

**Manifestation of Chinese Diasporic Elements
in the Novel *Crazy Rich Asians***

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Abstract

Singapore born American novelist Kevin Kwan published *Crazy Rich Asians* in 2013. The book was inspired by his childhood in Singapore. The main characters in consideration are Rachel Chu who is the protagonist, Charlie Wu, and the members of the Young-T'sien-Shang Clan. The paper focuses on the backgrounds of the character to display Chinese Diasporic Elements that define their identity and the relation to their homeland and host country as well as focus on the relations between Rachel and Eleanor, to describe how these elements interact with each other and can lead to prejudice and distrust.

Keywords: Diaspora, Chinese, Belonging, Class, Ancestry, Prejudice

Introduction

Diaspora refers to, “a people dispersed by whatever cause to more than one location. The people dispersed to different lands may harbour thoughts of return, may not fully assimilate to their host countries, and may maintain relationships with other communities in the diaspora.” (Melvin Ember)

The Greek term diasporá is derived from the verb disappearing, which is a composite of the words "dia" (over or through) and "speirein" (to spread or sow). Diaspora took on its most recognised shape throughout Jewish history. Displacement, exile, and longing for a homeland were the central features of the Jewish Diaspora. (Kenny)

The Chinese Diaspora is the fourth largest in the world, behind India, Mexico, and Russian Federation with a population size of ten million, and about sixty million if their descendants are included. (Schäfer) (Guotu)

The diaspora is spread over one hundred and forty-eight countries, and the history of Chinese migration goes as far back as two thousand years, with the opening of the maritime Silk Road. (Siu)

The "Chinese diaspora's" profound complexity is impossible to fully capture because of the sheer numbers and breadth of their geographic dispersion and the length of their persistent

movement.

The Qin and Han dynasties are where Chinese emigration first began. Movements into and out of the Chinese empire up until the middle of the 19th century were mostly based on tribute trips to and trade with China for manufactured commodities, and for tropical goods. Traders and merchants predominated early Chinese emigration, which generally went to Southeast Asia. (Min Zhou)

Periods of high migration were frequently associated with extremely harsh conditions at home. Political stability in China deteriorated dramatically at the end of the Qing Dynasty. Concurrently, catastrophic famines occurred around 1846 and 1849. More than two million people died between 1837 and 1877. (Unit)

Another sixty million people were estimated to have died as a result of the rebellions that lasted from the 1840s to the 1870s. The Treaty of Nanjing in 1842, which gave Britain control of Hong Kong and opened five ports for trade with Western countries, contributed to a flood of people fleeing China. (Unit)

By the middle of the 19th century, more than a million Chinese had immigrated to Southeast Asia. The Chinese trade diaspora was well-established in these areas, where the Chinese merchant elite controlled not only local but also regional economies. (Min Zhou)

Early in the 19th century, European colonial expansion into Southeast Asia altered the geopolitical order and side-lined the local Chinese trading diaspora. However, Chinese businesspeople proactively addressed marginalisation by creating fresh professional nooks. (Min Zhou)

They also worked as partners or agents for European colonists and other Westerners who conducted business in Southeast Asia. Later, they functioned as labour brokers to facilitate massive labour migration from China to Southeast Asia and the South Pacific, Hawaii, and the Americas. (Min Zhou)

Large-scale Chinese labour migration started in the mid-19th century. Millions emigrated to the Malay Peninsula and the United States. By the late 1920s large-scale labour emigration from China ended. Further Chinese emigration was interrupted by Chinese persecution in host countries, the Sino-Japanese Wars, the World Wars, Chinese Civil War and Communist Rule. (Min Zhou)

But the situations changed after the reforms of the 1970s, when China “revived itself to be a major sending country since it implemented its open-door policy”. (Min Zhou) This led to a new wave of Chinese emigration which is continuing to this day.

This is the background on which the novel *Crazy Rich Asians* (2013) has been set, by the Singapore born American novelist Kevin Kwan. The novel is a satire and romantic comedy, which focuses on the struggles faced by many characters, because of their different ancestry, socio-economic backgrounds, and cultural values.

Rachel is the daughter of a Chinese immigrant who comes to America in search of better prospects and independent life. Nick, a Singaporean, comes to the United States in search of a fresh experience. Nick now wants to bring Rachel back to his house in Singapore, because both of them are in love, and to top it off his best friend, Colin Khoo, plans to get married this summer. Unbeknownst to Rachel, Nick is the heir apparent to one of Asia's greatest financial kingdoms and is unquestionably Singapore's most eligible bachelor owing to his astonishingly attractive

appearance.

What follows is an astonishing family drama that goes on to engulf many of Singapore's elite, Rachel faces huge prejudice against her from Nick's family because of her ancestry from mainland China and her identity as an American Born Chinese.

This paper focuses on the presence of Chinese diasporic elements throughout Kwan's novel and how these elements highlight the difference in culture, values and mindset between the characters who all are of Chinese ethnicity but have separate identities because of their ancestry. And how this difference is highlighted through class hierarchy and prejudice towards "the other Chinese."

Objective, Methodology And Scope

This paper discusses how Chinese diasporic elements are present throughout the novel, *Crazy Rich Asians* (2013). The work is examined through textual analysis as the methodology and study seeks to identify instances in the novel that validate the presence of Chinese Diasporic Elements and the impact it has on the lives of the characters in the novel. With everything that has been and will be said, this article will leave gaps for further research on the subject presented as well as other branching ideas. While prior research work on *Crazy Rich Asians* has investigated numerous aspects of the work, the topic of Chinese Diaspora has not been touched upon till now. This research paper aims to find how Kwan's novel *Crazy Rich Asians* provides an outlet for the exploration of the Chinese Diaspora, its diverse nature, and the way it shapes people's lives.

Literature Review

The primary text taken into account for the paper is *Crazy Rich Asians* (2013) by Singapore born American Novelist Kevin Kwan. The novel is a romantic comedy and a satire on the glitzy life of Singapore's elite and the class hierarchies present in Singapore.

A wide range of secondary texts have been taken into consideration to further the points made in the paper, these papers range from works on diaspora and specifically the Chinese Diaspora to works done on Kwan's novels including the primary text.

"An Analysis of Social Classes and Its Impact in *Crazy Rich Asians* Novels by Kevin Kwan" (2021) by Arifah Ulfa Nasution, Siti Norma Nasution and Riko Andika Rahmat Pohan discusses the social class contained in the *Crazy Rich Asians* novel and its impact on family life. The paper focuses on the creation of class difference and how the difference is measured.

"Cultural conflict experienced by the central character in the novel *Crazy Rich Asians* by Kevin Kwan" (2020) by Eva Monica, Ni Made Widisanti S and Sari Rejeki provides a view into the novel with the lens of culture and shows that the cultural conflicts experienced by Rachel and Nick were caused by stereotypes, misunderstandings, ethnocentrism and materialism, a high sense of selfishness that made the conflict continue without any resolution.

"Family Conflict reflected in Kevin Kwan's *Crazy Rich Asians* (2013): a Sociological Approach" (2013) by Dwi Rohmawati explores the novel through the lens of family conflict, it focuses on the conflicts between Rachel and Eleanor's family, conflict between Rachel Chu and her mother, conflict in Astrid's family, and conflict between Cheng's family.

"Hybridity portrayed by major characters in the novel *Crazy Rich Asians* by Kevin Kwan" (2021) by Yolanda Viviani and Robby Satria applies Homi K. Bhabha's idea of hybridity was using a postcolonial methodology to discover hybrid characteristics.

"Moral Values revealed through Rachel's character of overcoming the conflicts in Kevin

Kwan's *Crazy Rich Asians*" (2020) by Natalia Vinny Andani focuses on how Rachel's character is described in the novel, the challenges she faces and her moral values.

"Rachel Chu as a liberal feminist in Kevin Kwan's *Crazy Rich Asians*" (2013) by Ni Komang Arie Suwastini, I Dewa Ayu Ogik Vira Juspita Banjar, Luh Putu Cornea Arya Tienty, I Made David Garcia Sasmita and Putu Kerti Nitiasih aims to identify the characterization of Rachel Chu as a liberal feminist in *Crazy Rich Asians*, by employing McKee's textual analysis with liberal feminism's perspective.

Repression upon Rachel Chu in Kevin Kwan's *Crazy Rich Asians* (2021) by Deny Naufal Kurniawan and Ariya Jati explains repression perceived by Rachel Chu, the main character in Kevin Kwan's *Crazy Rich Asians*.

Social identity expressions in Kevin Kwan's *Crazy Rich Asians* (2019) by Nailul Ifada and Zakiyatul Mufidah deals with the expression of social identity in Asians elite community circle found in the novel *Crazy Rich Asians* by Kevin Kwan.

Social Conflicts on *Crazy Rich Asians* by Kevin Kwan (2019) by Meidina Asmara Dewi and Maman Suryaman describes the social conflict form and discover some of causative factors, utilizing a descriptive qualitative approach, data is analysed.

"The Representation of Chinese Characters in Kevin Kwan's *Crazy Rich Asians*" (2013) by Antonio Winatian, Nia Nafisah and Nita Novianti uses a qualitative approach and textual analysis method to examine how Chinese characters are represented in the novel and the significance of the depiction. This study shows that the Chinese characters are represented through their cognition, conduct, and language which bent towards American culture using the theories of Representation (Hall, 1997) and Hybridity (Bhabha, 1994).

"China's Diaspora Policy under Xi Jinping" (2022) by Carsten Schäfer provides a window to look inside the Diasporic Policy of PRC under Xi Jinping and focuses on important questions like, who belongs to the "Chinese diaspora" and how China operates diaspora engagement policy.

"Diaspora: A Very Short Introduction" (2013) by Kevin Kenny examines the roots of the concept of diaspora, its evolving interpretations over time, its contemporary appeal, and its strengths and limits as an explanatory technique are all examined.

Changing Patterns of Chinese Immigration and Diaspora-Homeland Interactions in Singapore and the United States (2012) by Min Zhou and Hong Liu examine the ways in which diaspora-homeland connections occur in various host societies by engaging with the increasing literature on transnationalism and concentrating on the roles of immigrant agency, diasporic communities, and nation states.

"Encyclopaedia of Diaspora" (2005) by Melvin Ember, Carol R. Ember and Ian Skoggard is an encyclopaedia that focuses on the many diasporas present throughout the world and also provides a glossary of words related to diaspora and migration.

"Overseas Chinese Business Networks in Asia" (1995) by East Asia Analytical Unit provides details about the enormous Chinese business community that is present throughout Southeast Asia and their history.

"Introduction to Chinese Diaspora: Migration, Identity, and Belonging" (2020) by Lok Siu describes the basics of the Chinese Diaspora like the size, the many identities associated with it and how the diaspora adjusts in different American countries and the paper describes the shift

from the identity as just Overseas Chinese to the identity of a Diaspora.

“Code switching and code mixing on *China Rich Girlfriend* novel by Kevin Kwan” (2021) by Lisa Agustiyana Budi, Surya Sili and Chris Asanti categorizes several types of code switching and code mixing, as well as the determination of the factors that suggested characters in Kevin Kwan's book *China Rich Girlfriend* were doing these things. In order to analyse and interpret the data, the researcher employed a qualitative and content analytic approach.

“Code switching in novel entitled *China Rich Girlfriend* by Kevin Kwan” (2021) by Zeannosky Djingga, Dra. Roma Ayuni Aminoeddin Loebis, M.A. and Alemina Br. Perangin-angin uses descriptive qualitative research regarding the issue of code switching found in *China Rich Girlfriend*, a novel by Kevin Kwan.

“Family Conflict reflected in Kevin Kwan’s *Rich People Problem*; a sociological approach (2021) by Indah Purnama and Ayu Melati Ningsih objective of the research was to analyse the family conflict that was reflected in the novel *Rich People Problem*. This research used a sociological approach and social action theory. This research used qualitative research.

Reflection of the cultural identity of Asian elite circles through code alteration from English language into French (based on the book trilogy by Kevin Kwan *Crazy Rich Asians*, *China Rich Girlfriend* and *Rich People Problems*) (2018) by Ekaterina V. Tutova, Ekaterina S. Medvedeva, Mariya A. Shkineva and Anna R. Kim observes the occurrence of code switching from English to French in the major characters' speeches and descriptions of the surroundings of Kevin Kwan's works, in which he portrays a picture of an elite Asian society.

“Social Class Reflected in Characterization in Kevin Kwan’s *China Rich Girlfriend*” (2020) by Kadek Ayu Dewi Prastika purpose of this research is to examine how socioeconomic class classification affects storyline and characterization in the novel *China Rich Girlfriend*. This study employed Marxism to assess social class classification as it relates to this novel. The main Marxist principle used in this novel is class conflict. Documentation was the data analysis technique used.

Discussion

Plot

Crazy Rich Asians is structured into three parts, each of which is separated into chapters that follow the events leading up to and immediately following Colin Khoo and Araminta Lee's wedding. The chapters are narrated from the point of views of different characters.

The prologue takes place in 1986. Nicholas Young is a young boy who visits London with his mother, aunts, and cousins. The manager at the hotel pretends not to find their reservations and kicks them out, implying that the Chinese family is not the suitable kind of people to stay in such a posh establishment. Felicity, Nick's aunt, contacts her husband Harry, who knows the hotel's owner and purchases it from him. When the family returns to the hotel, the former owner informs the management that Mrs. Felicity Leong is the new owner. Felicity dismisses the manager nonchalantly, the same way he discarded them earlier.

In Part 1, Nick is an adult, living in New York City with his girlfriend, Rachel Chu, a New York University professor. Nick invites Rachel to spend the summer with him in Singapore, his native country, where he would be serving as best man at his friend Colin's wedding. Rachel, a Chinese American who has never visited Asia, is hesitant at first but eventually decides to go. A Singaporean girl sees Nick and Rachel together and spreads the rumour that Nick is returning

to Singapore with a new girlfriend.

Astrid, Nick's cousin, discovers an illicit text message on her husband Michael's phone and her jeweller informs her that Michael purchased a bracelet that was not for her. Meanwhile, Nick and Rachel arrive in Singapore and go out with Colin and his fiancée, Araminta Lee. Nick spends the next day with Colin while Rachel spends time with her friend Peik Lin's family. They are floored to learn that Nick is best friends with Colin, who is from a famous and wealthy family, and that Rachel is attending his wedding. Colin warns Nick that once he is married, Nick will become the most eligible young man in Singapore, and he needs to be mindful of "dark forces" plotting against him, referring to unmarried women.

Peik Lin drives Rachel to Nick's grandmother's house, where they will meet. The magnificent estate astounds them, and Rachel understands Nick hails from a distinguished, wealthy family. Part 2 begins with the mansion party, when Nick introduces Rachel to the highest crust of Asian society. Nick's grandmother, Shang Su Yi, invites Nick and Rachel to stay with her instead of in a hotel.

Following the party, Astrid is involved in a car accident while attempting to get home to catch her husband cheating. She is hospitalized, but when she gets home, she confronts Michael. He advises that they break up, which leaves Astrid distraught, searching for reasons, and attempting to maintain her face in front of her nosy family.

Rachel and Nick attend Colin and Araminta's bachelor and bachelorette parties and witness their peers' outlandish conduct. Bernard Tai, Colin's friend, arranges a spectacular bachelor party complete with illegal dogfights, drugs, and a wild yacht party. Colin, Nick, and their friend Mehmet flee by saying Colin is ill and hiring a helicopter to transport them to the tranquil Australian desert. Araminta's snobbish peers target Rachel. The women interrogate her about her past and her relationship with Nick, indicating that she is a gold digger. Rachel befriends Colin's sister, Sophie, who is down to earth, and she finally feels safe opening up to her. Rachel then discovers a bloodied, gutted fish and a menacing comment scribbled in blood in her luggage. She seeks assistance from Sophie, who advises her to ignore the bullying.

Nick presents Rachel to his parents, Philip, and Eleanor, in Singapore. Eleanor invites several friends to supper to support her against Rachel. Everyone at dinner is cordial to Rachel, but when she and Nick leave, Eleanor's friend Francesca proposes that Eleanor get rid of her. Others agree, but Philip excuses himself, irritated with them. Eleanor determines that she will get rid of Rachel in a subtle manner.

The wedding festivities for Araminta and Colin take up the next few days. The wedding is star-studded and lavish, which annoys the old-money crowd. Shang Su Yi, not Michael, attends with Astrid. Nick realises he wants to marry Rachel after attending the wedding. He brings her to a cave where he used to hide when he was little. He begins to tell her that he wants to marry her, but is cut off by Mandy, his ex-girlfriend. She is pleasant enough, but she appears to be possessive of Nick.

Mandy and Francesca later hint to Rachel at the wedding luncheon that they had sexual relations with Nick. Rachel is humiliated and wishes to leave Singapore. Meanwhile, Astrid rekindles her relationship with her ex-fiancé, Charlie, and they both discover they have failed marriages. Charlie offers to fly Astrid to Hong Kong to confront Michael, whom she suspects is meeting with his lover. Rachel packs her belongings after the meal, and Nick tries to

persuade her to stay. She tells him about the bullying she has been subjected to since they arrived, and he offers to take her someplace so they can be alone. Before they leave, he informs Eleanor that he intends to propose to Rachel and is unconcerned about her approval.

Charlie assists Astrid in tracking down Michael in Hong Kong. He initially admits to having an affair, but when Astrid begins to cry, he explains that he made it up; the "mistress" is actually his cousin, and he feigned to have an affair to give Astrid an excuse to leave him. He wants out of the marriage because he cannot bear the thought of being Astrid's husband.

Rachel and Nick travel to Malaysia, where he intends to propose, but his mother and grandma await them. Su Yi refuses to bless Rachel because she is not from a proper household. Rachel assumes her father, Zhou Fang Min, is dead, but Eleanor reveals that he is imprisoned for negligence that killed several people. Rachel faints as a result of the news. Nick scolds his mother and grandma before carrying Rachel out. He apologises to Rachel and drives her away, but she abandons him to stay with Peik Lin.

Devastated, Nick stays at Colin's house and makes repeated attempts to reach Rachel. Eleanor complains that he will not talk to her since she ruined their relationship. Colin returns from his honeymoon out of concern for Nick and advises him to continue his efforts to reclaim Rachel. Rachel phones her mother to inquire about her father, but she abruptly hangs up before her mother can respond. Nick arrives with her mother, Kerry, the morning Rachel is scheduled to travel to China to meet her father.

Kerry says that Zhou Fang Min is not her biological father, but rather a kind man named Kao Wei. Her harsh husband was Zhou Fang Min, and Kao Wei consoled her and sheltered her from her husband's violent outbursts. She began a connection with Kao Wei and was concerned about her safety when Rachel became pregnant. Her family was disappointed because Rachel was a girl, and they planned to blind her so that the authorities would allow Kerry to have another child. Kao Wei assisted her in escaping to America without knowing Rachel was his daughter.

Astrid is distraught about Michael but still loves him. Charlie realises she is incapable of reciprocating his affections for her. He pays significantly more than Michael's company is worth in the hopes that it will help Astrid. Nick and Peik Lin are relieved that Rachel and Kerry have reunited at Peik Lin's. Rachel thanks Nick for travelling to California to find her mother; she is impressed that someone would go out of their way for her, and they kiss. Peik Lin and Nick disagree on where they should take Kerry and Rachel to dinner now that everything has been fixed. Rachel explains to her mother that this is how Singaporeans do things.

This is the novel's overarching plot. Now we will talk about the key characters' relationships and their background while focusing on the elements of Chinese Diaspora present throughout the novel.

The Young-T'sien-Shang Clan

The Young-T'sien-Shang Clan are three families who are related to each other through marital ties and are part of the upper crest of Singapore's elite. The reason the three families intermarried as explained by Oliver to Rachel is to:

Oh come on, Rachel, don't play the naïf with me. For the money, of course. It joined together three family fortunes and kept everything neatly locked up. (Kwan 151)

The three families intermarried so as to tie the three family fortunes together and keep it safe for many generations to come.

Shang Loong Ma, the father of Shang Su Yi, founded a shipping business in Beijing before moving to Singapore with his several wives and kids. Despite having six children, he only formally acknowledged only three, Alfred, Su Yi, and Alexander (Ah Jit).

Shang Loong Ma set up his daughter's wedding to physician Sir James Young. Additionally, he made arrangements for Rosemary, Sir James' sister, to wed T'sien Tsay Tay. Alfred was then given the oldest daughter of T'sien Tsay Tay as a promise.

Five children were born to Shang Su Yi and Sir James Young: Felicity, Catherine, Philip, Victoria, and Alexandra. Five children were also born to T'sien Tsay Tay and Rosemary Young: Mabel, Richard "Dickie", Mark, Anna May, and Clarence. Mabel T'sien, and Alfred Shang had four kids: Leonard, Charles, Frederick, and Cassandra. Alexander (Ah Jit) passed away at an early age without leaving any successors.

Because of their riches and reputation as one of the oldest wealthy families in Singapore and Asia, the Youngs, Shangs, and T'siens are held in extremely high regard. It is from this clan that most of the important characters in the story hail their ancestry.

Ancestry and Chinese Diasporic Elements

At first is the matriarch of the Young-Shang families, Shang Su Yi, she is the centre of power in the novel, even though there is no narration from her perspective in the novel and is shown in only a few chapters, she is the person on whose wishes the destiny of many characters hang.

Shang Su Yi while talking to Rachel gives a glimpse into her past:
Well, I am not a native Singaporean. I spent my childhood in Peking, and we of course did not follow the British custom there. (Kwan 270)

She was born in China and moved with her father and family to Singapore, thus she has a hybrid identity as Singaporean Chinese and this identity plays out in her love for her homeland when she remarks about Beijing Olympics:

Did you see how magnificent it was? No one in the world can doubt China's might after the Olympics. (Kwan 270)

Nicholas Young and his mother Eleanor Young who is married to Philip Young, take their ancestry from Shang Su Yi and her husband James Young descended, "from a long line of royal court physicians, going all the way back to the Tang dynasty." (Kwan 246), therefore, Nicholas and Eleanor are native Singaporeans while also having ancestries as far back as the dynasties of Mainland China.

The other major characters from the Young-Shang families are of Astrid Leong-Teo and the Chengs from Hong Kong. Astrid, like Nick, comes from illustrious stock. Felicity and Phil are cousins: her mother is Nick's father's oldest sister. Not only is Astrid related to her grandmother's fortune, Shang Su Yi, but her father, Harry Leong, is regarded as "one of the kingmakers" in Singapore's government. (Kwan 248)

Alexandra Young married the famed heart surgeon Dr. Malcom Cheng of Hong Kong, they had three children Eddie, Cecilia, and Alistair. The Cheng family and especially the children have a hybrid identity of Singapore and Hong Kong.

Moving away from the Young-T'sien-Shang Clan, the other characters that show major diasporic elements are, the protagonist of the story Rachel Chu and Astrid's former fiancé Charlie Wu, both of them outsiders to the world of Singapore's elite society, and both have

different Chinese ancestry, with Rachel being an American Born Chinese and Charlie a Hong Konger who lived for a brief period of time in Singapore.

Rachel's Relationship with Eleanor

Rachel's relations with Eleanor are strained and is full of mutual distrust, and this distrust and aggression, rocks the boat between Nick and Rachel. The reason for this distrust is Eleanor's prejudice towards Rachel because of her ancestry and her background.

Eleanor was born a native Singaporean Chinese and for her this is significant, as this defines her identity and her place in Singapore's elite society. Eleanor is from the wealthy Sung family but marrying Philip Young was a big step up for her.

Eleanor recognises and values her position among Singapore's social elite. Her friends "kowtow" to her because she "trumped" them all by marrying Philip Young. (Kwan 26) With her "social algorithm," which can detect who people are and all their family scandals in seconds, she devotes an abnormal amount of attention to a hierarchy of status. (Kwan 52)

Eleanor's contempt for everyone who is not Singaporean is one of her flaws. She is not alone in this trait, but she is obviously prejudiced against many others. We hear her scream about Nick bringing home an American woman, then possibly a Taiwanese woman, but for God's sake, not a Mainland Chinese woman! An exchange between Eleanor and Philip stands out:

Don't be funny with me! Her family comes from some ulu ulu village in China that nobody has ever heard of. The investigator thinks that they were most likely working class. In other words, they are PEASANTS! I think if you go back far enough, darling, all our families were peasants. And don't you know that in ancient China, the peasant class was actually revered? They were the backbone of the economy, and — Stop talking nonsense, lah! (Kwan 89)

Eleanor is humiliated that Rachel comes from a working-class family, and shame on Philip for implying that she, too, is descended from peasants! Because she looks down upon Rachel's American Chinese ancestry and is raised by a single parent, she decides to hire professional investigators, flies to Shenzhen to meet with random men who have dirt on Rachel and enlists other ladies to oust Rachel from Nick's life to ensure nothing sullies her family's name and prestige.

This by her own choice creates a barrier between her and Rachel, due to her prejudice she is unable to see beyond Rachel's ancestry and how good a partner would Rachel make to her son Nick and how Rachel is an extremely well educated, well settled economics professor who has a lot going for herself.

She is also not able to see how Rachel is completely unpretentious and down-to-earth, despite her sophisticated educational background. While many of the other female characters in the novel are materialistic and are only interested in climbing the social ladder, Rachel is uninterested in and even bothered by wealth: "all these people whose lives revolve around making money, hiding money, controlling others with money, and ruining their lives over money." (Kwan 386)

Eleanor's crossing the limit with Rachel by going behind her back and finding out about Rachel's past leads to Rachel breaking up with Nick and as Rachel herself realizes the prejudice she faces for her who she is, she tries to explain it to Nick why they cannot be together:

So, you'll have to understand that, as much as I love you, Nick, I don't want to be your

wife. I never want to be part of a family like yours. I can't marry into a clan that thinks it's too good to have me.

Rachel's relationship with Eleanor is the most defining relationship in the entire novel as it encompasses the entire point of view of Singapore's elite society that looks down upon any other Chinese who is not one of them or comes from a family background that is not acceptable to them.

Conclusion

Crazy Rich Asians is a story of love, heritage, and acceptance, it is a story about class hierarchies and who knows who. Oftentimes people do not truly understand their loved ones and are even more unclear of what they are expected of from their family. This defines Nick's attitude through much of the novel, but it leads to Rachel facing the brunt of the family's prejudice.

The Chinese culture and its people are more often than not considered a giant monolith but throughout the novel, the Chinese perceive each other differently based especially on the ancestry of the person. When people in Nick's society come to know that Rachel is not from Taiwan but was born in Mainland China the look of disdain is the reaction that they show.

For them Rachel is not of good pedigree even though she is Chinese, her background as an American Chinese born in Mainland China and that too raised by a single mother provokes disgust and prejudice. Nobody else but Eleanor represents this feeling in a clearer way, not only does she find Rachel below the mark for her son but also decides to sabotage her and tries to oust her from her son's life.

The Young-T'sien-Shang Clan also showcases how a person's ancestry defines his or her feelings toward his or her homeland, while Nick is not extremely bothered by his ancestry or his identity, Eleanor sees herself as a native Singaporean first foremost putting it above her Chinese identity, what she wants in her daughter-in-law is a person of Chinese ethnicity but should be a native of Singapore.

On the other hand, there is Shang Su Yi who was born in China and spent her early years in Beijing (Peking) for her the rise of China as a power to reckon with is of extreme importance for it is connected with her core identity as a Chinese who was born in Mainland China.

All of these different identities and the way they collide and interact throughout the novel showcase the many Chinese Diasporic Elements present and these Diasporic Elements define the identities of the characters which then defines their values and their thought process, which leads to their actions.