

I grew up the first 5 years of my life in London, and then we went to China ... then we went back to China in 45' after the war and I was in China until 49' the revolution, when we had to come back. My father worked in the Embassy it's called the Chinese Embassy in London he was the first secretary so he was transferred to London in 1938 and he married my mother here who came here from Cheng-Du to join him in London in 1938, yep they married in 1938 and I was born in 1939.

We were brought up in a traditional Chinese form ... my parents were traditional Chinese. My father was a confusion scholar, my mother also was a scholar but she went to university in China and she didn't have a job when she came over to England because she couldn't speak English very well.

When I went to China I learnt how to read and write (Chinese) quite well in fact. I even wrote some Chinese poems that were published by my school in the Chinese press. But when we came back to England in 1949 I'm afraid I neglected my Chinese because I had to take up English again in order to get into a grammar school and so my Chinese have since then has gone down hill which is a very unfortunate thing and I regret intensely.

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Since I grew up in a traditional Chinese family I suppose it makes me respect a lot of the Chinese philosophy in terms of its ancientness, longevity and its values but at the same time being quite quote a modern person now, certain with my artwork and so forth there is a contradiction because I think that Chinese culture is hard to accept modernity and post modernity because they are set in very rigid ways. Although their values are very respectful ... it's difficult for them to come to terms with modernity. There has been some kind of conflict in my life and my brother and sister did not found it difficult ... they went totally their own way and became totally European.

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I think as I grow older ... the British culture (and) the Chinese culture I grew up with them kind of merge into one culture; into a much more

definitive; and possibly more clarified identity instead of having two sides of me that kind of live comfortably together and clash sometimes they merge into one...I don't have to think about am I Chinese am I British ... it just comes naturally I am both at the same time

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My father was a calligrapher he always use to write calligraphy in the evening. every evening he would spend a couple of hours writing away, he would always have a drink of whiskey first because it releases his chi, so his pen would flow with the energy of the chi, although we knew it was whisky. I think they ought to have a bottle called whiskey called chi. so he did masses and masses of calligraphy. My mother wrote poetry and then he would write it out in calligraphy. ... After he died, I have away all his calligraphy to his friends that were around at that time.

I can't remember anything of the war years, at all. We went back to china, um in 1945 after the war, and my memory started, I started to get little glimpses, I can remember little bits of China during that period. I remember staying in my mother's um, grand mansion on the mountainside, her

parents' grand mansion actually, because her father was a judge in the province and he was very affluent family and we went to school nearby and I was carried on a palleanquin, you know, with uh, like a sedan-chair thing, down the mountain to the school. ... I remember seeing loads of beggars around on, on the roadside and I was terrified, and I cried and cried coz I'd never seen these beggars before. You know, they were real beggars, not, not just like the homeless in London, but um, in a terrible state. So ah, that made me very unhappy.

I said before, I find that the older I get the more the centered I become, and instead of being either British or Chinese, or British Chinese, two halves, I become a whole person um, which has bits of both, the Chinese being my, you know, influence by my parents of course, and the British being influenced by my main culture and where I was born and where I was schooled. But um they've merged together into one comfortable, one comfortable mass. It's like putting two different spices together to make on dish, so the dish becomes indistinguishable.

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