



Emily Hahn



Nien Cheng



Qiu Xiaolong

*Volume 2 The Exegesis: Xenotropism and the Awakening of
Literary Expatriatism Through Writing Memoir*

Christine Velde

Thesis Title:

The Transformation of Expatriates through Turning to the Foreign

Volume One:

The Memoir: Bound: An Expatriate's Journey to China and Beyond

Volume Two:

The Exegesis: Xenotropism and the Awakening of Literary Expatriatism through Writing Memoir

Christine Robyn Velde

**Thesis Title: The Transformation of Expatriates through
Turning to the Foreign (Volume 1 and Volume 2)**

submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (Creative Writing)

Department of English

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

University of Adelaide

South Australia

February 2014

Contents

List of Photographs	v
Abstract	vi
Declaration	viii
Acknowledgments	ix
INTRODUCTION TO THE EXEGESIS	11
PART I XENOTROPISM	15
Defining Xenotropism	15
Past and Current Theories about Foreignness	15
Meaning and Characteristics of Foreignness	17
Differences between the Refugee, the Expatriate, the Immigrant, the Émigré and the Forced Exile	21
Transformation through Xenotropism	27
Expatriation and Xenotropism	28
The Challenges of Expatriatism	31
Writing as a Cathartic Process	35
The Awakening of Artistic and Personal Development through Xenotropism	36
The Memoir Genre and Xenotropism	38
PART II THREE WRITERS AND XENOTROPISM (TURNING TO THE FOREIGN)	42
Introduction	42
The Romantic Expatriate (<i>Emily Hahn</i> : 1905–1997)	44
The Political Émigré (<i>Nien Cheng</i> : 1915–2009)	49
The Exile (<i>Qiu Xiaolong</i> : 1953–)	53
PART III “BOUND” AND XENOTROPISM	60
Synopsis of “Bound”	60
Research Design and Process	64
Literary Techniques	68
Self-Reflexivity	72
CONCLUSION: CONTRIBUTION TO NEW KNOWLEDGE AND FURTHER RESEARCH	76
APPENDICES: A1–5	80
A1 – <i>Isla</i>	81
A2 – <i>Amelia</i>	83
A3 – <i>Liam</i>	85

<i>A4 – Deng</i>	87
<i>A5 – Siri</i>	89
<i>A6 – Grace</i>	92
<i>A7 – Sophie</i>	94
<i>A8 – Thomas</i>	96
<i>A9 – James</i>	98
<i>A10 – Millie</i>	100
<i>A11 – Damian</i>	102
WORKS CITED	104
GENERAL REFERENCES	110

List of Photographs

Emily Hahn – *No Hurry to Go Home*, <http://www.amazon.com> (accessed 1st August 2013).

Nien Cheng – <http://www.telegraph.co.uk> (accessed 1st August 2013).

Qiu Xiaolong – Emailed by author on 1st August 2013.

Abstract

This thesis, “The Transformation of Expatriates through Turning to the Foreign”, has two components which constitute Volume 1 and Volume 2. Volume 1 is a literary memoir, “Bound: An Expatriate’s Journey to China and Beyond”, which explores a ten-year period in the life of “Kristen”, an Australian expatriate in Shanghai. Although this memoir focuses on my own life, I adopted a similar Chinese pinyin version of my name (“Kristen”), to distance myself from my experiences and to write about them in a more objective way.

Volume 2 presents the exegesis, “Xenotropism and the Awakening of Literary Expatriatism through Writing Memoir”. It provides a theoretical analysis of xenotropism, undertakes an analysis of three prominent writers in China’s history and explores the relationship between xenotropism and its complexities and challenges, and the writing of memoir and its impact on mental health. Parts I, II and III of the exegesis are investigated through literary research and the use of a qualitative, narrative research design. This literary form of qualitative research is used to develop the research instruments and to carry out interviews with 11 expatriates in Shanghai and Hong Kong. Contemporary and historical photographs are incorporated to create a dialogue with Shanghai and to illustrate some ideas in the memoir “Bound”.

Critical and literary sources such as memoirs written by Asian and western writers are examined together. Rebecca Saunder’s *Concept of the Foreign* provides many theoretical ideas about xenotropism. Writers, such as Judith Barrington in *Writing the Memoir*, provide an explanation of the relationship between memory and the memoir genre. Julia Lin’s *Twentieth Century Women’s Poetry* is examined to provide a poetic emphasis to the writing of memoir. Poetry was considered integral to the writing of the

memoir because it provides a more layered and visual meaning, than prose alone can express.

The research findings contribute to new knowledge in that they illustrate that xenotropism, or “turning to the foreign”, results in both personal and artistic development, an understanding and acceptance of different cultures that facilitates the writing of a memoir. The findings show that the writing of memoir is a cathartic process which has positive benefits for mental health. Although there have been discussions about challenges faced through East to West migrations, the literature about West to East migrations is meagre. Yet these migrations are becoming more frequent now due to the advances of technology and the fact that people’s work increasingly involves a global role. “Bound” helps to fill this gap in the literature.

Together Volume 1, the memoir “Bound” and Volume 2, the exegesis “Xenotropism and the Awakening of Literary Expatriatism through Writing Memoir” exemplify the craft of memoir written through living in a foreign country, and they explain how this is different from writing from home. The exegesis explicates the creation of “Bound” from a combination of personal, research-based, literary and theoretical perspectives.

Declaration

I certify that both components of this thesis, the memoir and the exegesis, contain no material which has been accepted for the award of any degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contain no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

I give consent to this thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the *Copyright Act, 1968*.

I also give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the university's digital research repository, the library catalogue, and also through web search engines, unless permission has been granted for the university to restrict access for a period of time.

Christine Velde

February 2014

Acknowledgments

This memoir could not have been conceived without the foreign experience of living and working in Shanghai. My fellow expatriates through providing valuable input have enhanced the integrity and realism of the memoir. I appreciated their accessibility and openness during the interview process. A memoir is a literary act and could not have been written without the expert advice of my Principal Supervisor, Professor Brian Castro. Brian saw me through “Bound” and the exegesis “Xenotropism and the Awakening of Literary Expatriatism through Writing Memoir” from their initial conception through to completion.

On a personal note, I would like to thank my life partner David for his support and encouragement throughout the process and whilst in Shanghai, even when he needed me the most. I found a draft of my initial work when going through my mother Roma’s things after she suddenly left us. I recalled an earlier conversation with her when she said she really liked what I had written. Thanks to my sons Nikolas and Aleksander who willingly supported me on my return from Shanghai.

“Bound” is dedicated to my close Chinese friends and to others whom I may never see again who welcomed me into their city and their lives; who guided me in all aspects of my life there from finding my way around to carrying out my work role, purchasing, renovating and eventually selling an apartment and remained faithfully at my side during my subsequent departure. They explained to me what I did not understand, patiently and repeatedly made efforts to communicate with me in a language not their own, took on responsibilities often outside the realm of friendship and showed me how to see the world differently. They remain my greatest teachers.

Shanghai, my beloved city, was like a catalyst because she catapulted me forward in time and space. Through the expatriation process and the experience of foreignness, I became irretrievably changed in my personal values and priorities, artistic aspirations and the way in which, as writer Emily Hahn wrote in *China to Me*, I can now “see through new windows” (13).