

I am thai, but inside i
am also chinese
essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

“ My hometown China, I’m so sad that I had to leave you”, is a part of the song I heard all the time when I was little, and I still remember it. Not much is known about my background; I only know that I am actually Chinese. I could have cared less about it because I was born and raised in Thailand, and I considered myself Thai until my mom told me about my grandparents. My grandfather used to be a doctor in a small communist camp in China. He didn’t like it because he had to cure soldiers who hurt innocent people, but he couldn’t help these people.

He felt that was wrong, so he and my grandmother escaped from the communist camp, looking for a better life in Thailand. As foreigners in Thailand, they had a hard life for a while; however, they never gave up. Later on, they became successful in a business. I am very proud of them and I feel very thankful. If my grandparents hadn’t moved from China, my life would be completely different now. School is the first priority of my life, my mother always reminded me. She is very strict about my education.

Sometimes I felt like I was under the water and couldn’t breathe because it’s too much. I used to get mad at her all the time. One day she and I had a conversation about school, she told me she was hard on me because when she was teenager, my grandparents had already settled down. They had a noodle company, which made them very wealthy. Her parents had 8 children including her, and she is the 6th. My grandfather wanted his children to have a good education because he believed a good education would bring you a good life.

The older ones didn't want to go to school because they had a lot of money to spend from the business, so only my mother and the two younger sisters were going to school. When my mother was still a young, my grandfather passed away, leaving the noodle company behind. Unfortunately, nobody knew how to manage it. The company started falling apart. They became very poor. My mother worked very hard to support her sister and herself until they graduated from school. Finally, they got good jobs and supported the whole family.

Now, I understand why my mother thought education is very important in life. I experience two cultures, Thai and Chinese. While I was growing up, I didn't realize that I was being raised bi culturally. I celebrate two New Years every year. One is Thai New Year, on April 13, called " Songkran's day", and on this day, Buddhists visit the temple for ceremony, sprinkle water on the Buddha image for good luck, and then head home to sprinkle water on an elder's hand to show love and respect. The other is Chinese New Year in February, the date changing depending on the Chinese calendar.

All businesses close for 3-4 days, including my father's business. Cleaning the house is prohibited. Therefore, we believed on New Year's day if we work, the rest of the year we would work hard. There are also many celebrations such as lion dance, firecrackers, and acrobats. The most important part I look forward to on Chinese New Year is when older people give a good amount of money to the younger ones. Moreover, in my family when one wants to get married we have to follow both traditions, Thai and Chinese, which makes it twice harder than usual.

Knowing my history has made me want to study Chinese language and culture in the future. When I was young, I remember hearing my mother talk to my grandmother, my aunts, and my uncles in Chinese. I didn't know what they were talking about. Sometimes when they were outside and didn't want other people to understand them, they would speak Chinese. My mother has encouraged me to study Chinese since I was 8 years old and started to study English, but I never took it seriously because I didn't think the Chinese language would make my life different since I am Thai.

Now my thoughts have changed since I learned the story of my grandparents from her. If it weren't for my grandparents escape from China, I could be in China right now or somewhere else. I would never have this great life. I am very fortunate. In the future, I have a plan to visit China to see my roots and where my grandparents came from. If I am lucky, maybe I can find some of my relatives there. I want to know more about their culture, and I want to be able to tell my children and grandchildren about our history. I know that they will be proud of their great grandparents just like me.