. In addition to your mother tongue, what other languages do you speak fluently? If you don't speak any other language fluently, write N/A.
7. Have you studied other languages besides your mother tongue?
If you chose “yes” to the question above, how long have you studied it and what level are you at? If you have studied more than 10 languages, please add more as you answer question 21.

⁶ Twenty rows are provided in the real survey.

	Language 1	Language 2	Language 3	Language 4 ⁷
Duration				
Proficiency				

8. Why did you choose China as your study abroad destination?
9. What were your major source(s) of information about China before you went to China? If you remember them, please specify. Write N/A please, if the source does not apply to you.
Books:
Newspaper/magazine:
News program:
World Wide Web:
School courses:
Other:
10. What were your impressions of China before traveling there with the “Made in China” group?
11. What was/were your “This is China” moment(s) during your “Made in China” trip? Why?
12. What surprised you the most when you were in China?
13. What pre-trip reading materials helped you the most for this trip? If there were not any, write N/A please.
14. What are your major source(s) of information about China now? If you remember them, please specify. Write N/A if the source does not apply to you.
15. Please use three words or phrases to describe your basic impression of China now.
16. How would you describe the influence of "Made in China" had on your knowledge of China?

	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
"Made in China" expanded my knowledge about China.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Made in China" made me more aware of my own bias regarding China.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. Rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

		Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
1)	In China, it is all about economic development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

⁷ Twenty columns are provided in the real survey.

2)	China is a safe country.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3)	The Chinese eat weird food.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4)	The Chinese have a healthy life style.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5)	China has little racial discrimination.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6)	The Chinese are brainwashed by their government.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7)	Chinese culture and its social system are so complex and cannot be understood by foreigners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8)	Chinese hospitality is great and people are very welcoming.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9)	The one-child policy is cruel and a violation of human rights.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10)	The one-child policy represents a commitment to effective family planning, with benefits for both China and the world.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11)	Chinese political authority speaks with a single voice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12)	There is no freedom of speech in China.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13)	China has its own form of democracy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14)	Chinese still idolize political figures such as Chairman Mao Zedong.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15)	China is an ethnically diverse country.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16)	The U.S. is losing so many jobs to China.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17)	China's rapid economic growth has made important contribution to the development and prosperity of the world economy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18)	China is a threat to the U.S. and wants to replace the U.S. as the world's superpower.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19)	The Chinese intentionally keep the value of their currency low to promote their exports unfairly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20)	Chinese industry is technologically advanced.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21)	The booming Chinese economy is largely built on cheap labors working in sweatshops.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22)	China always wants to show its power to the West.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. What is your major and minor if you have one?

19. What is your gender?

Female Male Other

20. How would you describe your ethnic background/identity?

American Indian or Alaskan Indian

African American

Asian or Pacific Islander

Hispanic/Latino

White

Other, please specify _____

21. If you did not have enough space to answer question 3 and 7 about the languages you have learned and the countries you have been to, and/or if you have anything you want to tell me about the program, which hasn't been asked, please add here.

Appendix II: Semi-Structured and customized interview questions

Interview questions for interviewee one

1. Thanks for showing me five pictures you had taken during your “Made in China” trip. Why do you think would best describe China in your eyes?
2. In the survey you strongly that “Made in China’ made me more aware of my own bias regarding China.” Can you talk about what your biases were and how did this program make you become aware of that?
3. In the survey you agree, “The Chinese still idolize political figures such as Chairman Mao Zedong.” How did you get this impression from the trip?
4. In the survey you also agree that “China always wants to show its power to the West”, which is related to the cultural concept of face. Can you tell me more about your impression of China always wanting to show its power to the West?
5. I know Seth had arranged a few lectures on various topics during your trip in China. Which speaker impressed you the most? Why?
 - From which speaker or writer do you think you learned the most?
6. What do you think of the arrangement of the presentation before every factory visit?
 - What do you think of the representatives from INBAR who companied your factory visits in Anji?
7. How do you like the tour guide(s) you had during your trip?
 - How do you think of the message he had conveyed about China?
8. I know that both Seth and several speakers had mentioned about government control from the Chinese government. Did you have any experiences with it? Or were there any incidents which made you feel the presence of government control?
9. As a Chinese student who went on a study abroad trip to China with a group of American students who were of other ethnic backgrounds, what role do you think you played in the group?
10. You mentioned that the reason you chose China as your study abroad destination is because “you want to see the country as a foreigner.” Was this goal fulfilled through this trip?
 - What is the difference between the perspectives of a foreigner and a Chinese?
 - What is the difference between the China in the eyes of a foreigner and a Chinese?

Interview questions for interviewee two

1. Thanks for showing me five pictures you had taken during your “Made in China” trip. Why do you think would best describe China in your eyes?
2. You rate the following statement 3: ”Made in China’ made me more aware of my own bias regarding China.” Can you talk about what your biases were and how did this program make you become aware of that?
3. In the survey you somewhat agree, “The Chinese still idolize political figures such as Chairman Mao Zedong.” How did you get this impression from the trip?
4. In the survey you also somewhat disagree that “China always wants to show its power to the West”, which is different from many other participants’ view. Can you tell me more about why you kind of disagree with this statement? Has this trip influenced your attitude to one child policy?
5. Again in the survey you disagree that “The one-child policy is cruel and a violation of human rights.” What made you think so? Has this trip influenced your attitude to one child policy?
6. I know Seth had arranged a few lectures on various topics during your trip in China. Which speaker impressed you the most? Why?
 - From which speaker or writer do you think you learned the most?
7. What do you think of the arrangement of the presentation before every factory visit?
 - What do you think of the representatives from INBAR who companied your factory visits in Anji?
8. How do you like the tour guide(s) you had during your trip?
 - How do you think of the message he had conveyed about China?
9. I know that both Seth and several speakers had mentioned about government control from the Chinese government. Did you have any experiences with it? Or were there any incidents, which made you, feel the presence of government control?
10. What is the most influential source of learning about China through the whole MIC trip?

Interview questions for interviewee three

1. Thanks for sharing the five interesting pictures with me. They look really fun. Can you tell me why you think these five pictures best describe China in your eyes?
2. You rate the following statement 4: "'Made in China' made me more aware of my own bias regarding China." Can you talk about what your biases were and how did this program make you become aware of that?
3. In the survey you agree that "China has its own form of democracy" which is different from many other participants' view. Can you tell me more about what made you agree with this statement? How this trip has influenced your view about this issue?
4. In the survey you somewhat agree that "China is an ethnically diverse country" same question, what made you agree with this statement? Was there something during the trip that had made you thought this way?
5. In the survey you agree, "The U.S. is losing so many jobs to China." what made you agree with this statement? Was there something during the trip that had made you thought this way?
6. I know Seth had arranged a few lectures on various topics during your trip in China. Which speaker impressed you the most? Why?
 - From which speaker or writer do you think you learned the most?
7. What do you think of the arrangement of the presentation before every factory visit?
 - What do you think of the representatives from INBAR who companied your factory visits in Anji?
8. How do you like the tour guide(s) you had during your trip?
 - How do you think of the message he had conveyed about China?
9. What is the most influential source of learning about China through the whole MIC trip?

Interview questions for interviewee four:

1. You rate the following statement 4: "'Made in China' made me more aware of my own bias regarding China." Can you talk about what your biases were and how did this program make you become aware of that?
2. In the survey you somewhat agree, "The Chinese are brainwashed by their government." Can you tell me more about what made you somewhat disagree with this statement? How this trip has influenced your view about this issue?
3. In the survey you somewhat agree that "The Chinese still idolize political figures such as Chairman Mao Zedong." same question, what made you agree with this statement? Was there something during the trip that had made you thought this way?
4. In the survey you somewhat agree that "There is no freedom of speech in China." what made you somewhat agree with this statement? Was there something during the trip that had made you thought this way?
5. In the survey you somewhat agree that "China always want to show it power to the West." what made you somewhat agree with this statement? Was there something during the trip that had made you thought this way?
6. I know Seth had arranged a few lectures on various topics during your trip in China. Which speaker impressed you the most? Why?
 - From which speaker or writer do you think you learned the most?

7. What do you think of the arrangement of the presentation before every factory visit?
 - What do you think of the representatives from INBAR who companied your factory visits in Anji?
8. What is the most influential source of learning about China through the whole MIC trip?
9. Do you have any pictures that you had taken during the trip you really think represent China?