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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The Center for Asian Studies is pleased to publish five research papers from the 2018-2019 academic year. The journal accepts outstanding Asia-related papers written by students in various disciplines at CU and other universities in Colorado. Each year, this journal publishes excellent work on a wide variety of topics and this issue is no exception. This issue contains papers written by students who wrote China-related papers for the ASIA 3900 Urban China class held in China in Summer 2018 (Gagne, Jones, and Vunnam), by a student in a Media and Popular Culture class (Faricy), and by a student from Colorado College (Zhao). These papers cover a wide range of topics and cultures: "The Politics of Music—K-Pop: A Structured Soft Power " (Faricy); "Beyond the Art Museum: The Employment of Art in Public Spaces in China" (Gagne) "Chinese Consumerism and Reflection of Wealth" (Jones); and "Chinese Music as a Tool for Developing Bonds within Communities" (Vunnam); and "Making and Remaking Shangrila: The Confrontation and Negotiation between Tibetan Cultural Preservation and State-Sponsored Tourism" (Zhao).

The Politics of Music: K-Pop – A Structured Soft Power

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In 1954, a Cultural Presentations Program was sponsored by the US State Department. The goal of the problem - to send American musicians, thousands of them, to foreign countries. [1] The belief was that, by sending American musicians abroad to integrate with regions of opposing political influence, a subtle invasion of American beliefs and politics could be made; if they liked the American music, maybe they would like America. This program was made to counter similar advances made by other countries, most notably China, with similar programs. This marked a notable transition in the global perception of music as a political tool - a change that would only increase in the current decade, reaching intensive alteration as methods of distribution changed via the World Wide Web. The most intensive example of music as a tool can be found in none other than South Korea.

South Korea has only existed as a world power in the most recent of senses, and with growing world power, has come growing influence. The most notable aspect of its influence comes not in military, education, or even technology – all things South Korea should be known for – but in its commodified music industry. As this industry has begun to infiltrate the drastically different, intensely dominating market of America, it is important to perceive the effects of politically driven commodification on something as simplistic and universal as music. A brief look at South Korea and its history is needed to understand the economic position that pushed South Korea into this development of global-oriented industry. It is in this understanding of the country that an understanding of the commodified music of K-pop can exist. From there, K-pop's subjection in America can begin to be understood, posing a final question about commodification and art, and where it stands in the global sphere.

South Korea and the Driving Forces to Now

South Korea is an economic anomaly, often referred to as *the* economic *miracle*. Just sixty years ago, South Korea was considered a third world country, with "per capita income [being] less than $100 – about what it is today in the poorest south Asian and African countries." [2] Today, South Korea is the 14th largest economy in the world, with a smaller population and geographical size than competing economies. [3] South Korea's development was entirely and uniquely a phenomenon of its own, propelled by the leadership of President Park, educational reform, and the development of global trade at a crucial moment.[4] The toppling factor in all of this though, were the Korean people themselves. While cultural values had a large part in the motivations that drove the Korean people and their country further into development, it is also the gruesome history of the country that pushed them onwards.

South Korea's history is one of constant invasions. Because of its Asian neighbors, South Korea lacked control over its own government and people for generations before being fought over once more during the Korean War. It wasn't until after the Korean War that South Korea became a truly sovereign state, and that was after suffering the loss of its northern part. With the threat of further invasion from the North, the people and government developed a drive to reach a state of

[1] Fosler-Lussier, Danielle. "Music Pushed, Music Pulled: Cultural Diplomacy, Globalization, and Imperialism." *Diplomatic History* 36.1 (2012): 53-64. doi:10.1111/j.1467-7709.2011.01008.x.

[2] Oh, Kongdan. "Korea's Path from Poverty to Philanthropy." *Brookings.* 28 July 2016. www.brookings.edu/articles/koreas-path-from-poverty-to-philanthropy/.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.

power, one where the threat of future invasion would be minimized. Thus, even after South Korea's economy grew, bringing "better jobs, salaries, and living conditions… one could sense an endless desire to get more and more," as "perhaps a legacy of the many years of struggle and deprivation that Koreans had experienced." [5] South Korea has become a remarkable force to be reckoned with, always trying to obtain the next step for the acquisition of power. And the development of its music industry, interestingly enough, is just another step towards this acquisition of global power as South Korea seek to become a world influencer.

Soft Power and Music

According to Statista, a statistic-based website focused on changing numbers in international factors, music consumption is continuously high on the rise. According to the Global Music Report, "worldwide recorded music revenues totaled $19.1 billion last year, up 9.7 percent from the previous year's total of $17.4 billion," a growth highly dependent on the switch from audio to digital consumption. [6] Especially in this modern age, music has become a crucial factor in distribution and global communication. This market is intangibly important. And while the United States is still the biggest player in the game, there exists a change in the notion that the United States used to be the only player worth mentioning.

When it comes down to negotiation and the exchange of cultural understanding, "a nation's financial and armed capability to acquisition and pressure," known as *hard power*, has paved way for a new dominant strategy in the post-Cold-War world, called *soft power*, which is "the facility to fascinate over and done with national and philosophical petition." [7] With power being the

ability to obtain one's goals and transition others into compliance with one's desires, soft power forms the near manipulative and subtle version of the acquisition - one that still requires request and acceptance from the receiving end. "Through the effects of media, people learn to imagine themselves in relation to others they have never met, "which was shown by the United States' intention when it endorsed sending dozens of American abroad. [8] The presence of American musicians in foreign lands "allowed people abroad to see and know them as real human beings—to imagine inhabiting the same world with them," which, in turn, allowed the distribution and communication of policy. [9]

This kind of soft power was used in Iceland when Icelandic opinions were turning against the United States in the mid-1950s. [10] In response, the United States endorsed the presentations of classical music from American artists in Iceland, in the hopes that the government would "continue to tolerate the American military base at Keflavík." [11] This follows an argument by Tomlinson, which was that globalization has less to do with direct communication and confrontation, and a lot more to do with "altering local contexts and changing the frame of reference in which people think." [12] While using music as a soft power strategy is not a new phenomenon, in the modern age, this process has only increased in value as technology allows distribution across borders in a seamless and cheap manner that has many different actors fighting for their spot in the global market.

South Korea and Music

South Korea made itself known as one of the Four Tiger Economies of Asia in the 90s through "a determined, decades-long drive to build up a competitive hi-tech manufacturing industry" jump started by government control and removal from

[5] Ibid.
[6] "Music Streaming - Worldwide | Statista Market Forecast." *Statista*. www.statista.com/outlook/209/100/music-streaming/worldwide.
[7] Khosravishakib, Mohammad. "Essential of Cultural (Literature, Art, Music, Customs …) Negotiation as a Resources of Smart and Soft Power in Age of

Globalization." *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature* 6.6 (2017): 101. doi:10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.6n.6p.101.
[8] Fosler-Lussier.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Khosravishakib.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.

democracy.[13] However, it would be this same authoritarian economic policy that would result in the Asian Financial Crisis in the early 1900s. After this economic crash, South Korea turned from its previously isolationist ideologies to one known as *segyehwa*, translated simply to "globalization," while being "more usefully ambiguous."[14] In 1994, the Presidential Advisory Board of Science and Technology of Korea found that the earnings from the American hit Jurassic Park movie equated their earnings from 1.5 million exported Hyundai cars.[15] One movie versus 1.5 million cars – the math seemed simple. Entertainment was the gold of the new era, and South Korea was determined to find their niche in that market. The South Korean Presidential Advisory Board on Science and Technology began to advocate for increased support of "creative content industries" [16] to jumpstart this policy.

This process did not begin with what is now known as K-pop. The first credited tide in what is known as *Hallyu* – "the Korean Wave" – would start in China through a "soapy mini-series" that would push South Korea's name (outside of manufactured technologies like Samsung and Hyundai) abroad. [17] The miniseries rooted schedules across East Asia and implanted the idea of entertainment as a means to spread public diplomacy. K-pop's beginning as a global good wouldn't gain ground until the TV dramas paved the way. Korean music was initially distributed simply for domestic use, with the authentic "Korean sound" being valiantly unique from any music in the Western sphere, being regarded as almost "alien" sounding through sharp instruments.[18] To become a global export, Korea needed to completely revision the industry, which is precisely what the biggest music companies in South Korea (most notable SM Entertainment) began to do.

The Korean music industry is a drastically different beast than in the West, with record companies being called "talent agencies" precisely because they train (and maintain) pop star idols in a country with no tradition for such," from sometimes as young as eleven or twelve.[19] The first successful integration of this manufactured process of talent was in the arrival of a female star known as BoA, who was "trained for two years behind closed doors, her career launched in 2000 at the age of 13."[20] With intensive language lessons in Japanese and Mandarin as a crucial part of her training, BoA was immensely successful in neighboring East Asian countries, which was a product of her intense training to be so.[21] Because of this, BoA's company had her learn English and attempted her debut abroad, which was unsuccessful. At this time, the *Hallyu* began its integration into neighboring East Asia, its application into the West still a distant dream.

Blossoming media technologies and streaming services would drive *Hallyu* deeper in the years that followed. Because of these developments on the internet, K-pop was able to expand its reach into the rest of East Asia, gradually turning towards South Asia, though any attempts at really gaining ground in the West still came up short.[22] In the West, any rise mainly existed within Asian American communities, specifically Korean-Americans, for about a decade after BoA's initial attempt to tackle the West.[23] It was not until the unprecedented success of Gangnam Style, which not even South Korea was anticipating, that America started paying attention.[24] Since then, the medium has only been on the rise. The numbers are still increasing, with over 4 billion dollars projected back into South Korea from its K-pop industry alone this last year.[25] Such influence is said to be responsible for pushing the nation into

[13] Manticore-Griffin, Neil. "K-Pop's Soft Power." *In These Times.* 2011. 35.6: 32-33.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Jolin, Johan W. "The South Korean Music Industry: The Rise and Success of 'K-Pop.'" *Department of Asia Bachelor's Thesis* 4.5 (2014): 2790-2810.
[16] Manticore-Griffin.
[17] Ibid.

[18] Jolin.
[19] Manticore-Griffin.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Jolin.
[23] Manticore-Griffin.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.

the "world's top 10 cultural exporters,"[26] bringing *Hallyu* to a very intentional fruition.

The Rise of K-Pop

K-pop is South Korean pop music that is distributed abroad in a manner that is uncannily similar to how traded goods are distributed in a global economy. And K-pop has become just that - an economically tradable good. The recognition of popular K-pop stars marketing Korean goods has led to an increase in sales in other economic categories, seen in popular K-pop band BTS' partnership with Hyundai, which led to so many sales that the company could not keep up.[27] K-pop is regarded as a soft power tool, able to share Korean culture, ideals, and awareness more than any educational or manufactured trade process could - one that is still on the rise, advocating for more tourism, more East Asian students going to South Korea for higher education, and an increased number of foreign Korean-language learners. [28] Despite being a small part of the country as a whole, K-pop has brought enough attention to alter mainstream perceptions of South Korea and bring a previously hindered awareness to the country that is now matching and surpassing that which was brought to Japan through anime and manga.[29] K-pop is, in essence, a tool, just like any country's media expression that is transferred abroad.

K-pop, on its surface, is a flashy integration of music, dance, storytelling, and filmography to capture a visual take on the music platform, one which is easily shared and distributed online and is satisfying to watch (even if the only feeling invoked is a deep set confusion for the five minute music video.) However, referring to K-pop simply as "pop from South Korea," is oddly deceiving, as "K-pop is a genre and an industry, a complex system of late capitalist music manufacturing."[30] What separates K-pop so vividly from other countries' music is that, while it is justified as an art form, the commoditized nature of it is overwhelming to a degree not even seen in American industry.

One K-pop song will see dozens of partnerships, producers, and even different countries before it is released with a Korean star in South Korea. One of K-pop's more successful late 2010s songs, "I Got a Boy" by Girls Generation, "is credited to thirty-six songwriters and fifteen producers, hailing from Korea, Sweden, the U.S., Norway, Denmark, Netherland, Ireland, Wales, England and Morocco."[31] The intent with each produced piece of music is to make it the next hit, every chord and string of lyrics strung together to be catchy, heavy beats crucial for the integration of upbeat dancing that is a crucial aspect to any K-pop hit.[32] The stars themselves see the brunt of the manufactured process of music, as they themselves are manufactured like pieces on an assembly line. Most stars start as early as eleven or twelve, beginning in cram schools that stretch hours after their usual school schedule each day to train them in song, dance, and even looks.[33] Even after these young dreamers are signed under contracts, where they are then structured and built up to be exactly what the company deems necessary, the potential of them actual debuting is next to none; less than one-tenth of the trainees in the biggest companies ever making it into a band. [34] From there, their very lives are dictated by contracts that prohibit sexual and romantic relationships with anyone, and the complete removal from anything that might taint their image, be it alcohol,

[26] Ibid.

[27] Kim, Bo-Gyung. "Hyundai Motor Goes All-out in US Marketing on Signs of Recovery." *The Korea Herald*. 4 Dec. 2018. www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=201812040006 67.

[28] Lee, Sook Jong. "South Korean Soft Power and How South Korea Views the Soft Power of Others." *Public Diplomacy and Soft Power in East Asia*. 2011. 139–161. doi:10.1057/9780230118447_8.

[29] Keltz, Roland. "Defining the Heisei Era: When Anime and Manga Went Global ..." *The Japan Times*. 2019.

www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/10/27/national/h istory/defining-heisei-era-anime-manga-went-global/.

[30] O'Flynn, Brian. "The K-Pop Phenomenon: 'It's Pop Music on Crack'." *The Irish Times*. The Irish Times, 27 Oct. 2018. www.irishtimes.com/culture/music/the-k-pop-phenomenon-it-s-pop-music-on-crack-1.3669060.

[31] Jolin.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

drugs, or even anger towards fans.35 Any failure from these stars to uphold this end of the contract can result in immediate termination.

Perhaps it is the very manufactured aspect of this medium that prohibited its integration into the US for so long; perhaps it's the foreign aspect – the different language, underrepresented faces, or just the flashiness of their performances which were brushed off as being "popular in Japan," a phrase credited to most things the United States finds to be too flashy and foreign for their tastes.36 It is quite possible that the very nature of the media being made in Asia was enough to turn people away from it, as there exists a very strange and deeply held connotation that anything in the entertainment world that stems from Asia, be it *manga, anime*, TV shows, or music, is inherently strange and foreign37 - a stereotypical notion that continues to hurt the present integration of Asian entertainment into America.

K-Pop in America

Despite every effort made by South Korea to garner its place in the American music industry— beautiful idols, catchy music, flashy dances, English lyrics, and careful integration into streaming platforms like YouTube – when K-pop did arrive with a resounding gong that finally turned heads, it was not in a way that even the country itself had expected. It was from a middle-aged, considered almost "washed-out K-pop star" that Gangnam Style arrived in 2012 and quickly became a global sensation. The strange, over-the-top perception of the music world in South Korea was not the exact introduction the K-pop industry had been searching for, in fact, most people were shocked that, of all music, it was Gangnam Style that gained popularity. However, it was still the foot in the door that Korea had been looking for. And it proved to be just the beginning.

The strangeness of the music video, song, and lyrics, along with the strange follow-ups from the same artist PSY, would seek to solidify the perspective of many that music from Asia is just plain weird.38 It was in no way the desired first major step into America's popular music scene, but it was still a step and a necessary one. The integration of such a strange variant of the structured K-pop style set the theme of popular Korean infiltration into the country, which would turn out to be, ironically, a removal from the commoditized manufactured process.

Gangnam Style's success brought awareness to other K-pop groups, such as EXO, Shinee, and Big Bang, all groups who had dominated Asia for years, even having American followings in small bundles that were mostly associated with the west and east coasts of the country (also due to heavy Asian immigrant populations in those areas). 39 These groups began to see growing American attention turned their way, and more tours being scheduled across America as merchandise began to sell and a more diverse fan base in the United States began to grow.40 But, despite the dedication K-pop fans seem to have, the success rates were still small in comparison to domestic artists and even foreign artists from Europe and Mexico.41 While a large divide also existed between perceptions of Korean artists and domestic ones, there was also a removal of their presence in most American formats that domestic artists dominate, like talk shows and American award shows. The arrival of K-pop in America existed as more of an allowance than a solid integration, with unique and divided groups finding interest in the mediums, just like what is seen with Japanese media, such as anime and manga. While anime is, pretty much, animated TV shows, there is very little crossover in fans of TV formats and fans of Japanese anime.42 Despite similarities and the potential for global enjoyment, there is a determined divide between Asian mediums and those that dominate the West.

It was not until 2016 that K-pop and Korean artists were able to take a big step over that divide into the structure of America's music industry.

35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
37 Kelts.
38 Jung, SooKeung, and Hongmei Li. "Global Production, Circulation, and Consumption of Gangnam

Style." *International Journal of Communication* 8 (2014): 2790-2810.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
42 Kelts.

Once again, this happened almost in opposition to the soft power attempts of South Korea's music industry. The band that would take stardom in America, known as BTS, was a huge step away from the commodified entertainment form. The band was not from the big three K-pop entertainment companies, which were responsible for just about every popular K-pop group and fully responsible for the biggest ones.[43] BigHit, the company responsible for the creation of BTS, was unknown in the national market until the band's rise to popularity. Furthermore, BTS actually makes most of its own music – a huge step away from the typical processes of K-pop distribution,[44] and also started with a style that was tilted much more into American hip-hop than K-pop. The band faced huge oppositions, domestically as well as abroad, but something must have stuck, because even while the group seemed to flounder within the borders of South Korea for several years following their debut, their popularity abroad was almost immediate and has only continued to skyrocket and grow, leaving the domestic competition confused and angered. [45] Similar to PSY, BTS was not supposed to be the ones who crossed the line into America. It was simply not in the plan and was completely unexpected. [46] But not only are they alone responsible for bringing over 3 billion of the 4.7 billion dollars brought into South Korea's economy through K-pop,[47] but they have also just attended and won their third BBMA ceremony after already attending the Grammy's last year – a highly American stakeholder in the music industry, which had previously never been infiltrated by a Korean artist. This poses an interesting opposition to the commoditization of music. Is there a line between manufacturing and creating art? And if there is, where is its limits?

Going Forward

Soft power is now the new main power. K-pop is a flawless example of this. With the growth of Korean music consumption in the United States, the simple awareness of South Korea has also drastically expanded in the general public.[48] South Korean skin care treatments have grown increasingly popular on social media platforms. Korean food is more popular than ever, with various fusion and traditional restaurants popping up in metropolitan areas. Other forms of media see increased attention, such as the onslaught of K-dramas on Netflix. And even Korean technologies have gained popularity through this growing awareness, as seen by the above Hyundai example. Advertisements for learning the Korean language have grown, and simply liking a K-pop image on Instagram will likely reward you with a Duolingo ad to learn Korean if you "like K-pop." This is soft power in action. Something as simple as music has brought an incredible reevaluation in the West of a country and culture that has been around far longer than the United States itself.

The success of this industry has brought ranging attention from South Korea's neighbors. Both Japan and China have both tried (and failed) to copy the structured K-pop industry within their own borders.[49] Even the authoritarian neighbor to South Korea, North Korea, has attempted to copy the unprecedented success of K-pop's medium, debuting a North Korean girl-band in the hope to garner attention (and money) from South Korea.[50] And while people are, understandably, on the defense against such things, it does not hinder that it is, to some extent, working, as South Korea listeners had begun to take notice of the North Korean band. [51] The political value of having a

[43] Jolin.
[44] Kim, Youngdae, and T.K. Park. "What the Rise of Black Pink and BTS Says About the Future of K-Pop." *Vulture*. 28 Aug. 2018. www.vulture.com/2018/08/bts-black-pink-and-the-continued-success-of-k-pop.html.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Manticore-Griffin.
[48] Lee.

[49] Jolin.
[50] Fifield, Anna. "South Korea Went Gaga over a North Korean Singer. Just Wait until the Rest Arrive." *The Washington Post*. 22 Jan. 2018. www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/south-korea-went-gaga-over-a-north-korean-singer-just-wait-until-the-rest-arrive/2018/01/22/ecf39004-ff7e-11e7-93f5-53a3a47824e8_story.html.
[51] Ibid.

band that the rest of the world knows the name of is instrumental. And, for the United States, it is not something they have ever had to consider as America dominated the global awareness of music for over a century.

It is no surprise that South Korea is dominating the world of structured music as a soft power, especially when an evaluation of their complicated and unfortunate history is considered. While they may have been ahead of the times in understanding the global value and importance of music distributed abroad, they are not the only actors. Their success is only driving others to imitate the same structures in hopes of their own success, a possibility in this heavily globalized era. However, despite South Korea's success in this area, it is important to see that the biggest successes have come from a separation of the manufacturing process of K-pop music and its stars; even if that separation is only a minor step, it still seems to make a world of difference. K-pop poses an interesting stance in the consideration of art and commodification, perhaps revealing that there is a limit to the commodification process and what it can accomplish. However, once that balance is found, the soft power effects of music can be instrumental to a country's international image and influence.

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Beyond the Art Museum: The Employment of Art in Public Spaces in China

RENEE GAGNE

INTRODUCTION

From Soho, New York to Beijing, China, public art can be perceived as being an important entity in establishing the branding of global cities. Public art plays a pivotal role in the community through its copious benefits, such as contributing to economic growth, creating jobs, uniting a community, enhancing tourism, inspiring citizens, and improving the overall aesthetic of the area which the art resides.[1] In an era of globalization, public art also functions as a bridge for connecting worldly cities and countries.

The international community has come to recognize China for its notable economic growth and rising power in its push for modernity, and amidst this growth lies the increasing prominence of art. From the 798 Art District in Beijing to the exquisite flower arrangements in Shanghai, art can be perceived as being a prominent aspect of the culture of these communities. Throughout China, it can be observed how public art displays a variety of underlying references, such as those pertaining to aesthetics, nationalism, politics, and nature - all of which showcase ties to tradition, modernity, and nostalgia. This article will investigate selections of notable art displayed in China's major cities, as well as propose interpretations regarding these pieces through the lens of history, modernity, and nostalgia.

"The aim of art is to represent not the
outward appearance of things, but their inward significance"
-Aristotle
[2]

An Overview of the Evolution of Public Space and Art in China

While investigating the prominence of public art in China, it is important to understand the changes made regarding the use of public spaces and the developments made regarding the role and style of art. The employment of walls is an important traditional characteristic in cities, which has been used throughout Chinese history and persists today. Beginning with the Tang Dynasty leading up to 1949, Chinese temples and street markets proved to be prominent entities associated with early public space use, many of which were enclosed by walls.[3] Beginning with Chairman Mao's declaration of the People's Republic of China and The Revolution in 1949, the significance and use of public space started to undergo change. Public squares, monuments, and Soviet-inspired architecture began to emerge within the boundaries of the city's walls.[4] One prominent example pertaining to the emergence of Soviet-style squares during this period in time

[1] "How Art Economically Benefits Cities." *Project for Public Spaces*. 31 Dec. 2008. www.pps.org/article/how-art-economically-benefits-cities.

[2] "TOP 18 PUBLIC ART QUOTES." *A-Z Quotes.* www.azquotes.com/quotes/topics/public-art.html

[3] Gaubatz, P. "New public space in urban china." *China Perspectives* 4 (2008): 72-83. https://colorado.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.colorado.idm.oclc.org/docview/1494703493?accountid=14503

[4] Ibid.

is Tiananmen Square, which underwent remodeling under Chairman Mao's leadership - one of the changes being a modification to the square to make it large enough to fit one billion people.[5]

In 1949, Chinese art primarily depicted images of "revolutionary heroes" with the overall purpose to promote a sense of nationhood and display the overarching ambitions for the country. [6] 1949 marked the beginning of the country's adoption of the Soviet art system, which did not allow for the creation of "private or unofficial art."[7] During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), artists began to experiment with painting new subjects and staying away from traditionally encouraged topics, however many artists experienced hardship and even punishment during this time.[8] Following the revolution, public spaces continued to become more abundant and accessible to Chinese citizens. One eminent adjustment included no longer holding exclusive access to the Imperial Gardens and opening them to the public. [9] Another development involved the demolition of select walls and replacing them with fences for a "more open" appearance. [10] In relation to the growing eminence of public spaces, art in China also paralleled this transformation in its trajectory of change.

During the 1980s and 1990s, many artists were drawn to Beijing and took part in what are known as "artist villages," which are communities shared by artists who support each other and create art.[11] These communities have the potential for the area's population to become "displaced owing to political decisions or urban renewal." [12] One example of this occurrence happened at an art village in Yuan Ming Yuan in 1995, during which

the area was dissolved though the process of jailing of many artists.[13] This event functioned as a catalyst in establishing today's well-known art zones, such as 798 in Beijing. Today, some art areas have recently gained recognition as art zones by the government, partially because of their potential for generating profit and increased international recognition. [14] According to Xuefei Ren, a sociology professor at Michigan State University, "as the government discovered the economic potential of the cultural industries, it took control of art districts by setting up management offices, and in doing so, has inserted its own regulatory logic in the spatial production of art spaces in Beijing."[15] These artist villages and government-recognized art zones are important because they function as distinguished locations abundant with public art, which showcase a variety of underlying references and exude creativity that ultimately contributes to globalization in the world of art by providing an additional pathway in which China can interact with other countries.

Today, it can be observed that public spaces, such as the Summer Palace, Yu Gardens, West Lake, Yuan Ming Yuan, and open-park areas, such as those in Xi'an, are important places often used by locals going about a variety of activities. Throughout the day, various endeavors can be observed, such as ground calligraphy, tai chi, painting, exercise, and dancing. These locations being used as public space are not only important in regards to open access for various activities, but also because these areas prove to be abundant with public art. The phenomenon is not restricted to gardens, but also holds true through projects, such as that of Xintiandi, the 798 Art District, and

[5] Ibid.

[6] "Art and China's Revolution." *Asia Society*. asiasociety.org/art-and-china's-revolution.

[7] Zhang, Y. (2014). "Governing art districts: State control and cultural production in contemporary china." *The China Quarterly* 219.6 (2014): 827-848. http://dx.doi.org.colorado.idm.oclc.org/10.10(17/S03 05741014000708

[8] "Art and China's Revolution"

[9] Gaubatz, 75.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Currier, Jennifer. "Art and Power in the New China: An Exploration of Beijing's 798 District and Its

Implications for Contemporary Urbanism." *The Town Planning Review* 79.2/3 (2008): 237-265. www.jstor.org/stable/40112757.

[12] Zhang.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ren, Xuefei. "The International Journal of the History of Sport." *Taylor & Francis*. The International Journal of the History of Sport. July 2009. www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/0952336090 2904751

Beijing's preparations for the 2008 Olympics. In alignment with the popularity of these public spaces, many of these areas are abundant with beauty and showcase a variety of public art. The evolution of public spaces and art showcases a variety of underling references and significance through creativity and design.

An Investigation on Public Art in China

Olympic Beijing: Modernity in Architectural Public Art

The 2008 Olympics hosted in Beijing functioned as a catalyst, which led to many notable changes and developments in Beijing, one of which pertains to public art displays. Among these changes, some of the most prominent examples that encompass art and development pertain to architectural creations, which "accommodate state functions and articulate national ambitions." [16] It is important to recognize these architectural marvels on behalf of their functionality as well as their unparalleled outwardly modernized appearances.

One of the iconic expressions of art that relates to Beijing's preparations for the Olympics is the National Stadium designed by Herzog & de Meuron, referred to by many as the 'Bird's Nest Stadium,' (Figure 1). [17] The National Stadium's design reflects a fresh approach, which can be perceived as combining minimalism and modernity. Though the stadium's outward appearance is modern, there are also traditional aspects accounted for in the design of the Olympic Park. According to The Telegraph's Chief Reporter Gordon Rayner, "In Chinese mythology, the sun is represented by a circle and the moon by a square, reflected by the shape of the bird's nest and the Water Cube… when the venues are lit at night, red for the Bird's Nest and blue for the Water Cube.

The shapes also echo the Chinese symbols for male and female, and are built either side of the north-south axis road which runs in a perfect straight line for three miles through Beijing, centered on the Forbidden City." [18] The distinctly modern design of the 'Bird's Nest' can be interpreted as functional art symbolic of China's journey toward modernization. The stadium appears to be unique in observation of the skyscrapers, neighborhoods, and *hutong* in the surrounding area; however, upon further investigation, the traditional ideas regarding the representation of male and female play an important role in these contemporary buildings.

Another notable artistic building created in the timeframe of the 2008 Olympics is the China Central Television (CCTV) Tower. [19] Designed by Ole Scheeren and Rem Koolhaas, this building has a unique construction because it appears to be two towers connected by an overhang at 90 degrees from each of the towers.[20] This building is similar to the National Stadium in that it exudes both contemporary and particular construction, which can be contrasted to the traditionally styled buildings in the city, such as those in the Forbidden City or the Summer Palace. Though this building is recognized for its appearance, it can be inferred that the overall approach to the building is modern.

The Bird's Nest Stadium and CCTV Tower are just two among a copious collection of architectural marvels, which came about during the timeframe leading up to the 2008 Olympics. In addition to the architectural changes made, the Olympics can also be attributed to the decision to preserve the 798 Art District, in consideration of the growing international recognition it was gaining.[21]

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[16] Ibid.

[17] Rayner, Gordon. "Beijing Olympics: The Bird's Nest Stadium." *The Telegraph*. Telegraph Media Group. 7 Aug. 2008, www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/olympics/251877/Beijing-Olympics-The-Birds-Nest-stadium.html.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ren.

[20] "China Central Television (CCTV) Headquarters." *Verdict Designbuild*. www.designbuild-network.com/projects/cctv/.

[21] Ren.

Figure 1: The Olympic Bird's Nest Stadium. 22

Modernity Amidst Nostalgia: The 798 Art District

Figure 2: A factory at the 798 Art District in Beijing, China.23

798: From Technology to Studio Space

Constructed between Beijing's buzzing streets, financial buildings, and neighborhoods lies the 798 Art District (Figure 2). The streets leading to the heart of the district are lined with local vendors selling crafts, freshly made street food, bikes piled on top of each other, and buildings decorated with graffiti - all of which can be thought of as appetizers for what lies in the district. Deeper into 798, visitors are surrounded by streets with cafes, restaurants, shops, galleries, studios, and exhibitions. With each turn of a corner lies new treasures for the eyes.

The 798 Art District is significant both from a historical and modern-day lens. The art district was originally a factory known as 718, which was built under Chairman Mao with secret military practice pertaining to technology.24 Following the end of the Cultural Revolution, the factory was not generating enough income, thus it was encouraged that a method to stimulate economic growth from the factory was to be discovered.25 Many artists from nearby universities and art villages, such as Yuanming Yuan, were drawn by the low rent at 798, and thus the factory district began to become a popular spot for artists' studios.26 Not only did the rent collected from the artists help to bring forth monetary gain for the area, but it also led to the establishment of a flourishing artist community that has played a pivotal role in Beijing's art scene.

As the area continued to gain recognition and popularity, it also endured hardship during its journey of becoming the internationally-recognized district it is today. Prior to the district's protection, the landlord for the area recognized the growing value of real-estate in the district and attempted to drive artists out of the area. 27 In addition to these attempts, Seven Stars began discussing the demolition of the art district in 2003, which brought forth a debate within the government until it was decided to preserve the district.28 Xuefei Ren stated that this decision to save the art district can be related back to the city's upcoming 2008 Olympics. 29 According to Xuefei Ren, "The development of contemporary Chinese art could not have been possible without the emergence of the 798 Art District."30 The art district provided a space where artists could create and display art, which was critical since there was a lack of public space which could be utilized for such purposes. 31 This decision has

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22 Renee Gagne, 2018.

23 Ibid.

24 Currier.

25 Dutton.

26 Ibid.

27 Ren, 1018.

28 Zhang, 834.

29 Ren, 1014.

30 Ren. 1017.

31 Ibid.

been associated with a consideration for the upcoming 2008 Olympics and the growing recognition the art district was gaining within the international community.32

Art Interpretations: Connections to the Past in the Present at 798

The 798 Art District has developed into an influential location in modern-day Beijing, where history and modernity combine to create a unique area in the city. The factory and surrounding buildings are important indicators of nostalgia for the days of Chairman Mao's leadership, in that the area was established per his request for a place devoted to developing technology for the military. Though renovations have been made, the overall buildings remain similar to how they did during the Cultural Revolution and house an abundance of modern art. In correlation to the government's preservation of the district, consumerism became a prominent attribute within the area, furthering the concept of pushing modernity forward in an area that encompasses an important part of Chinese history.

Tucked between the buzzing streets lined with galleries, studios, shops, and restaurants lies an abundance of art within and outside the buildings. One prominent motif associated with the district is art which pertains to China's history and nationhood. One notable work depicts a black train made with wrought iron, which has a red star on the front and appears to be traveling at high speeds during a red sunset. The title of this piece translates to "Spraying Out of Iron and Plastic" ("喷薄欲出铁塑") by Dong Mingchuan in 2016 (Figure 3). This piece, though it was recently created, ties both modernity, in the style of creating the piece, with nostalgia for China's history. This piece also can be interpreted as having an underlying significance that relates to nationhood and pride for the country, considered through the use of red - a color which traditionally symbolizes happiness.

Another notable art piece which can be interpreted as referencing China's history with a modern twist is "Great Criticism: Rolls Royce" by Wang Guangyi, which is currently displayed at the

Lotus Chen International Art Museum. This oil painting depicts a red and yellow image with people, and appears to be depicted in a style similar to propaganda posters from the Cultural Revolution. The piece shows a group of men, possibly workers, holding what may be Mao's Red Books. The leading man is holding a paintbrush and paper, and beside him is a *Rolls Royce* logo. Layered on top of the image are the numbers "317" and "6790," which appear as if they were stamped on the painting. This piece appears to integrate a historical period of time in Chinese history with modern day consumerism.

Figure 3: "Spraying Out of Iron and Plastic" by Dong Mingchuan, 2016.

Tradition in the City: Artistic References

Political Art: Socialist Values

Throughout China, one can observe the prominence of traditionally using walls in cities, such as Beijing, Xi'an, and Shanghai. Along some of the busy streets and pavements are walls with posters that depict China's socialist values. The Newspaper *The China Daily* states "core socialist values comprise a set of moral principles summarized by central authorities as prosperity, democracy, civility, harmony, freedom, equality,

32 Zhang, 834.

33 Renee Gagne, 2018.

justice, the rule of law, patriotism, dedication, integrity and friendliness." [34] The Communist Party of China (CPC) began the promotion of these values beginning in 2012 through the use of various media platforms and continues this promotion into the present day.[35]

Figure 4: Traditional Chinese Calligraphy on display at the Shanghai Art Museum.

Looking beyond the writing and overall values promoted by the posters on the walls in the city, it can be observed that many of the images depicted are often in a traditional style of Chinese art. Ink paintings are a distinct and traditional art form from China, which are described as requiring a well-developed understanding of calligraphy techniques in order to develop "mastery." [37] Traditional Chinese calligraphy writing was considered to be "supreme visual art form," whereby the physical writing was of equal importance to the content of the writing topic (Figure 4). [38] This description of calligraphy showcases the importance of the art form, as well as emphasizes the level of detail both in calligraphy and Chinese painting. According to Maxwell Hearn's article for *The Met*, many of the Chinese ink paintings only use black ink and do not use gradient to avoid distractions, but rather focus on presenting the main subject in the piece, such as bamboo, trees, and rocks.[39]

In Beijing outside of the Beitucheng subway station was a series of socialist values posters that employed the traditional Chinese painting style. For instance, a poster that reads "free" in large orange characters depicts a landscape image of mountains, trees, and a deer with what appears to be black and green ink (Figure 5a). The paint appears to be primarily black and grey with accents of green on the trees and mountains. Beside the tree appears to be a deer, which is symbolic of longevity. [40] This political poster is important to recognize, as it integrates both traditional Chinese painting and symbolism with modern-day political values. In addition to the political implications, it can be extrapolated that the poster also has an underlying purpose pertaining to taking pride in one's country.

Another poster displayed outside of the Beitucheng station in Beijing reads "dedicated" and depicts a photograph-like display with a statue of a man, red and yellow tulips, and a yellow watermark with an oil drill, buildings, and children (Figure 5b). The art depicted in this socialist values poster is a distinct contrast to the traditional painting of the deer poster. This poster may be seen as showcasing a modern perspective through its realistic, photograph-like image. The underlying message pertaining to "dedication" can be perceived by the arrangement of the man, who appears to be working outdoors, and the progress of buildings and oil behind him.

[34] Wang Jianfen. "Core Socialist Values." *China Daily.* www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/19thcpcnationalcongress/2017-10/12/content_33160115.htm.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Renee Gagne, 2018.
[37] Hearn, Maxwell. "Chinese Painting." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art, I.e. The Met Museum*. The

Met. June 2008.
www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/chin/hd_chin.htm
[38] "Chinese Calligraphy." *Asia Society*.
asiasociety.org/education/Chinese-calligraphy.
[39] Hearn.
[40] Venefica, Avia. "Chinese Symbol For Longevity: Long Life Symbols on Whats-Your-Sign." *Www.whats-Your-Sign.com*. Whats Your Sign. 8 May 2018. www.whats-your-sign.com/chinese-symbol-for-longevity.html.

Figure 5a: "Freedom" socialist values poster displayed outside of Beitucheng subway station in Beijing.

Figure 5b: "Dedication" socialist values poster displayed outside of the Beitucheng station in Beijing. 42

Socialist values posters, such as those displayed in Beijing, are similar to those displayed in other cities, such as Shanghai, except that there is a distinct difference in the style of art used. In Shanghai, posters presenting socialist values appeared to employ simple shapes and colors. For example, one painting depicts rows of faceless people sitting at desks with plaques beside an intricate doorway that reads "ruler of men" in red paint (Figure 5c). This image utilizes a tan background with grey ink to create the people, and

can be seen as showcasing traditional and modern aspects of simplicity in presenting the message of the piece.

Figure 5c: "Democracy" socialist values painting in Shanghai.

These described images on city walls are few among many posters throughout the country, which utilize various art forms to encourage socialist values. The art in these posters carries underlying implications that relate to politics, as well as attributes relating to history, nostalgia, and modernity through their images. In recognizing this, it can be extrapolated that other posters throughout China may also display these references to China's past and future through the depictions and styles of the images presented by the posters.

Blooming Art: From the Garden to the Wall

Within Chinese cities, displays created with flowers and plants appeared to be in abundance. Though these flower gardens are not typically associated with public art on the surface, observation of the detail and arrangement of the displays contributes to the recognition that these creations are works of art. Outside of the city walls of Xi'an, there was an intricate greenery sculpture

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41 Renee Gagne, 2018.

42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.

of a three dimensional dragon (Figure 6). The dragon appears to be primarily made with scrubs, whereas the area below the dragon has a geographic flower arrangement of pink and purple flowers. This piece of art is on display in an urban area between many business buildings. The display of a dragon can be interpreted as relating modern gardening with a symbolic creature in Chinese culture.

[44]

Figure 6: Flower and shrub dragon in Xi'an, China.

Another important art form pertaining to plants is Shanghai flower arrangement. It is thought that the overall category of "Shanghai style" derives inspiration from the Shanghai Opera, cinema, and paintings.[45] This style of flower arrangement combines a variety of ideas into each arrangement, including western influence, tradition, belief, and the environment.[46] Parallel to the growth in China, flower arrangement committees in major cities, such as Beijing and

Shanghai, have been created to promote learning and the creation of Shanghai style flower arrangements.[47] Flower arrangement prove to be a competitive art form, in which many artists build their status by participating in flower arrangement contests.[48]

At The Swatch Art Peace Hotel, there was an elaborate flower display in the lobby (Figure 7). Based on the size and detail of the arrangement, it can be assumed that the flowers are of the Shanghai flower arrangement style. The flower arrangement appears to integrate a variety of red, blue, yellow and purple flowers with large leaf branches. Another notable flower arrangement in Shanghai is located along the flood wall at The Bund, known as the "Lover's Wall," (Figure 8).[49] This wall is decorated with an abstract display of green leaves with pink and purple flowers. This design appears to have a modern approach through its decoration with flowers, as the flowers function to cover the wall as well as create an intricate design on a vertical plane.

[50]

[44] Renee Gagne, 2018.
[45] Jiaying, C., Chen Xuan, and Pu Yan. "On shanghai-style flower arrangement art." *Journal of Landscape Research* 4.12 (2012): 31-34. https://colorado.idm.oclc.org/lobgin?url=https://search-proquest-com.colorado.idm.oclc.org/docview/1435693449?accountid=14503

[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] "The Bund." *Flight Center USA*. 26 Aug. 2015. www.flightcenter.com/world-travel/china/shanghai/the-bund.
[50] Renee Gagne, 2018.

Figure 7: Flower arrangement at The Swatch Art Peace Hotel, Shanghai.
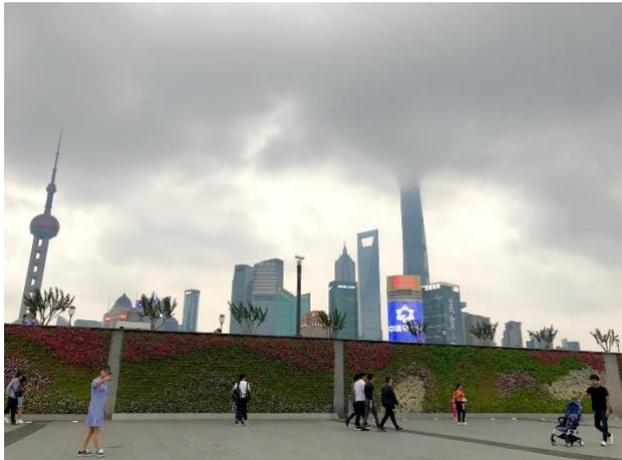
Figure 8: The "Lover's Wall" at The Bund, Shanghai.[51]

Graffiti as Art

Similar to many cities around the world, street art can also be observed throughout Chinese cities. Graffiti is said to have originated in New York during the 1960s, which inspired similar art around the world.[52] This implies that graffiti art is a relatively modern art form in China. In China, both "state sponsored" and "un sanctioned" graffiti can be observed, whereas the "state sponsored" art is typically a part of a campaign or for aesthetic purposes.[53] The dichotomy in art purposes has been a source of controversy, primarily in relation to unofficial graffiti art and the perceptions it cultivates.

Figure 9: Graffiti art in Xi'an.[54]

Though the artist, purpose, and status of officiality is unknown for the purposes of this article, one interesting graffiti painting could be observed on a main shopping street in Xi'an. The art depicts two rats who appear to be leaving a room with a bag, and are followed by mummies (Figure 9). Based on the location and depth of the graffiti, it can be extrapolated that the art is for the pleasure of people passing by.

At Donghua University in Shanghai, a long wall is utilized by student artists who have the opportunity to paint a section of the wall. This wall displays a variety of subjects that change throughout the academic year. Because the wall is used by students at the university, it can be assumed that it is a space for relatively modern graffiti art to be displayed for the pleasure of students passing by (Figures 10a, 10b, 10c).

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51 Renee Gagne, 2018.
52 Volodzko, David. "Graffiti in China, Part I: A Crack in the Concrete." *The Diplomat*. The Diplomat. 20 May 2015. thediplomat.com/2015/05/graffiti-in-china-part-i-a-crack-in-the-concrete/.
53 Bruce, Caitlyn. *Public Surfaces Beyond the Great Wall: Communication and Graffiti Culture in China*.

Rochester. www.rochester.edu/in_visible_culture/Issue_15/pdfs/bruce.pdf.
54 Renee Gagne, 2018.

Figure 10a: Student art at Donghua University, Shanghai.55

Figure 10c: Student art at Donghua University, Shanghai. 57

Figure 10b: Student art at Donghua University, Shanghai.56

Conclusion

Today, there are two prominent considerations regarding public art that have dialogues of controversy. One important consideration is regarding whether an artist has the ability to display art in a government-funded museum or similar entity. 58 Another topic of discussion regards whether a creation should be considered art, and if the people who reside in the area regard the piece as art. Though these topics are debated, it is important to recognize that art is a subjective entity that can be perceived differently depending on the observer, and that art can be found on bold displays as a statue, or as a subtle detail in the pavement. Regardless of the controversy and scope of art, both art and public space in China have evolved in a way so that art has become a prominent consideration for spaces outside of museums. From architecture to graffiti, public art can be observed as having a multitude of underlying connections to history, nostalgia, and modernity. As China continues to grow and pave its path into the future, it can be assumed that the role of public art will evolve in a parallel manner.

55 Renee Gagne, 2018.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

58 Platt, Kevin H. "Public or Private? The Culture Clash in China." *The New York Times.* The New York Times.

12 June 2012, www.nytimes.com/2012/06/13/arts/13iht-rartchina13.html.

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nalcongress/2017-
10/12/content_33160115.htm.

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Chinese Consumerism and Reflection of Wealth

SEAN JONES

"Arguably more than any single change in the law or political move by the central government, consumerism has profoundly transformed this nation…"[1] China is emerging as the single greatest purchasing power in the world from being a much less consumerism focused society just decades ago. This paper will analyze China's overall consumption and focus specifically on the consumption of clothing, vehicles, and luxury goods, which are often used to display wealth in China, through analysis and on-the-ground observational research. Additionally, this paper will explore China's massive e-commerce market, which is difficult to observe but is crucial for understanding China's consumption. Chinese consumerism and wealth reflection are intriguing to study due to their driving factors, cultural significance, and behavioral explanations. To start, it is important to understand the possible driving factors of Chinese consumerism to better identify what causes the Chinese people to have specific consumer behaviors and why they display their wealth in specific ways.

In the current global economy, it is difficult to imagine China as anything other than an economic super power leveraging its massive population and strong, stable economy. China truly has the perfect recipe to be the largest consumer in the world, yet it did not always have the mindset to indulge in such materialist behaviors. China's entrance into the world market on a large scale began in 1978 with economic reform based on the "the revival of the open market; breaking free from a seller's market; a growing middle class of consumers; and increasing consumer

sophistication."[2] China's mindset was shifting from the Mao era "three loyalties," which included Mao, the Party, and Socialism, to the desire for the "three wheels - a bicycle, a sewing machine, and a watch."[3]

Eventually, as individual wealth grew, the "three wheels" transformed into the "six big items," which involved a VCR, television, washing machine, camera, refrigerator, and electric fan.[4] Now, the Chinese people have created *siyou* or the "four haves – an apartment, a car, a good facial, a great body."[5] The Chinese people are clearly trying to become more sophisticated consumers and revise their "needs" as their economic state develops. The combination of foreign goods, increased desire to purchase and individualize, and a massive middle class reported to be around 54% of the urban population (over 390 million people) in 2012, creates the perfect environment for mass consumerism to fulfill their needs.[6] In order to target the Chinese people and their four haves, companies needed storefronts and the Chinese people supplied them.

During my recent visit to China, I experienced what seemed like never-ending malls. Each of the major cities had their respective shopping street: Wangfujing in Beijing and Xian, Nanjing in Shanghai, and so on. The streets were filled with local and foreign retailers, high-end goods to dollar-store equivalents, and most importantly, Chinese consumers with armfuls of shopping bags. I had expected to see full-fledged consumerism on these streets, that is what they exist for, but it seemed like every district, every neighborhood, had their own multi-story mall. In Guangzhou, I spent the better part of a day mall-hopping

[1] Dutton, Michael, Hsiu-ju Stacy Lo, and Dong Dong Wu. *Beijing Time*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 2010. 9.
[2] Ho, Suk-Ching. "The Emergence of Consumer Power in China." *Business Horizons*, 40. 5 (1997): 15–21.
[3] Dutton, 9.

[4] Lim, Sun S. "From cultural to information revolution: ICT domestication by middle-class families in urban China." Domestication of media and technology. Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2006. 185.
[5] Dutton, 10.
[6] Iskyan, Kim. "China's Middle Class Is Exploding." Business Insider. Business Insider. 27 Aug. 2016.

without ever leaving the comfort of air conditioning. To get from one mall to the next, there was either a skyway or underground tunnel that placed me in either an extension of the mall or another mall entirely. The malls were centralized, but they were everywhere, and the retailers do not seem to mind or be affected by the competition.

I had assumed many of the malls would be rather empty, but I saw consumers browsing nearly everywhere at any time of day. They appeared to be a place of social gathering, and even the high-end malls had restaurants or food courts. Some of the malls contained almost exclusively foreign retailers and others exclusively Chinese sellers. It also appeared that shopping malls could serve as a one-stop shop for the Chinese people. Even if the mall did not contain a department store, one could buy practically anything in every mall. Some local malls even had grocery stores in the lower levels. I was impressed by the size, sheer number, and amount of people in these malls, which was a stark contrast to the mall culture of the United States. Shopping has become a favorite pastime, according to some college students I spoke with, who loved to shop and embraced their consumerist lifestyle.

College-aged individuals in particular appear to be especially attracted to materialism and consumerism. These tendencies may be a side effect of the one-child policy, which according to some theories, created China's "little emperors." The one-child policy in conjunction with increased economic well-being may have caused parents to overindulge their children, possibly creating consumerist behaviors from a very young age.[7] In 1997, McNeal and Yeh conducted a study on China's "little emperors," finding that children greatly influence their parent's spending and "spend a substantial amount of their own money on their own needs and wants."[8] The study found

that 10-year old children make an average of 2.8 shopping trips per week for a variety of goods, indicating rampant consumerism from a very young age.[9] Many of these children have grown up in what Karl Gerth from the University of California-San Diego calls a "4-2-1 structure," in which the one child is the beneficiary of both the grandparents' and parents' disposal income.[10] This theory suggests these children are raised on consumerism and behaviors that encourage shopping. Because they only have one child, the family wants to do their best to create opportunities and success for them. A side effect of this may be what many consider a spoiled child that also has lots of pressure to succeed. Apparently, the pressure and pampering strategy is paying off, according to a BBC article in 2011, "The average age of a Chinese millionaire is 39 - that's 15 years younger than in the developed world."[11] The influx of youth with money in China has also created a unique opportunity for high-end retailers to enter China and be very successful.

Not a subway ride went by that I did not see a high-end leather bag, nice jewelry, or a pair of collector sneakers on someone. The Chinese people seem to care about the brands they wear and want to show off their most top-end items. Most of the sneakers were $200-$300 (retail) "Jordan's" or $250 (retail) "Yeezy's." Many of the authentic pairs can fetch much more depending on the rarity of the shoe, and others are knockoffs that are just another pair of shoes to collectors. One shoe seller from the United States recognized the Chinese emergence of streetwear fashion and their desire for high-end sneakers after a Chinese customer purchased "50 pairs of Air Jordan worth 10,000 (US) dollars by cash."[12] The store "Stadium Goods" has since integrated into China's massive e-commerce platform and sells internationally

[7] Lim, 187.

[8] Mcneal, James U., and Mindy F. Ji. "Chinese children as consumers: An analysis of their new product information sources." Journal of Consumer Marketing 16. (1999): 345-65.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Bain, Marc. "The Meteoric Rise of Chinese Consumerism Will Reshape the World, and Maybe Even Destroy It." Quartz. Quartz. 4 June 2017.

[11] Marston, Rebecca. "No Rules for the Rich: How China Spends Its New Wealth." BBC News. BBC. 12 May 2011.

[12] Xu, Xingtang, and Wen Wang. "Feature: U.S. sneaker dealer discovers niche market in China via online platform." Xinhua. 10 Nov. 2017.

through online transactions, which I will discuss in more detail later on.

In China, I also saw a lot of counterfeit brand name goods, otherwise known as fakes. Most of the fakes were of the popular Adidas and Kanye West collaboration "Yeezy's," which have become a must-own pair for streetwear fanatics. As a "sneaker-head" (a term used by shoe collectors), I had a difficult time distinguishing fakes and authentic shoes, and I even considered buying a pair of fakes for myself. Real Yeezy's sell out instantly from retail locations, causing the average buyer to resort to fakes to imitate the look. It doesn't even matter if the Yeezy's on the feet of teenagers on the bus are real or not, what is important is their desire to flaunt their wealth, going so far as to buy fakes to impress others. The easy replication and growing importance of clothing makes it the perfect avenue for wealth reflection.

The streetwear movement is exploding in China; Chinese youth match their Yeezy's to the most popular streetwear brands like "Off-White," "Bape," "Supreme," and "Stussy." On a few occasions, I saw someone dressed head to toe in their favorite brand, capped off with a stylish pair of sneakers. I imagine that many of these clothes were also fakes, but I only knew enough about the brands to spot the most obvious ones. Many of the fake clothes I did recognize were based on the popular "Nike Off-White" collection. These shoes appeared to be straight off the factory line, with detailing describing the materials used for each component of the shoe. Authentic Off-White clothing fetches a lofty price tag with jackets costing easily over $1,000, and $200 for a keychain. The fakes for this brand's clothing were obvious based on their misspellings and excessive Off-White branding.

Most of the streetwear brands thrive on online sales with very few actual storefronts. While in China, I only saw one storefront that sold many of the most popular brands. The small store was in the Shanghai art district and contained a wide range of clothing, shoes, and accessories. One accessory that stood out to me was a "Supreme Blimp" that was selling for $100 USD. The blimp is essentially a balloon with the "Supreme" logo printed on the side, which shows how a brand can be more important than the actual usefulness of an item. Based on my observations of the popularity of these streetwear brands, I would have expected the store to be more popular but I only saw one other customer, though this might have been due to the store getting ready to close for the day.

The Chinese people have developed a deep knowledge of brands and their values in order to identify wealth in streetwear clothing. The streetwear cultural movement among the youth places extra value on otherwise ordinary clothing. These clothes are not made with premium materials like other luxury goods; they simply gain traction because people desire to wear the brand name associated with them.

Streetwear brands and styles are very age-specific, but consumerism in China seems to reach beyond the shopping-addicted youth with other luxury brands. China has entered what is called the "show off" stage of luxury evolution.[13] The Chinese people care about the brand names they are wearing; they want to show off the most popular brands and stir competition among the wealthy. Many people accomplish this by purchasing goods from luxury brands. While the definition of a luxury good is up for debate, these brands are generally classified by rarity (uniqueness), premium pricing, high level aesthetics, and brand signals.[14] These luxury goods are usually expensive, not necessities, and the brand is worth more to the consumer than the actual item. Some of the most popular luxury brands in China from my experience are "Gucci," "Prada," "Louis Vuitton," "Rolex," and "Burberry." In fact, in 2011, Moet Hennessy Louis Vuitton made over 40% of their profits from China.[15] Interestingly, the Chinese people have a different view of what is considered a luxury brand, naming

[13] Zeveloff, Julie. "China Has Entered The 'Show-Off' Stage Of Luxury Evolution." Business Insider. Business Insider. 9 Sept. 2011.

[14] Ko, Eunju, et al. "What Is a Luxury Brand? A New Definition and Review of the Literature." Journal of Business Research 99. (2019): 405-413.
[15] Zeveloff.

brands like "Nike" as luxury in one survey.[16] Nike would not normally be considered a luxury brand in the United States, but because of the fluidity of the luxury definitions and cultural perceptions, it could possibly be seen as one.

The brand seems to be more important than its price from what I observed in China. In this "show off" stage, the Chinese people want to show others their wealth. The most prominent way to do so is to consume luxury clothes and accessories and flaunt them. Sometimes it was blatant when someone wanted to flaunt their wealth. They wore flashy jewelry, a nice handbag, and what appeared to be designer brand clothing. I would usually experience this in the business districts of each city. In Beijing, I saw luxury handbags around nearly every woman's arm in the Central Business District near the CCTV building. In Chengdu, the nightlife near the Anshun Bridge was crawling with people showing off their wealth with handbags, clothing, and jewelry. Even at tourist attractions, the Chinese people seemed to want to show their wealth. It is as though it has simply become a way of life to own these luxury goods and use them in everyday occurrences.

The norm has become luxury, even if it is not on purpose, and in order to keep "face" as the Chinese people call it, you have to own some type of luxury good. Face is considered "a desire to gain favorable social self-worth and to be valued in relation to others... associated with social prestige, reputation, and status."[17] This is the apparent effect of the "show off stage" that will continue to persist until the Chinese people cease to place so much emphasis on showing their wealth.

Currently, I believe China's economic state and relatively new ability to purchase luxury goods will continue to fuel their obsession to purchase such goods. The youth that are driving the sales were raised with the money to buy luxury goods, and have normalized the shopping experience into essentially a daily activity. Luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton have obviously seen the buying potential in China and will likely continue to penetrate the Chinese marketplace. The future of luxury goods is in China, with other markets such as Europe, the United States, and Japan showing no or negative growth.[18]

The Chinese people obviously believe it is beneficial to purchase luxury goods in order to reflect their wealth, perhaps as a symbol of success. This mentality could be rooted in Chinese culture as well. The Chinese culture "emphasizes hierarchy and status."[19] Luxury is considered a "social signifier," and fashion can be used to convey social status; therefore, purchasing luxury clothes and accessories symbolically raises their social status.[20] As the Chinese people continue to progress through the "show off stage," different brands will become symbolic of different personalities or social groups, causing certain types of individuals to gravitate towards certain brands and signifying different tiers and types of wealth.[21]

The Chinese people's obsession with luxury brands is magnified by one another's obsession, creating a cycle in which each individual wants to be part of a particular social group. This importance placed on a sense of belonging can also be attributed to Chinese cultural components that are more collectivist and community-focused. However, luxury brands could also be a break from the collectivist mold where Chinese youth in particular want to be more individualized, and will therefore go to great lengths and dive deep into their pocket books for the next emerging or unique style. Clothing purchases are just the beginning for the Chinese consumer, who also spends a lot of money on luxury cars.

Since one of the *siyou* is a car, there is no surprise that the Chinese people use the car as a literal vehicle to display wealth. In 2017, "China accounted for almost 90% of sales growth at leading luxury automakers," as well as

[16] Zhan, Lingjing, and Yanqun He. "Understanding Luxury Consumption in China: Consumer Perceptions of Best-Known Brands." Journal of Business Research 65.10 (2012): 1453.

[17] Zhang, Bopeng, and Jung-Hwan Kim. "Luxury Fashion Consumption in China: Factors Affecting Attitude and Purchase Intent." Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services 20.1 (2012): 68-79.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

approximately 27% of overall luxury car sales.[22] These two statistics show the Chinese people's desire for luxury vehicles, which I saw on any walk around town. Luxury cars lined the streets; Audis, Mercedes, Land Rovers, Teslas, and BMWs made up every other car, mixed in with more economy brands or taxis. Seeing these cars became normal; the expectation was to drive a luxury car. Yet, the abundance of these types of cars almost negated their status. Since so many people were driving the luxury cars, they were not unique. The cars were still an obvious reflection of wealth and status, but it seems to be such an important purchase that many Chinese people buy a luxury car as their first step to display wealth, making the status club less exclusive. I was still astonished by the amount of high-end luxury cars, but was more impressed by the occasional Bentley, Ferrari, or Lotus. In the United States, someone driving a Mercedes or Land Rover would catch my eye, but in China it soon was no surprise.

It does not appear that the Chinese people's desire for luxury cars is slowing down either. Since the luxury car is such a status symbol, brands like Audi, BMW, and Mercedes will continue to thrive. In the first half of 2017, Mercedes and BMW sold nearly 600,000 cars in China with a 34 percent increase for Mercedes and an 18 percent increase for BMW compared to the first half of 2016.[23] Yet, the emerging generation that cannot quite afford these well-known brands are still opting for luxury car entry models. Cadillac experienced a 71 percent increase in sales growth, and Lincoln boasted a 97 percent sales growth, meaning these brands were the go-to entry models. Overall, there is an explosion of vehicle purchases that are priced between 300,000-500,000 Yuan or around 45,000 to 75,000 USD.[24]

Interestingly, I did not witness so many of these entry level brands. Every now and then, American brands caught my eye because they seemed out of place compared to the European, Chinese, or Japanese brands, yet they did not seem to reflect the same status or wealth as other luxury brands. This could simply be because I was so accustomed to seeing these vehicles on an everyday basis, or because I did not even associate some of these brands as luxury vehicles. This further implies that the luxury status can be developed based on the desire of a particular community and their willingness to purchase one product over another. Additionally, even with their increased sales, entry level brands still have catching up to do in order to compete with the traditional luxury brands in China, which have historically been Audi, Mercedes, and BMW, each selling over 500,000 cars in China in 2017 alone.[25]

The Chinese people have developed a luxury hierarchy that places certain brands above others. Once again, indicating the "show-off" stage that China is currently in. The current desire is to own a luxury car that subtly flaunts wealth without drawing too much attention. Aside from taxis and the occasional dash of color, the vehicle landscape in China is relatively bland. Black, white, or grey are the most popular colors for cars in China by far. Only a few times did I observe flashy sports cars or supercars in the cities. For instance, one luxury hotel in Shanghai appeared to be using Bentleys and other high-end cars for prestigious clients. The car is an effective, prominent, and normal reflection of wealth for the Chinese people.

It would be an oversight to talk about consumerism in China without addressing the e-commerce market prevalence and explosion of online shopping. China, along with the rest of the world, is shifting to online shopping over retail stores. The multi-story malls I observed throughout China will likely suffer the same fate as retail stores in the United States. Yet, I suspect luxury brand stores will continue to thrive due to their specific products, the desire for consumers to see the products before purchase, and limited availability for discounts online. China's growth in online retail shopping is truly mind-blowing with $1.33 trillion of online sales in 2018, growing nearly 24% from 2017.[26] The Chinese people have the money to spend and are taking advantage of the convenience of online sales to spend it.

[22] Fukao.
[23] Qian, Qin. "China's Luxury Car Market Is Getting Shaken Up in 2017." Jing Daily. 14 Sept. 2017.
[24] Ibid.

[25] Fukao.
[26] Melton, James, et al. "Online Retail Sales in China Grew Almost 24% in 2018, Its Government Says." Digital Commerce 360. 24 Jan. 2019.

One college student I spoke to in Shanghai was surprised I did not expect same-day or next-day shipping from my online purchases. She explained that online purchases often arrive the same day you order them, the next day, or in two days at the latest. This convenience means there is relatively no difference between shopping in a mall and shopping online. Even if an item is needed on short notice, it can be purchased quickly online because of the e-commerce infrastructure established in China.

China is increasingly automating its warehouse operations and upgrading information systems to deal with the volume and fast shipping demands of customers.[27] This infrastructure will continue to develop and allow the Chinese people to further shift towards online shopping in the future. The college student I spoke to told me she rarely shops in actual malls or stores, and that she does most of her shopping online because of the fast delivery. She elaborated by telling me about the time it takes to actually go shopping, and that she only goes shopping in person as an outing with friends or when she needs to buy clothes. She identified shopping as a social gathering, which further supports the idea of consumerism and the reflection of wealth. Even though online purchases allow consumers to buy conveniently, shopping with others, such as friends, further perpetuates the prestige of shopping and the opportunities associated with it to reflect wealth.

While it may be difficult to observe Chinese shopping online, people are no doubt shifting towards e-commerce over physical retail locations. The effects of this are prevalent with many abandoned mall areas, malls containing only high-end shops or shops of the same kind, and relatively low foot traffic in malls compared to the density of population in these cities. The online retail movement does help to explain why I noticed malls in very poor condition and as many, if not more, foreigners in some of the retail malls I visited. Even though I saw Chinese shoppers everywhere, especially on shopping streets, I also experienced closed retail malls frequently. While it is unclear what these malls contained, e-commerce likely contributed to their closing in some way. Chinese e-commerce is an important aspect of Chinese consumerism and provides another tool for people to purchase goods and reflect their wealth.

Luxury brands and other trending brands, like Supreme and Off-White, must now compete with online counterfeits with the emergence of China's online market. The sellers of these fakes have recently been cracked down on with hefty fines, which has caused them to move towards one-on-one transactions through social media apps.[28] These purchases are much more difficult to regulate and enable less wealthy people to purchase similar-looking products as status symbols and reflections of wealth. As stated previously in my argument, the legitimacy of a product as a display of wealth is less important than the desire to actually do so. This counterfeit market provides an opportunity for many Chinese people to purchase look-a-like trending products and create a façade of their economic status and wealth reflection.

China is not complaining about the consumerism movement or the desire to display wealth. Increased disposable income combined with the youth spending movement continue to grow the Chinese economy. Neilsen reported that 78% of China's economic growth in the first three quarters of 2018 was the result of consumerism.[29] This immense contribution to economic growth will continue to expand as the Chinese people have more money to spend on more things. More importantly, only "9% of consumers are willing to spend more money on things that fail to reflect their identity and status."[30] These statistics are crucial to understanding the future of Chinese consumerism and the trending attitudes that reveal how the Chinese people will spend their wealth.

Luxury brands will continue to thrive in China as individuals continue to display their wealth

[27] Lau, Alan, and Min Su. "China's e-Commerce Soft Spot: Logistics." McKinsey & Company. Apr. 2016.
[28] Chang, Rachel, and Sarah Frier. "How Chinese Sellers of Fake Dior Are Evading a Crackdown Online." Bloomberg.com. Bloomberg. 16 Jan. 2019.

[29] Neilsen. "Ten Trends of China's Consumer Market in 2018." What People Watch, Listen To and Buy. 21 Dec. 2018.
[30] Ibid.

through accessories, clothing, and luxury cars. The youth are taking advantage of growing up in a prosperous China, which has experienced tremendous growth for their entire life up until this point. Chinese families have more money to spend, less people to spend money on, and social pressure to display their wealth accordingly. It was fascinating to see first-hand the importance of wealth reflection to the Chinese people. Seeing people wear expensive clothing, niche brands, luxury handbags, and driving expensive cars were all testimonials to the consumption and associated attitudes of the Chinese people. It will be interesting to see how Chinese consumerism continues to develop as the younger people have families of their own and increase their disposable income. The wealth gap will also be something to monitor, even if it is difficult to distinguish based solely on observation of wealth reflection. It is obvious that the Chinese people care about how they are perceived and what they choose to spend their money on. Now, we will have to wait to see if this sort of consumption is sustainable and encouraged moving forward.

My experiences in China helped me to discover the difference between just doing research and actually experiencing an area of study. Observing Chinese people wearing particular clothing and driving certain cars, and experiencing the density of different types of luxury stores, were evidence of Chinese consumerism and the movement towards luxury spending. In general, my observations supported the research I did for my topic. I learned that the clothes Chinese people wear is important to how they reflect their identity and wealth. I learned that China makes a large amount of counterfeit goods and has a market for them. I learned that the display of wealth is partially integrated into the culture and ideology of the Chinese people, causing them to continue to find new ways to display wealth throughout the generations. Right now, that just happens to be clothes, cars, and luxury goods.

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Chinese Music as a Tool for Developing Bonds within Communities

SOUSHEEL VUNNAM

The purpose that music serves as an art form has been a question that has marinated in the minds of artists and audiences for thousands of years. At its core, music is a tool for expressing emotions through sounds placed strategically in time. The resulting emotions then allow for an extremely large set of applications, which range all the way from producing simple pleasure to inspiring meaningful thoughts.

In China, music has been used for centuries to strengthen social bonds and progress the wellbeing of society as a whole. However, the ways in which this has been done have changed throughout China's long history. Before the establishment of the PRC, music was largely traditional and provided a way for people to bond through pleasure and simple musical rituals. Since the establishment of the PRC, views about music changed and music became a way to promote national pride. This allowed communities to be built through a common catalyst and for a form of music to be designed for the masses.

Presently, Chinese music takes on many forms as it reaches a vital stage in its history. Some music is used to invoke feelings of nostalgia, usually through traditional instruments and performances, as well as nostalgic values and periods. Modern Chinese music is affected by the process of globalization and is developing sounds inspired from all cultures, but it is still uniquely Chinese and caters to new generations. In all these applications, music has been used as a way for people to come together and work toward a common goal, whether that is pleasure, country, or rebellion, and through these goals, communities are fostered.

A Brief History of Chinese Music

Music in China began millennia ago and has a complex history. A key moment was around 2500 BC when the Yellow Emperor began studying the music surrounding various rituals and performances in order to standardize a 12 pitch scale. These measures helped music become attainable by the masses, as it became easier for people to create music using these guidelines.

Music continued to develop throughout the years and during the first millennium BC, the philosophy of music was formed through the rising popularity of Daoism and Confucianism, as well as records such as the *Yue Ji*. Music was "seen as having an important role in the attainment of harmony between humans and the universe"[1] and ritualistic music for religious purposes was vastly developed. In this era, performances would bring those looking for an out-of-body or religious experience together. Later in the early first millennium, as the Silk Road developed, so did the diversity of musical talent and styles as performers travelled all over Asia. As the years went by, Chinese music took on many different forms and purposes, and new styles were created, such as the Peking Opera in the 18th century.

As political turmoil in China grew, music was used by the government to introduce certain values to the people. Once the People's Republic of China was established in 1949, people started to become disheartened by the previous history of music and thought it to be medieval and aged. This attitude steadily grew throughout the Cultural Revolution from 1966-1976, and traditional works were vandalized and musicians disrespected. Instead, the eight model plays, called *yangbanxi*, were performed to incite revolutionary

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1 Cook, Scott. "'Yue Ji' 樂記 -- Record of Music: Introduction, Translation, Notes, and Commentary." *Asian Music* 26.2 (1995): 1–96.

spirit in the people and help bring the country together under new socialist values.[2] After the death of Mao, people became more open and forgiving for the past, and popular, traditional, and modern music began a new revival. As China becomes more connected with the world around it, its music has influenced, and been influenced by, international cultures. Chinese opera, popular music, and various ritual performances have adopted techniques from jazz, hip hop, and Latin styles. As time progresses, the music of China will continue to change because of its government and worldly influences, but it will always look to its past for inspiration and technique.

Peking Opera: Entertainment for the Masses

The history of Chinese opera dates back to the Tang Dynasty, with influences in drama and musical performance going much further back in time. At the time, most opera was solely performed for the emperor and other imperial members. The most popular form of opera, Peking Opera, or *jingju*, didn't originate until around the 18th century. The roots of Peking Opera lie in the Four Anhui Opera Troupes. For the first time ever, the troupes had come to Beijing to perform for Emperor Qianlong and the imperial court. The emperor was attracted to their style and they continued to perform in Beijing, even expanding their audiences to the masses.[3] Over time, they adjusted their repertoire to the palates of the larger, uneducated audiences of Beijing, and Peking Opera was born.

One of the most significant aspects of Peking Opera is its appeal to the masses. There was a divide between the crude, unprocessed folk music that appealed to the masses, dubbed *huabu*, and the polished music that was performed for the imperial class, called *kun*. When the Anhui troupes adjusted their musical styles, it was mainly to incorporate more *huabu* influences and in doing so, they captured the hearts of many.[4] One of the

traits of this transformation was that the music became less complicated and followed less previously established "rules" of Chinese opera. The popularity of *huabu* eventually surpassed *kun,* so much so that *kun* opera is hardly performed anymore.

Building on its appeal to the masses, Peking Opera was influenced by many different areas in China. Although it is also referred to as Beijing opera, it was not specific to any region in China and the performances were familiar to people from across the country. For example, it took its musical modes from Wuhan, acting styles from Shaanxi, and dance techniques from the *kun* theatre. The performers even adjusted their singing styles to incorporate multiple accents to make it easier for the general population of China to interpret the performances. This allowed anyone from around the country to understand and enjoy these operas. Another appeal of Peking Opera lies in its extravagance and expressiveness. Most opera before Peking Opera was inclined to address aesthetics rather than expressing an idea. Peking Opera's responsibility to appeal to the masses altered this tradition so that more people could understand the general theme of the performances. These techniques allowed for a wider audience to be reached, and in doing so, popularized Peking Opera around the country.

When people went to see Peking Opera, they were usually there for pleasure. There would be "theatre crawls"[5] in which people would get drunk and see a number of operas. People would usually talk during the operas and it was seen as a social gathering, rather than a theatrical performance. There would also be plenty of food and drinks around the stage. During shows, one would often hear a loud "*Hao* (Great)!" from the audience, signifying laughter or a great scene. The informalities of the Peking Opera allowed for people to come together and build bonds, which was extremely different from the operas played for the imperial courts in the past. It signified that Peking Opera was for the common man to enjoy.

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[4] Li, Ruru, and Eugenio Barba. *The Soul of Beijing Opera: Theatrical Creativity and Continuity in the Changing World*. Hong Kong University Press. 2010.
[5] Ibid.

I found many of the appeals and stylistic choices of Peking Opera matched up to the traits above when I experienced a Peking Opera show meant for tourists. The first opera followed the story of a man in love with the daughter of a woman who sold chickens. The man left his ring at the store, hoping the woman would notice him. Soon, through unlikely circumstances, the two fell in love with each other. However, the mother opposed the relationship and set out to stop it. Soon after, the couple eloped. This is a classic love story and although it had some tragic moments, such as the daughter running away from her mother, it was very enjoyable to watch. The next opera was very short-lived and did not have an extensive plot, but was instead used to show off the acrobatics of Peking Opera. It was an exciting show to watch, and although I didn't learn much from the performance, I genuinely enjoyed myself throughout.

Because the show was meant for international tourists, I was elated that they had English subtitles. I felt it was continuing the motion of appealing to the masses, which Peking Opera represented for so many years. The audience's emotion was also in line with what I thought it would have been like when Peking Opera was gaining popularity during the late 1800s. Although nobody was shouting "*Hao*!" the audience laughed heartily throughout.

Peking Opera allows audiences to join together and have fun, rather than follow strict rituals. It is now considered one of the cultural treasures of China, and will continue to influence how communities bond through music.

Yue Ji

The purpose of music as a means to unite people has been traced back to the Han Dynasty, in around 100 BC, when the Record of Music (*Yue Ji*) was written. In the book, the writers aim to construct a philosophy of music and how music should be used for good. During the Han Dynasty, the Record of Music was the greatest commentary on music and it remains one of the most famous musical texts in China, continuing to have influence on Chinese musical thought. In essence, the volume states that music should always have a purpose and should not be totally reliant on aesthetics. One of its main themes is the necessary combination of ritual and music as well. In this sense, ritual is not primarily religious, but any sort of behavior that is repeated in order to maintain order. Music and ritual go very well together because the nature of music itself is repetitive but creative.

The *Yue Ji* aims to further the notion that music and ritual are interdependent on each other because music can allow for expression and freedom, but ritual bases that freedom in reason and order. It can also work the other way, in which music allows one to surpass the conformity of order brought on through ritual.[6] The *Yue Ji* goes on to say that this knowledge is vital for an emperor, the son of Heaven, because he must balance this duality in order to rule all those under Heaven.[7] However, the emperor alone must not play his part; it is necessary for society to contribute. The *Yue Ji* states "a well-balanced society should function like a well-balanced piece of music, by which each member maintains its position in such a way as to allow for the harmonious operation of the whole."[8]

In Shanghai, there are schools that perform a morning ritual of singing and dancing. This practice has been in place for years now and is seen throughout China. It may stem from the belief that music can bring together a society, and in this case, is used to build companionship among classmates. Furthermore, each person in the dances is vital to the entire piece and the dancers depend on each other to progress, which attributes itself to the *Yue Ji's* theme of harmony through society's roles.

The *Yue Ji* set a goal that music should not be purely for pleasure and aesthetics, but instead be used to serve a purpose. The combination of ritual and music allows a synthesis of order and disorder, as well as purpose and pleasure. A ruler should utilize this combination to progress the well-being of their people and progress their society as a whole.

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[6] Cook, 14.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

Propaganda Music: Uniting a Nation

Art is a powerful way to capture emotion and express ideas. The Chinese have been using music for thousands of years as a tool to teach specific themes and display meanings. Although the term propaganda has taken a negative connotation in western countries, the term simply means information, which may not be entirely fact based, that is used to advocate for a specific opinion. The Chinese saw music as a propaganda form, not to blatantly lie to the people, but instead to promote opinions that could be used for the good of the country. This practice has been done for thousands of years, beginning with ritual music and developing to *yangbanxi* – the revolutionary operas – as well as popular music during the Communist era.

The theme of music's role to serve a purpose continued throughout history, and during the Cultural Revolution, music was used in *yangbanxi* to convey socialist ideals while still being enjoyable to the public. While Chairman Mao was in power, he aimed to unite the country under a new socialist regime. In order to do so, he knew that altering the themes of art was a necessary prerequisite. Learning from the rise of popularity of the Peking Opera, he knew that a combination of drama and music could help promote his ideals the most.

However, Mao said that the old traditions did not serve to further the ideals of the time and he wanted to synthesize a new precedent for Chinese art using international influences and inspiration from ideas of the Chinese past.[9] Chairman Mao wanted to get away from traditional music in order to usher in a new, modern era during his rule. However, traditional music provides citizens with nostalgia, so he utilized the nostalgic influences in specific ways to unite the country.

It is clear to see the similarities between Peking Opera and *yangbanxi*. The music is fairly similar, though it is much more dramatic and allows for simpler representations to change the mood or scene. The *yangbanxi,* in this case, simplify the nuances of Peking Opera even further in order to appeal to the masses. This simplicity is also seen in the representations of characters in *yangbanxi*, as the protagonists usually wear red, are more beautiful than the antagonists, and follow Chairman Mao. The stories of the *yangbanxi* are also usually more modern in order to appeal to current problems, rather than follow old Chinese myths. Characters such as American soldiers and nationalists are usually chosen as protagonists, rather than ancient warlords.[10] The addition of modern storylines to traditional music allowed for a combination of nostalgia and Communist themes that were ideal in uniting people together to build a socialist country.

Mao aimed to make a community out of musical performances as well. During the rise of the Communist Party in the 1930s, he encouraged rural folk to create musical troupes and perform to their towns. This allowed the people to take part in culture, give back to their towns, as well as spread socialist ideals. He believed nothing brought people together for a cause better than art, and especially music. Mao called these artists "musical workers."[11]

The ideas of the *Yue Ji* can be seen in Mao's view of music. He wanted to progress the idea of a Communist party and bring people together under that power, so he aimed to create music that followed guidelines. These guidelines can be seen as the rituals necessary for order. The music also aimed to serve a purpose, rather than be purely aesthetic. In fact, many of the musical techniques used during this period were very similar to each other, with similar scales and chords being used to appeal to the public. Chairman Mao seemed to have imitated the musical guidelines for a ruler that were introduced in *Yue Ji* by combining music and ritual.

However, during Mao's rule, some music was banned and frowned upon. When an artist did not fit the socialist role, their art was secretly

[9] Perris, Arnold. "Music as Propaganda: Art at the Command of Doctrine in the People's Republic of China." *Ethnomusicology* 27.1 (1983): 1. doi:10.2307/850880.

[10] Terry, 70.

[11] Tuohy, Sue. "The Sonic Dimensions of Nationalism in Modern China: Musical Representation and Transformation." *Ethnomusicology* 45.1 (2001): 107. doi:10.2307/852636.

destroyed or ignored. The government only supported and publicized works that conformed to socialist roles, so naturally these were the only sources of art many citizens came to care about. Some playwrights were upset that their plays were rejected and some were prosecuted by the government. However, occasionally, the government would propose revisions or rewrites and the play would be allowed to be performed.[12] Actors were treated more equally and were praised more during this era. Audiences also loved the music of this era, as the plays allowed them to be optimistic about the future.

The appeal of Mao's rule over music during the Cultural Revolution lies in the ability to join people together under the country. It motivated citizens to work toward the goal of a successful, socialist society and allowed people to bond over these commonalities. This led to better family and community connections. There is a debate on the value of full artistic freedom versus art for a purpose. Since art was usually used for thematic purposes in China, more people generally gained a vision for their lives and improved them when the art served a purpose. Mao believed music and art should be for the people, and by controlling the culture in China, he created a force in the people that would motivate them for the better.

Music in Daily Life

Everyday music rituals are extremely popular in China. From group dancing, to choirs and concerts in parks, to street musicians, the power of music affects everyone's lives in China. In Xi'an, a popular tradition on weekend nights is to go to the streets and do the Xi'an dance. Everyone is invited to join in, and even though one may not know the moves, newcomers are welcomed and taught. In parks around China, especially in the morning, it is popular for older generations of Chinese people to join together and sing. In Fuxing Park, Shanghai, people set up pianos and sing Chinese songs together. Many of these people will return to the parks day in and day out to build a community in their area. In this sense, these gatherings can be seen as a ritual as people will usually dance or sing the same songs. Since it

involves music as well, it can be thought of as applying the rules of *Yue Ji*. The music's purpose is to build a community, and through these people showing up day in and day out, they contribute to the sense of togetherness. The rituals may also provide a sense of nostalgia, as *yangbanxi* is sometimes performed in parks. Although the Cultural Revolution signifies an era of repression, the people feel nostalgic for the communities built during the time period and have found the perfect setting of public parks to participate in that nostalgia. These everyday rituals of music allow for communities to be built through repeated gatherings. Similar to the school dances, they also develop roles for each person and promote bonding through the responsibilities of performance. These everyday rituals are a vital part of Chinese culture that allow for people to come together and enjoy Chinese culture while also encouraging friendship in a society.

The Globalization of Chinese Music

As China enters into the global market, it also gains influence in the realm of culture too. This influence has found its way into popular music and has spawned a few genres. These genres have risen out of the Chinese adaptation of international genres and have been transformed in beautiful ways. One of these genres is jazz, and although it originated from a combination of African rhythms, classical music, and improvisation, the Chinese have added their own spin on it to create a new genre called *shidaiqu*. The subgenre originated in Shanghai during the 1920s when trade flourished and people from all around the world were situated in Shanghai. An American jazz trumpet player, Buck Clayton, ended up in the French Concession and was able to synthesize the Chinese and American music scales. Li Jinhui, a famous popular music composer, learned from Clayton and was able to introduce new instruments, such as maracas, as well as new techniques for song structure. The genre boomed in the time before the Communist Party, but as soon as Chairman Mao came into power, the party denounced the music, as it did not emphasize national pride. The genre described Shanghai's

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[12] Li, 32.

rebellious nature very well, as it was usually played in nightclubs and highlighted the sins of the city.[13] It is still played today in jazz clubs around Shanghai, and it was even seen in various parks around the city. In Fuxing Park, there was a plethora of Chinese people dancing with maracas and singing *shidaiqu* tunes. The music was also seen in the Temple of Heaven when a *shidaiqu* troupe danced in the side gardens. The appeal of *shidaiqu* lies in its amazing feat of being able to make jazz music, a music already full of worldly inspirations, into something uniquely Chinese. Although it is not purely jazz, its influence can still be heard and as knowledge has passed through different musicians, it has grown into something else. *Shidaiqu* is especially interesting because it has garnered its own authenticity from the culmination of other cultures, creating somewhat of a paradox of authenticity. It brings people together through a modern vision.

Another music genre that has risen in popularity because of international influence is hip-hop. Hip-hop originated in the United States when the black community wanted their voice heard among the people. It is usually associated with revolution, as well as progressive ideas, and it has boomed in popularity with the young generation in China. The story of hip-hop in China is similar to the story of that in the United States. Due to the oppression of certain musical styles in China during the Cultural Revolution, many youths after the period felt their country was suppressing their artistic ideas. The youths of China then took hold of hip-hop because it gave them the ability to rise up against these constraints in an artistic way, taking influence from similar black cultural uprisings in the United States. They are able to, in many ways, disguise criticism of China [14] through the power of the genre. The rise of hip-hop has also allowed a young generation of Chinese people to learn more about culture outside of China, as well as join together and create new forms of social life within the country. For example, Chinese hip-hop is played in nightclubs and has created new sorts of scenes in different universities. The hip-hop scene has

created a type of counterculture within the country and united the youth around it. It is a direct opposition of the oppression of ideas experienced during the Cultural Revolution and it follows a general theme of history, in which countercultures are formed after overbearing rule.

The introduction of Western influences on Chinese music has spawned new sorts of cultures in China. It can also be seen in the light of *Yue Ji*, as the purpose of this music lies in bringing new revolutionary topics together. These topics usually resist the politics of China and symbolize the country's new generations. The youth's rituals involve going to bars, nightclubs, and cabarets, and the music that comes from outside the country is used to build up these scenes. It is also amazing how the Chinese people have made outside influences into their own traditions, as seen with *shidaiqu*.

Conclusion

Music in China has been used for a variety of purposes and has expressed many themes. Since music is a tool for expressing emotion, artists have found a way to capture that emotion and aim it toward a particular audience and produce a certain reaction. In Peking Opera, music and drama were adjusted in order to appeal to the country. In doing so, they created an art form that brought people together for pure enjoyment in an area where they could be themselves among friends and family. Then during the Cultural Revolution, music was still marketed toward the masses, but instead used by the government to advance a socialist agenda. Mao knew that nostalgia must be capitalized on while still creating a new vision for Chinese culture, so he formed *yangbanxi* through a synthesis of Peking Opera and modern, Communist concepts. This allowed socialist ideas to be relatable to the people and build bonds between communities. Techniques of combining ritual and music, introduced in the ancient *Yue Ji*, were also used in order to progress the Chinese society. These

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[13] "Jazz Music in Shanghai." *GBTimes.* 30 May 2016. gbtimes.com/shanghais-golden-age-jazz-music.

[14] Khan, Katy. "Chinese Hip Hop Music: Negotiating for Cultural Freedoms in the 21st Century." *Muziki* 6.2 (2009): 232–240.

approaches can also be seen in the everyday music rituals performed by people in China nowadays. When people join together in a community and perform dance and music, it allows them to bond over art as well as pleasure. In modern China, with the introduction of Western music, the youths have synthesized new genres and created new rebellious counterculture communities as a direct response to the subversion of culture experienced during the Cultural Revolution. As history progresses and goes through natural responses to the past, the purpose of music has still stayed the same. It has been used to create communities through joining people together under pleasure and ritual.

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Making and Remaking Shangrila: The Confrontation and Negotiation between Tibetan Cultural Preservation and State-Sponsored Tourism

ZIYU ZHAO

INTRODUCTION

Shangrila is a place of imagination. It was first presented to the world in James Hilton's *Lost Horizon* in a dazzling and mystical manner—an English novelist's imagination of an undisturbed utopia located at the mountainside of milk-blue snow slopes in the Himalayas. A place of eternal peace and vigor. In 2001, the Ministry of Civil Affairs of the People's Republic of China (PRC) granted the name of Shangrila to Zhongdian, a regionally peripheral and economically marginal county in the Sino-Tibetan borderlands in Southwest China, where later visitors would be struck by its magnificent mountainous views and ethnic and biological diversities. PRC's decision to localize the name on Zhongdian projected an intangible imagination on a reality and, in turn, transformed Shangrila into a real place. The real immediately falls into fantasy again, however, through the various and contradictory styles of conceptualization brought on by a myriad of incomers that are attracted by the name of Shangrila.

From then on, Shangrila was a county under the jurisdiction of Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan, China. Due to its international reputation, Western fervor for Tibetan Buddhism, as well as increased disposable income and spiritual neediness of Chinese citizens, Shangrila has experienced a large inflow of exogenous knowledge and populations, along with rapid economic growth catalyzed by state-sponsored tourism. It consequently has interesting socio-political dynamics and is the perfect place for social scientists to explore national imaginaries, governmentality, social transformation, human agency versus structure, and sustainable development in tourism[1]. As one of the classical discussions of human agency versus structure, my undergraduate thesis research focuses on state-sponsored tourism and Tibetan cultural preservation in Shangrila, as both confrontational powers and collaborative partners, for the purpose of sustainable development in tourism. Concepts of national imaginaries, social transformation, and cultural authenticity are also closely analyzed.

In the 2014 book *Mapping Shangrila*, Stevan Harrell stated: Shangrila "is but one place in the Sino-Tibetan borderlands that is being not only reimagined but incorporated into the Chinese nation-state as a space of accessible wonder, friendly exotica, extraction opportunities, and conservation imperatives."[2] My first journey to Shangrila in 2013 was exactly to seek its accessible wonder and friendly exotica. Throughout the following six years, however, I kept coming back to this place of imagination, each time carrying accumulated perspectives and roles of observer and examiner to my original positionality of an ignorant pawn in a giant chess game.

The central policy of "Open up the West" that started in 1999 brought state-sponsored tourism and global markets into the traditionally agriculture-based society in Shangrila. Local ethnic social structures and traditions, mostly Tibetan, have been constantly surrendered to extraneous aggressions since then. These extraneous aggressions have quickly induced many Tibetan cultural preservation projects that

1 Kolås, Åshild. *Tourism and Tibetan Culture in Transition: A Place Called Shangrila.* London: Routledge, 2008.

2 Harrell, Stevan. "Foreword." *Mapping Shangrila: Contested Landscapes in the Sino-Tibetan Borderlands.* Ed. Emily Ting Yeh and Chris Coggins. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2014. VII-IX.

strive to negotiate with the overarching structure of state-sponsored tourism and respond to the consequent socio-cultural changes. In reality, this negotiation is enacted through a unique style of sustainable development. Not viewing themselves as paralyzed and thinking beyond the traditional political-national boundary, local preservation activists implement their style of sustainable development by embracing globalization and appropriating state-sponsored tourism to suit their own benefit. It is important to note that most of the cultural preservation projects I have conducted my research on are for-profit. One interviewee even told me that she switched from the non-profit sector to her current position because the non-profit sector does not serve cultural preservation well under the current socio-political circumstances.

In this paper, I aim to analyze socio-cultural changes in Shangrila's landscape brought about by state-sponsored tourism and globalization. I am also going to address Tibetan cultural preservation as a form of sustainable development that reacts against, and collaborates with, the overarching structure of tourism in order to guarantee both preservation of traditional culture and local society's incorporation of modernity. The general social difficulties happening in Shangrila's society include emphasis of economy over culture, inequity, and transformation of social structure. In response, local preservation activists design their "responsible tourism" programs for the benefit of the locals' economic and social well-being, and Chinese citizens' awareness of authentic Tibetan culture. They utilize Shangrila's tourism as a niche, in which local society is benefited by modern modes of production and traditional social structure is preserved. To do this, local Tibetan preservation activists reject mass production and fabricated performances of Tibetan culture, and strive to present Tibetan ways of life, art, and learning as correct cultural representations for the general public.

Methodology

I conducted one-month fieldwork in Shangrila for my research. Ethnographic research methods were used in the process of data collection, including interviews with preservation activists and participant observation in the general Shangrila region. Chinese Mandarin was used throughout the ethnography because of the participants' proficiency in both Mandarin speaking and Chinese writing. For interviews, ten of my interviewees are Tibetan nationals, three are Han nationals, and two are Americans. One Han interviewee is the director of the Intangible Cultural Heritage program in the Diqing government. The other fourteen interviewees are all cultural preservation activists. Except for one phone interview, the other interviews were conducted face-to-face out of interviewees' familiar surroundings. As an ethnographer, I also carried out participant observation in various tourism sites, business activities performed by activists, and conventional daily settings. Besides preservation activists, I also interacted with tourists from diverse social backgrounds and Tibetan and non-Tibetan participants, such as tour guides. All collected data are qualitative.

Theoretical Frameworks Regarding Shangrila's Tourism and Local Agency

The anthropology of tourism emerged as a distinct field in the mid-1970s. [3] Since then, the anthropological focus on tourism has followed two directions: addressing tourism as a symbolic means of expressing and maintaining human identity, or emphasizing the social, political, economic and environmental effects that result from touristic modes of production. [4] For the symbolic approach, some famous theories include MacCannell's "staged authenticity," and Urry's notion of the "tourist gaze" and his description of

[3] Long, Lucy M. "Introduction." *Culinary Tourism.* Ed. Lucy M. Long. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2004. 1-19.

[4] Lett, James. "Epilogue to Touristic Studies in Anthropological Perspective." *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism, 2nd Ed.* Ed. Valene L. Smith. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989. 265-279.

tourism as a way of experience. [5] The other approach that views tourism as socio-cultural constructions explores concepts of postmodernity, consumer culture, leisure, and technology.[6]

As opposed to addressing tourism from a single approach, I will take a holistic perspective and analyze state-sponsored tourism in Shangrila as a complex system, in which the host and the guest are both involved, and political, economic and social environments interconnect. [7] In the anthropology of tourism, Malcolm Crick categorized three dimensions of enquiry: semiology, political economy, and social and cultural change. [8] This paper will carefully consider political economy and socio-cultural changes in Shangrila in relation to the responsive local involvement and development. Theories regarding national imaginary, cultural commodification, and authenticity are also discussed.

Modern China's National Imaginary

Firstly, understanding modern China's national imaginary is necessary for Western audiences to make sense of the political environment around Tibetan cultural preservation in Shangrila. Traditionally, China's foreign relations were built on the concepts of Chinese World Order and culturalism that are distinct from European ideas of international relationships among equal sovereign nation-states.[9] Fairbank organized the graded and concentric Chinese World Order into three levels: the central Chinese Empire where Han people and Confucianism prevailed at the highest level, the surrounding areas with Confucian influence at the lower level, and the barbarian rest of the world at the lowest level. Culturalism, which was exercised well throughout the Chinese diplomacy, conceptualizes that the boundaries of Chinese cultural community were determined by Confucian principles. [10] In other words, the Chinese cultural community welcomed all people who deferred to Confucianism. The theory of culturalism justified Chinese imperial rule over non-Han groups and occasionally non-Han imperial rule over the Han.[11] This culturalism was nevertheless accompanied by a certain degree of Han ethnic nationalism because of the Han's dominance in culture, population, and military power over Chinese territory.[12]

From the late 1800s to the early 1900s, China experienced an identity crisis when the Qing dynasty, ruled by the Manchus, a non-Han group, collapsed and the country dwarfed in front of the Western armies. This crisis severely challenged China's foreign relations, and catalyzed modern Chinese nationalism with a strong ethnic sentiment against Manchus' rule and Western imperialism. After 1949, the PRC was established as a multinational country with the officially acknowledged Han nationality and fifty-five minority nationalities. The government strives to portray modern Chinese nationalism as state nationalism that theoretically endows equal rights and obligations to create a sense of nationhood among all PRC citizens.[13]

Nonetheless, a set of institutionalized attitudes and historical precedents inherited from traditional China's foreign relations fail to completely fulfill state nationalism and accommodate the European style of foreign

[5] MacCannell, Dean. "Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings." *American Journal of Sociology* 79.3 (1973): 589-603.; Urry, John. *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies*. London; Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1990.

[6] Long, 5.

[7] Burns, Peter M. *An Introduction to Tourism and Anthropology*. London: Routledge, 1999.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Townsend, James. "Chinese Nationalism." *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 27 (1992): 97-130.; Fairbank, John K. "A Preliminary Framework." *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations.* Ed. John King Fairbank. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968. 1-19.; Harrison, James P. *Modern Chinese Nationalism*. New York: Hunter College of the City University of New York, 1969.

[10] Harrison, 2; Fincher, John. "China as a Race, Culture, and Nation: Notes on Fang Hsiaoju's Discussion of Dynastic Legitimacy." *Transition and Permanence: Chinese History and Culture. A Festschrift in Honor of Dr. Hsiao Kung-ch'üan*. Ed. David C. Buxbaum and Frederick W. Mote. Hong Kong, 1972. 59-69.

[11] Townsend, 113.

[12] Ibid, 114; Harrison, 2.

[13] Townsend, 123.

relations. [14] In addition, the fact that the Han nationality remains the main participant in China's affairs also causes contradictions between the PRC's definition of citizenship and its inability to abandon or suppress some Han ethnic nationalism.[15] State nationalism can be achieved only if there appears a new Chinese nation that fully incorporates multiple nationalities, ensures equal rights and obligations to, and receives political loyalty from all its members. [16] With imperfections, the government endeavors to improve official policies for the benefit of minority nationalities, and advocate images of the PRC as a multinational and harmonious family. In this research, I adopt the Chinese government's official declaration to treat the PRC, or China, as a multinational state.

According to Cornelius Castoriadis, an institutionalized society has its source from the social imaginary, of which the symbolic characteristic links up with the economic-functional component and keeps the society alive. [17] Castoriadis uses imaginary social signification to illustrate the social imaginary's function in a society; significations are like "the final articulations the society in question has imposed on the world, on itself, and on its needs, the organizing patterns that are the conditions for the representability of everything that the society can give to itself."[18] The concept of the PRC as a multinational state, and that all fifty-six nationalities possess absolute equal status and rights, is imaginary. However, when the government casts this imagination on its people, the people will reconceptualize and reorganize social patterns, creating an imaginary social signification and accommodating reality to what the imaginary social signification depicts. In Chinese society, the official imagination of China as a multinational state does work as a coherent

deformation of the system of subjects, objects, and their relations, as the curvature specific to every social space, and as the invisible cement holding together real, rational, and symbolic odds that constitute a society.[19]

Many situations have already changed since the Chinese Communist Party's first march in Tibet in 1950. In this paper, Shangrila will be treated as an open field that facilitates diverse cultural practices and intercultural communications. In spite of my research's focus on Tibetan tourism and cultural preservation, Diqing Prefecture and Shangrila are not a monolithic region with one distinctive set of claims to Tibetan culture or national identity.[20] In fact, there are 25 minority nationalities in total in Diqing. The modern minority nationalities should not be treated as outsiders to an entity called "Chinese culture" (which stereotypically implies Han culture) nor as subjects that are being simply assimilated into that entity. [21] In Diqing, where Han nationality only makes up 11.01 percent of the population, different nationalities actively interact with each other in a flexible cultural, social, and economic field. In the context of my research, Tibetan nationality in Shangrila selectively appropriates extraneous cultural and economic elements, and arranges them into a coherent set of imaginations to suit Tibetan values and desires. By doing so, Tibetan nationals incorporate themselves into modern China's national imaginary, but nonetheless react against it by establishing their consciousness of self and cultural identity.

The Political Economy

Political economy as a theory functions as a larger social, economic, and political framework of a local culture's preservation agency. According to

[14] Fairbank, 2.

[15] Townsend, 122.

[16] Dreyer, June T. *China's Forty Millions: Minority Nationalities and National Integration in the People's Republic of China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976; Townsend, 123.

[17] Castoriadis, Cornelius. *The Imaginary Institution of Society*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987.

[18] Ibid, 143.

[19] Ibid, 143.

[20] Yeh, Emily T., and Chris Coggins. "Introduction: Producing Shangrila." *Mapping Shangrila: Contested Landscapes in the Sino-Tibetan Borderlands.* Ed. Emily Ting Yeh and Chris Coggins. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2014. 3-18.

[21] Mueggler, Erik. *The Age of Wild Ghosts: Memory, Violence, and Place in Southwest China*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001. 19.

Foucault, population is the central concept that facilitates governmentality. The government is supposed to address its interest on the population as an entity and serve for "the welfare of the population, the improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health, etc."[22] In other words, governmentality means to improve the well-being of a population by calculating and producing knowledge about the population as a whole, without the comprehensive understanding of individual interests and aspirations. In addition, Foucault asserts three inseparable elements in the development of governmentality: government, population, and political economy. The population emerges first as a datum, a field of intervention, and as an objective of governmental techniques. The economy is isolated as a specific sector of reality, and the political economy lastly functions as the science and the technique of the government's intervention in economy. [23] Governmentality and a population's well-being can be fulfilled only with all of the three elements. In Shangrila, political economy is used by the government as a strategy to guarantee social stability and to improve the well-being of the population as a whole.

Authenticity

The concept of authenticity also requires a discussion when one attends to tourism and the socio-cultural changes happening in Shangrila's society. In his theory of authenticity and staged authenticity in tourist settings, MacCannell adopts Goffman's structural division of social establishments as "front" and "back" regions. "Front" and "back" regions are classified based on social groups' interactions: those who perform in social activities appear in the front and back regions, those who perform only in the front region, and outsiders who are excluded from both regions. Built up from Goffman, MacCannell theorizes that tourists are able to discover

authenticity when they make accidental incursions into the everyday life of the host society. [24] In the concept of staged authenticity, front regions are often decorated to appear as back regions, or back regions are remade to be opened to outsiders. What is being shown to tourists is not the institutional "backstage;" it is a staged back region, a kind of living museum for which MacCannell has no analytical terms for.[25]

In Shangrila, things happen a little bit differently. Cultural preservation activists actively break the structural division between "front" and "back," open up local society's back regions, and engage tourists in daily activities for a continuous period instead of one random peek. In this context, tourists are introduced to authenticity, not in tourist settings, but in the host society's everyday experience. Throughout this process, the identity of the tourist has somehow been transformed into an inner participant of daily local settings and ways of life, as will be discussed more carefully in a later section of this paper.

Shangrilazation in Sino-Tibetan Borderlands

Shangrila is viewed as a paradise in the general public's eyes. This imagination is rooted in both James Hilton's *Lost Horizon* and traditional Chinese conceptualizations of *The Peach Blossom Spring*, a Chinese version of utopia. In this Chinese story, The Peach Blossom Spring perpetuates, and hides away from, good, evil, and human transgressions. Shangrila, nevertheless, projects itself as an accessible county in Diqing, and remains present and susceptible to the knowledge of good, evil, and human transgressions from the outside world.[26] In this section, ethnic complexity, the political economy, and globalization will be analyzed as historical and social backgrounds for socio-cultural change and responsive Tibetan cultural preservations in Shangrila.

[22] Foucault, Michel. "Governmentality." *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality : With Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michel Foucault*. Ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991. 87-104.
[23] Ibid, 102.

[24] MacCannell, 594-595.
[25] Ibid, 595-598.
[26] Berger, Arthur A. *Theorizing Tourism: Analyzing Iconic Destinations*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2013.

Socio-political Intersections in History and Ethnic Complexity

Since ancient times, Diqing has been a place with high ethnic complexity. The Sino-Tibetan borderlands are historically mapped as a vast peripheral zone between ancient Chinese and Tibetan imperial polities, with its diverse populations and tribal power dynamics largely impacted by competitive territorial claims of these two regimes.[27] Because of this special geography, various ecological, cultural, and political zones have continuously interacted throughout the Sino-Tibetan borderlands. Dokar Dzong Old Town in Shangrila, for example, has functioned as an important trading town on Tea Horse Road, an ancient trade network that penetrated Sino-Tibetan borderlands and connected China Proper to the Tibetan Plateau.[28] After the incorporation of the Sino-Tibetan borderlands into the PRC, those cultural, political, and economic interactions have remained and even intensified because of the new national boundary, the political economy of tourism, and globalization.

The concept of minority nationality that I have mentioned throughout this paper was finalized in the Ethnic Classification Project that took place during the first decade of the PRC.[29] Over 400 names of nationalities were registered nation-wide after the initial policy called "names shall be chosen by those who bear them."[30] However, Communist officials quickly realized the overwhelming number of national names, and organized ethnologists and linguists to create an official taxonomy of Chinese people along ethnonational lines.[31] Fifty-six nationalities had been classified from 1950 to 1987. Yunnan, the province where Diqing is located, contains twenty-six of them. By the end of 2017, the Diqing prefecture government censused nine nationalities that possess populations above one thousand, in which Tibetans make up 35.99 percent of the prefecture's population, Lisu 30.3 percent, Naxi 12.65 percent, and Han 11.01 percent.[32] In Shangrila, urbanized areas where tourists and business people congregate often facilitate more intercultural communications than rural villages where most ethnic groups tend to reside with their own people.

The Political Economy

Outside transgressions are mainly manifested in the political economy and the opening of the global market. The central government has enforced a policy called "Open up the West" since 1999 to reduce the economic disparities between western interior regions, where many minority nationalities inhabit, and eastern coastal provinces.[33] Sino-Tibetan borderlands, as an important component of Chinese western regions, therefore become a target of "Open up the West" and submitted to central planning of economic development. The government's implication of the political economy, taking form in state-sponsored tourism, has gradually developed into a vast tourism zone in the Sino-Tibetan borderlands and imposed significant impacts on Shangrila's socio-cultural and natural landscapes.

Officially, the political economy acts as the government's intervention in the local economy to improve the prosperity of the population as a whole. However, in many anthropological studies, this political economy is also interpreted as a range of techniques and micro politics that create governable subjects and governable spaces in Sino-Tibetan borderlands for political stability.[34] To accomplish "Open up the West," the central and local governments fit their cultural policy in with

[27] Yeh and Coggins, 8; Coleman, William. "The Uprising at Batang: Khams and its Significance in Chinese and Tibetan History." *Khams Pa Histories: Visions of People, Place, and Authority.* Ed. Lawrence Epstein. Boston, MA: Brill, 2002. 31-56.
[28] Herron, Mick. "TEA HORSE ROAD: China's Ancient Trade Road to Tibet." *Geographical (Geographical Magazine Ltd.)* 83.4 (2011): 66.
[29] Yeh and Coggins, 11.
[30] Fei, Xiaotong. "Toward a People's Anthropology." *Human organization* 39.2 (1980): 115-120; Mullaney, Thomas S. "Seeing for the State: The Role of Social Scientists in China's Ethnic Classification Project." *Asian Ethnicity* 11.3 (2010): 325-42.
[31] Mullaney, 328-329.
[32] Diqing Statistical Bureau, 2017.
[33] Kolås, 11.
[34] Yeh and Coggins 12-13; Sofield, Trevor H. B., and Fung Mei Sarah Li. "Tourism Development and Cultural Policies in China." *Annals of Tourism Research* 25.2 (1998): 362-92; Kolås 10-26.

economic policy and mark minority nationalities' cultural heritages as contributable to economic growth in the form of tourism development.[35] In this context, Shangrila's cultural heritages are viewed as renewable resources, available for endless reproduction, and "subject to the laws of supply and demand."[36]

Globalization

The political economy of tourism is only one factor of socio-cultural change in Shangrila. Globalization occurs simultaneously with state-sponsored tourism and affects Shangrila's social, cultural, and economic landscapes. The transportation network among Shangrila, major Chinese cities, and international departures has rapidly extended due to explosive growth in the tourism industry. In 1999, the Shangrila airport was built in the middle of pastures and farmhouses when ground transport to the provincial capital of Yunnan was still limited to dirt roads.[37] During the time I was about to finish my fieldwork in the summer of 2018, the railway and paved highway from Lijiang, another famous tourist site in Yunnan, to Shangrila were still under construction and anticipated to be completed in 2020. The widely expanded transportation network has accelerated population migration and information transmission rates between Shangrila and elsewhere in the world. The introduction of modern technology by globalization also helps to intensify intercultural communications between local people and the outside world.

Since the early 1980s, global commercial opportunities and private enterprises have been brought into Diqing by the "Reform and Opening Up" policy. [38] Until 2018, four decades of indulgence in the global market have transformed the regionally peripheral and economically marginal Shangrila into an integral part of the international economy and a susceptible recipient of any miniscule global disturbance. In my research, many cultural preservation activists perform international business with people around the globe. For example, Kelsang Phuntsok

and his Khampa Caravan Adventure Travel Company receive tourist groups from mainland China and international student groups from the West for educational tours every year. In the spring of 2018, Kelsang organized homestay and community service tours in Tibetan rural villages for student groups from Lakeside School, Seattle, United States. Cili Dolma, the general manager of Arro Khampa Company, cooperates with American designers in their handicraft poverty reduction projects to synthesize Tibetan traditional aesthetics and modern fashion with their products. Other activists that work on the preservation of Thangka painting, black pottery, Tibetan embroidery, architecture, and music, have all been interacting with business partners, tourists, scholars, and even anthropologists from other parts of China and the globe. Some of them are international themselves.

Socio-Cultural Changes on Shangrila's Traditional Landscapes

The formidable trend of globalization and large inflows of tourists into Shangrila nevertheless cause tremendous changes on local society. The traditional social structure that was based on agriculture, Tibetan Buddhism, and social equity has gradually languished due to continuous impacts from state-sponsored tourism and global commercial activities. Palden Namgya, the director of Shangrila Association of Cultural Preservation (Thangka Center), said to me:

Tibetans is a nationality that has faith in Buddhism. People did not value self-benefit that much because of Buddhist spirituality. Nowadays, through different incomers, different experiments in tourism, a lot of competitions of money happens. People try their best to take benefits for themselves. Gradually this Buddhist spirituality and our traditional culture have been influenced, and people become bad, isn't it? They defraud. There is a lot! It also happens in Thangka painting. In Thangka Center, we all use traditional mineral pigment, and strictly follow

[35] Sofield and Li, 371-376.
[36] Yeh and Coggins, 14.

[37] Ibid, 20.
[38] Kolås, 14.

instructions on Utterances on Image-making and Iconometry [a Buddhist scripture]. This is a completely traditional method, a standard [process of painting] Thangka. But because of tourism, in many tourism sites people find a way to sneak around—an authentic Thangka need many times to paint—they copy it. Copying a Thangka is fast, and you only spend several hundred RMB. This copying will fool those tourists immediately. They will pay thousands and tens of thousands RMB for a fake copy. Like this, in Shangrila, our traditional culture is a little bit destroyed!

Palden's comments only partly demonstrate the negative impacts brought to local society by tourism and globalization. In the general Shangrila region, one can observe emphasis on economy over culture, inequity, and transformation of social structure, because the local government lacks careful planning in sustainable development, oversight for official subsidies, and market regulation in the tourism industry.

Under the political economy of state-sponsored tourism, development is interpreted heavily in economic terms. According to Burns, if the traditional structure of production is regarded as incompatible with economic growth, resources will be shifted away from agricultural production to "modern" manufacturing, and industrial and service sectors. The switch of modes of production will cause rapid urbanization, introduction of consumerism, neglect of rural development, and thus a social gap between the rich and the poor, and between modern and traditional methods of production.[39]

Inequity

The lack of oversight and government planning for sustainable development leads to huge economic inequity in the general Shangrila region. The government has released policies to privatize formerly state-owned enterprises and "marketize" the labor force since the early 1980s. [40] The political economy situates the local government's favor on enterprises that have the most capital to invest. People without money and personal connections to governmental authority are therefore disadvantaged and do not possess much space to improve their economic well-being. [41] Moreover, a large number of job seekers that flow into Shangrila's tourism market further decreases locals' economic mobility.

One local informant told me that the new-constructed Flower Alley in Shangrila's Dokar Dzong Old Town requires 80000 RMB as an entry fee to own a small shop in the Alley. Apparently, the high threshold has hampered many locals' first step into the industry. According to Kelsang, the tourism industry contributes 96% of the GDP of Shangrila. Nonetheless, in rural villages where most of the global businesses and touristic activities do not exist, Tibetan people do not have the capacity to participate in and utilize the tourism industry as a method to increase their income. Sadly, only a few government officials pay careful attention to the economic inequity that is happening in Shangrila and conduct field research in villages to address this problem. Many Tibetan potters complain that government officials even rely on their personal connections to issue official titles and distribute subsidies to outstanding folk artists in the Intangible Cultural Heritage program, a policy focusing on preservation of Shangrila's intangible cultural heritage. However, no government oversight is exercised on the recipients' budget and their actual spending of these subsidies. There is also not much room available for the public's opinion on who is eligible for those titles and subsidies.

Emphasis on Economic Growth over Cultural Preservation

Under circumstances that place strong emphasis on economic growth, the local people's attention on and consideration of their cultural heritage decreases. Cultural commodification and mass duplication of religious art and original folk art are widespread in Shangrila's tourism market. A Tibetan potter declares that, nowadays, many local people do not value workmanship; a large portion of black pottery is manufactured. This

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[39] Burns, 139.

[40] Kolås, 14.
[41] Ibid, 20.

manufactured portion is not good quality because machines are not able to press dirt tightly enough to solidify potteries. In Dokar Dzong, one can easily find Buddhist Sutras written in gold with gorgeous frames displayed in glass showcases and a label with a breathtaking price. This commercial behavior on sacred objects significantly violates the traditional Buddhist doctrine that focuses on believers' faith and piety.

Another example of the commodification and secularization of Tibetan Buddhism is the ticketing system of the Ganden Suntseling Monastery. Despite the monastery originally being a holy place for Buddhist pilgrimages, the ticketing system and other vendor activities within the monastery secularize this sacred space and, to some degree, degenerate it to a mere commercial site. Local people, as a result, do not present as much respect as they previously did to the monastery. According to participants in my research, the most unethical commercial operation is the opportunistic behavior of blowing up prices in Shangrila's real estate market. Particularly in Dokar Dzong, extra-local investments on real estate are usually made when housing prices are high, and withdrawn when prices drop and the market looks doomed.

Tourist traps are another downside that challenge market regulations and sustainable development in the tourism industry. As they enter into the 2020s, China's younger generation is starting to dominate the domestic tourism market and actively seek dive-in cultural experiences, but many elderly people still choose to travel in groups organized by travel agencies. Frequently, local tour guides in cooperation with these travel agencies premeditate compelled shopping trips for tourist groups in designated Tibetan souvenir shops, from which they are able to gain a fair amount of dividends. Counterfeit Thangka paintings mentioned above by Palden also expose an inside perspective of tourist traps in Shangrila. In Dokar Dzong, architecture styles are actually very diverse if one notices the varieties of intricate Tibetan reliefs and hollowed-out carvings on those wooden beams. Because of mass tourism, these culturally significant architectures become hosts of souvenir shops selling mass produced products that can be found in any tourist site in China. In addition, a fire in 2014 burned down most of the ancient wooden architecture and expelled many Tibetan artists, musicians, and activists who used to congregate in Dokar Dzong and care for Tibetan cultural preservation. Nowadays, Dokar Dzong, with reconstructed Tibetan architecture and generalized souvenir shops, is a vacant replica of its past splendor.

With an overarching emphasis on economy in Shangrila's society, local participants in the tourism industry, whether consciously or unconsciously, tend to exercise a generalization of Tibetan culture in order to accommodate tourists' expectations. Instead of displaying correct cultural representations of Tibetan people, they produce a standardized Tibetan image. A stereotypical Tibetan figure is depicted as tall and strong, a talent dancer and singer, and a generous drinker. There are also other rumors expanded by local tour guides: a Tibetan man can marry two wives, all Tibetan boys are named Tashi, a word that means good fortune, and all Tibetan girls are called Dolma (Tara in English) - a savior-goddess in Tibetan Buddhism.

After decades of experience in the commercial market, the locals' desire for money is strong. Generalizations of Tibetan culture and the reinforcement of stereotypes are viewed as an essential strategy to extract money from tourists because local participants in the tourism industry believe that this distortion of Tibetan culture is able to satisfy the tourists' curiosity and quest for pleasure. Local tour guides working in mass tourism normally do not make an effort to educate tourists about Tibetan ways of life, art, and learning in a serious way. One can observe an obvious tendency to cater to the restlessness of modern society resulting from desire and avarice. One of my interviewees stated: "They are catering to the restlessness of modern society. In fact, our Tibetans, authentically, in order to live and survive on a plateau like this, you need to meditate and calm your heart down, we are not fickle people. But if you are to accommodate the restless heart of tourists, it is not good for both sides [the host community and tourists]."

The Transformation of the Traditional Social Structure

The most far-reaching change in local society caused by tourism is the transformation of traditional social structures. Local lifestyles have enormously changed due to the developing service industry and secularization of Tibetan Buddhism. The decline of traditional values has been the most urgent issue preservation activists are concerned about. In traditional rural villages, neighborhoods were closely associated and collaborated with each other. Sense of collectivity was a significant force that bonded villagers together to fulfill agricultural production, such as farming, animal husbandry, and housing construction. Since the early 1980s, the introduction of tourism and the opening of the global market have stimulated the development of the service industry and largely urbanized Shangrila's social landscape.

Younger people tend to leave rural villages and work in the service industry and urban areas. The individual lifestyle created by modern alienation makes the younger generation gradually lose their sense of community and collectivity, which is an essential framework of traditional Tibetan values. The younger generation, therefore, cannot inherently understand the concept of life and death, as well as the interconnected relationship among humans, animals, and nature from a traditional Tibetan Buddhist angle. The decline of traditional values is also demonstrated by the fading morality in religious sacred places. I was informed by my local connections that many Buddhist monks in the Ganden Suntseling Monastery do not spare a thought for fulfilling their responsibility as a monk to study classical scriptures and philosophy. Instead, they are zealous in showing off and competing with one another for luxury. More unethically, some monks privatize donations from pious believers who are experiencing predicaments and wish to use donations to gain help from Buddhist deities. Other manifestations of the decline of traditional values include counterfeiting, tourist traps, and decreases in Tibetans' respect to the monastery that I have mentioned above.

One of my interviewees told me:

> I have been to a lot of places because of business, and I have known some international luxury brands, like Burberry, LV... But in fact,

our Tibetan [culture] is the most valuable and authentic. I dare to say that in our Tibetan history that lasts more than a thousand years, we have always been playing with the concept of brand...However, because of the industrial development, [Tibetan culture and art] have been challenged. People don't realize [the preciousness of our wisdom and art].

The words uttered above by this interviewee imply a common underappreciation of traditional culture by the Tibetan people in Shangrila. Some traditions, like hand-weaving woolen cloth, are devalued when compared to manufactured commodities, such as Nike or Adidas, from eastern China and the West.

Decreased confidence in traditional culture and alienation from a social structure based in sedentary agriculture are also contributing to younger people's disinterest in Tibetan tradition. Young people usually present more interests in Chinese and Western pop culture. For example, the traditional Tibetan wedding ceremony was partly wiped out by its Western counterpart because young couples pursue western dress codes and ceremonial formulas. It is common for the elder generation to criticize the younger for their fickleness and desire for money. A Tibetan potter declared:

> Nowadays young people couldn't stand solitude. They have been to places other than Shangrila since young age. They are used to moving and playing around, eating, and wearing new clothes. If they come to learn how to make black pottery, they are in troubles [*sic*]. Feel lonely and bored. I had a university student here who stayed two weeks and ran. They don't think it is fun. They don't trust our teachings. They are all fond of working in big cities. Too much loneliness for them, they feel one day like one year.

Based on my observations in the general Shangrila region, it is less common for younger Tibetan people who received higher education to dedicate their career and life to inheriting "old" Tibetan craftsmanship.

Preservation Activists' Comments on Socio-Cultural Changes and Inheritance of Tibetan Traditions

Many negative examples may give readers the impression that the political economy and globalization only bring adversity to local society. Shangrila seems to be placed under the overarching structure of mass tourism, in which local people and the community have no say about the production of fake cultures and inauthentic images. [42] But everything has two sides. The positive comes with the negative. Since the 1980s, the central government has welcomed Tibetan refugees who have fled the country, as well as second-generation Tibetans born in India or Nepal, back to China.[43] A founder of one of the cultural preservation organizations in my research is actually a second-generation returnee born in India. With great English skills, returnees usually operate companies that cater to Western tourists and manage to forge alliances with international NGOs and other global actors.[44] Therefore, they become one of the spearheads in Shangrila that promote "responsible tourism" and "sustainable tourism." The state, NGOs, and common people have also become increasingly engaged in the physical and symbolic transformation of Shangrila's landscapes throughout the decades.[45] Rapid developments in governance, technology, and ideology also have catalyzed a myriad of local responses and innovations that are both manifested in, and enabled by, changes in rural and urban landscapes.[46]

After having gone to an English Training Program in his university, Kelsang always dreamed of owning an NGO that is dedicated to Tibetan traditional culture. After several years of participating in the Tibet Poverty Alleviation Fund, an international-funded NGO, however, Kelsang realized the sensitive politics in Tibet and the NGOs' reliance on outside funding. It was common for an NGO project with an idealistic mission to fail to be exercised in reality after assiduous design and long-term planning, because of the politics involved and its disconnection with modern

industry. These issues also happened throughout Dolma's thirteen-year dedication to the non-profit sector in Tibetan cultural preservation. In 2016, Dolma finally decided to switch to the for-profit sector and become a general manager of Arro Khampa Company to take charge of the handicraft poverty reduction project. When I asked her why she switched from the non-profit to the commercial, she replied:

It was hard…we were not free and independent, we could not provide livelihood to ourselves, we replied on outside funding and survived on blood transfusion…If we rely on outsiders, the communities behind us also rely on outsiders. But the thing that we want to protect and inherit belong to ourselves, not outsiders. Personally, I think why shouldn't we use market, connect with market, and find out: can we be self-sufficient? Can we use our nationality's special [things/culture]…Why shouldn't we benefit ourselves from this? I think it is decent! I wish the communities we are helping can become more and more confident. We can feel that uh this thing of mine, we can share it with more people, and I can benefit from that.

From Dolma's perspective, Tibetan spirituality, values, aesthetics, and interrelationship between people and nature are cores to be preserved, rather than stagnant physical forms. A completely conservative method that pays its whole attention on stale material forms cannot survive in modern society. I realized through my research that many preservation activists believe in this statement. They are flexible and welcoming of adapting and incorporating modern modes of production and aesthetics without altering traditional Tibetan values. Preservation activists regard Tibetan culture as well-preserved, as long as the root of Tibetan identity, the traditional values and wisdom that help them to survive and thrive on the highest plateau on Earth, are not mutated. In a developing and changing society in which younger people receive new styles of education, innovative

[42] Burns, 127.
[43] Kolås, 21.
[44] Ibid, 21-25.

[45] Yeh and Coggins, 14.
[46] Ibid, 15.

experiments on cultural preservation are necessary to transmit correct cultural representations to the general public, raise the Tibetan younger generation's interest, and improve locals' well-being.

In Yamashita's 2003 study about Balinese tourism, he described culture as a "hybrid entity which is consciously manipulated, reconstructed, and consumed." Different from the old definition of culture that fits with the standard pattern of a specific region and people that are isolated from the rest of the society,[47] anthropologists now view culture as dynamic, always changing, and evolving. According to Fairchild, culture is transmitted by the process of teaching and learning, and essential parts of culture can be found in patterns embodied in social traditions, including knowledge, ideas, values, standards, and sentiments.[48] In Shangrila, preservation activists seem to separate Tibetan traditional culture into two layers: the surface layer with fixed material forms of traditional Tibetan production and the inner core that focuses on classic social teaching and learning. Although the inner core is nevertheless entangled with the surface layer and can be influenced when the surface layer is going through the transformation, preservation activists find ways to manipulate state-sponsored tourism into a niche in which modern modes of production can function as a substantiated carrier of intangible Tibetan spirituality, values, and aesthetics.

During an interview, the official director of the Intangible Cultural Heritage program explained why tourism happens: "Tourism happens because people that reside in different regions and grow up in different cultures have the curiosity to explore the unknown world. In reality, tourism occurs as a spatial movement of humans that come from diverse cultural backgrounds. It originates from human's cultural consciousness." Shangrila's Tibetan preservation corresponds with this definition of tourism and treats tourism as a way for tourists to broaden horizons, break stereotypes, and learn what the host culture wishes them to learn. Preservation activists utilize people-centered development to bridge traditional Tibetan values with modern society, and to cooperate with the local government for more powerful assertion.

Local Involvement to Make and Remake Shangrila

In sustainable development, there is a need for appropriate scale, equitable distribution of benefits, long-term accounting, and state support for regional and local initiatives.[49] During an interview, the director of the Intangible Cultural Heritage program expressed his wish for the local government to be a leading force and strong financial and legislative backer for cultural preservation and sustainable development in Shangrila's society. Nonetheless, inveterate corruption in the government and limp efforts to reform make these aspirations hard to fulfill. The support given by the government for cultural preservation is obviously deficient due to a lack of oversight and market regulation. Tibetan preservation activists in Shangrila, under these circumstances, therefore function as a complementary force to governmental action and strive to develop and manage tourism as a local resource where local needs and priorities take precedent over the goals of the tourism industry.[50] In response to the negative socio-cultural changes, the local agency adopts the form of "people-centered development"[51] and treats tourism as a package that improves locals' economic mobility as well as a system in which the host takes control and facilitates appropriate intercultural conversations with guests. Traditional Tibetan values and Buddhist philosophy function as moral standards to prevent over-commercialized and unethical behavior in this form of "people-centered development."

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[47] Yamashita, Shinji. *Bali and Beyond : Explorations in the Anthropology of Tourism*. Vol. 2. New York: Berghahn Books, 2003.

[48] Fairchild, 80.

[49] Burns, 143.
[50] Murphy, Peter E. *Tourism: A Community Approach*. New York and London: Routledge, 1991.

[51] Burns, 147.

Convey Correct Cultural Representation to the General Public

Local preservation activists intend to transmit correct cultural representations to the general public by providing tourists with educational lectures and chances to participate in everyday experiences in the host community. By doing so, tourists are allowed to not only observe, but also dive into, Tibetan ways of life, art, and learning.

Tibetan family homestay is designed by preservation activists to present the most holistic picture and vivid experience of Tibetan culture to tourists. Every year, Kelsang provides educational tours for student groups around the world. During the homestay, students stay and eat with Tibetan villagers, conduct community service, and participate in daily agricultural activities and singing and dancing gatherings. The agricultural activities cover everything a local villager would do to make a living, such as cultivating crops and herding. Doing interviews with village elders about traditional story-telling is also a crucial component of homestay programs for students.

For general tourists, Kelsang and other preservation activists provide homestays that focus on education and participation in Tibetan ways of life without community service and interviews. Tourists usually stay with local villagers for a shorter period of time, observe the village life, and participate in singing and dancing gatherings. Education on Tibetan cultural norms will be provided before a homestay starts. For example, appropriate dress code, religious conduct, and deference to elders will be announced out of deserved respect for the villagers and for tourists' comprehension of a person's social role in a Tibetan family and community. In singing and dancing gatherings, Tibetan villagers will present folk music and *skor bro*, a type of Tibetan circle dance that usually appears in festival rituals and rites of passage, to students and tourists and actively engage them in these traditional art forms. The representation of music and dance, along with educational lectures about symbolic meanings and traditional teachings that are embedded in these oral traditions, inform the general public of a meaningful and holistic perspective of Tibetan culture. Tibetan spirituality, values, and cosmology are made known to the public in these processes. By engaging in daily activities, students and tourists are also introduced to the Tibetan's hard work ethic and wisdom necessary to survive and thrive on this plateau.

The "experience it" program is another method for activists to deliver vivid cultural representations of Tibetan art and artists to the public. In my research, activists exercise "experience it" programs for Thangka painting, Tibetan jewelry, embroidery, leather carving, and black pottery throughout the general Shangrila region. Tourists often receive brief educational lectures about the historical and social backgrounds of traditional art forms and then take part in the making processes. For example, in Thangka "experience it" programs, tourists will be informed of Buddhist legends and spirituality in a specific Thangka that they want to experience. By engaging tourists in craft-making, activists aim to provide a vivid experience and allow the general public to understand local artists' hard work and enthusiasm for traditional craftsmanship.

In homestay and "experience it" programs, the local society's back regions are selected from everyday experiences and displayed in front of tourists, such as deliberate representations of traditional songs and dances performed in singing and dancing gatherings that usually appear in certain festival rituals and rites of passage. However, preservation activists don't regard these representations as negative staged performances since they are extracts of Tibetan ways of life. Most of the time, tourists just flow with daily life patterns of villagers and artists. In homestays, preservation activists build up close connections between villagers and tourists, and local participants host tourists as dear friends from distant places instead of merely providing a service in the tourism industry. The commercial feeling is diluted in this context. One activist also stated the significance of traditional modes of production in generating Tibetan social structures and values. By engaging tourists in traditional modes of production, the homestay and "experience it" programs accelerate intercultural conversations between the host and the guest, transform the identity of a tourist into an inner participant of a local way of life, and educate

tourists with correct representations of Tibetan culture.

Increase Cultural Awareness and Appreciation from Locals and Tourists to Tibetan Traditions

In Shangrila, Tibetan cultural preservation efforts to connect traditional culture with the commercial market promote Tibetan cultural images to the general public and raise both tourists' and locals' awareness and appreciation of Tibetan traditions.

Thangka Center, a non-profit organization that is dedicated to the revival of Thangka art, provides Tibetan youth from western China with four-year long professional Thangka training. Palden, the director of Thangka Center, expressed the gradual influence of his organization on raising locals' and tourists' awareness and appreciation of Tibetan traditions:

A stage like our organization allows local community to attain more knowledge [of Thangka art]. Before we came, despite other nationalities, many Tibetans here didn't know what Thangka is… what is in the painting? They couldn't even recognize Buddhist deities! Now it is better…they can ask us. We gradually influence people in our surrounding. They learn about Thangka art, Buddhist spirituality, they will also encourage others to learn… Tourists will also recommend us to their friends.

In this context, the Thangka Center functions as an accessible resource for locals and tourists for extracting knowledge of Thangka art and its related Buddhist philosophy and legends. In addition to locals' random visits, schools also organize tours to the Thangka Center for local students to learn about their traditional art and spirituality. Contrasted by unethical commercial activities in Shangrila's tourism market, Thangka Center's passion for cultural preservation moves many tourists and makes them willing to donate and help its mission.

This gradual influence also occurs in other homestay and "experience it" programs and Dolma's handicraft poverty reduction project. For extra income, more and more young Tibetans are

participating in singing and dancing gatherings that allow them to understand more about the charisma and values imbedded in their oral traditions. On the other hand, tourists also learn to appreciate these traditional art forms and realize their cultural and social significance in a traditional Tibetan community. The appreciation from tourists, as a result, transforms the monetary relationship between the host and the guest and encourage locals to identify with, and appreciate, their own traditions. Younger people are also motivated to learn from elders. In Dolma's handicraft project, she wishes local handicraft makers can find their dignity and confidence through transactional behavior. A transaction should contain an equal relationship between a seller and a buyer, in which a product is valued by its quality. The amount of money a tourist pays for a handicraft should be based on his or her acknowledgement on its quality and cultural significance, rather than pity. Through this equal power dynamic, Dolma hopes local handicraft makers will increase their confidence in traditional aesthetics and discover their potential to be creative and self-sufficient.

In present day Shangrila, local people gradually return to traditional rituals for celebrating life's transitions and religious festivals. Tourists also start to prefer everyday experiences in order to gain a holistic perspective of the host community. With the government's increasing emphasis on cultural preservation and local involvement, cultural awareness and appreciation from locals and tourists of Tibetan traditions are increasing.

Utilizing Tourism as a Niche to Improve Local's Well-being and Preserve Tibetan Cultural Heritage: The Balance between Modernity and Tradition

When I asked the "what can you do better" question during the interviews, many preservation activists expressed their wishes to have more efficacious intercultural communication and incorporation of modernity into Tibetan tradition. Truly, handling the delicate balance between modernity and tradition is the central issue preservation activists are tackling. They hope local society can have the advantage of enjoying the benefits brought by modern technology and liberal perspectives, but still be

able to preserve traditional values that are the root of Tibetan identity. Following this ideology, preservation activists have developed their unique style of "people-centered development" that shapes tourism as a specific hosting space of traditional Tibetan social structure, and modern modes of production as tangible carriers of traditional Tibetan values.

This theory is manifested in all of the programs designed by local preservation activists. The Tibetan family homestay programs intend to increase the locals' economic mobility and eliminate inequity, to a lesser degree, by introducing global business and tourist activities to rural villages. With the effort to connect rural communities with the commercial market, younger people gain more employment opportunities and receive higher incomes without leaving their hometowns. Consequently, more and more Tibetan younger people are satisfied with, and choose to stay, in activists' homestay programs due to the benefits of acquiring a higher living standard and reviving their traditional culture. A niche is thus created, in which a traditional social structure and a sense of community and collectivity is preserved. Younger people can inherit traditional Tibetan values, spirituality, and aesthetics by living in a traditional social structure and feeling a sense of collectivity.

The homestay's attempt to engage tourists in villagers' daily activities also opens the door for industrial experience and liberal perspectives to enter into local communities. Intercultural communication happens in various contexts, including daily interactions, agricultural activities, and singing and dancing gatherings. In response to locals sharing their ways of life, tourists coming from diverse cultural, social, and professional backgrounds also share stories of other cultural traditions and knowledge of modern technology, health, and hygiene.

I was told in my research that many traditional art forms fade away because they serve less practical and symbolic uses in modern society. An effort that contributes to the revival of traditional art forms but is disconnected with modern modes of production is a waste. In Thangka Center, the organization invests a large amount of time and money into training students professionally in Thangka art. However, many students work in restaurants and hotels after graduation instead of in Thangka-related industries because of their lack of business skills and the relatively small demand in domestic and international art markets. In order to solve this problem, Thangka Center, with other preservation activists, designed "experience it" programs as a buffer zone between newly graduated students and the commercial market in the real world, in which students can accumulate work experience, build up their business skills, and get the whole picture of working in the tourism industry. After transitioning out of "experience it" programs, students can develop their independence and carry on Thangka art in their life and to future generations. "Experience it" programs in Tibetan embroidery and leather carving also collaborate with local schools to recruit students and provide them with employment opportunities.

Many preservation activists working on traditional Tibetan craftsmanship adopt creative thinking and innovative methods in their productions in order to integrate modern techniques and aesthetics. For example, without altering the traditional making process, activists explore different possible external shapes and contexts of black pottery, which was only used as braziers and cookware in ancient times. In modern society where people do not use fire to keep themselves warm, activists make black pottery into teapots, censers, hotpots, or decorations for various modern lifestyles. Another example is Tibetan leather making, which was traditionally practiced in order to make water containers or harnesses for traveling and herding purposes. Nowadays, preservation activists transform leather carving by adding religious symbols and story-telling into the carvings to promote Buddhist philosophy and traditional Tibetan values to the general public. It turns out that story-telling and decorative carvings attract more tourists than completely traditional forms because of their cultural significance and innovative aesthetics.

Besides all of the projects mentioned above, Dolma's handicrafts poverty reduction project contributes some very interesting and valuable ethnographic data to my research. Her project not only improves locals' living standards and facilitates cultural preservation and intercultural

communication, but also asserts Tibetan feminist rights, emphasizing Tibetan women's social role, and improving their social status in the traditional Tibetan community. Focusing on Tibetan women in rural villages, especially single mothers and the disabled, Dolma's project provides opportunities to earn extra income for local women that do not have access to the labor market because of disabilities or maternal responsibilities. The project cooperates with the local government to gain official subsidies for initial trainings, and American designers to integrate modern and Tibetan traditional aesthetics in their handicraft products. Local women in this project thus are able to learn a useful skill to make themselves a livelihood and, at the same time, remain at home to fulfill their maternal responsibility. Additionally, in a traditional Tibetan family where a mother acts as a crucial bond that links all of the family members, her happiness and positive life attitude are essential to influence the entire family and transmit optimism to the larger community. The process of making an intricately designed handicraft with diverse patterns and colors requires makers to have a completely calm mind and careful attention to details. Tibetan women, through this process, are allowed to feel solitude and tranquility, and think and reflect on their lives.

According to Dolma, the feeling of inner self, as a result, enables a woman to feel and understand her children and family. Dolma's field research finds that the index of happiness of families that are taking part in handicraft projects are generally higher than other families in the local community. More importantly, doing handicrafts also gives single mothers the confidence to prove their ability to live well without a husband. Single mothers working in the handicraft project are often appreciated by other people and their social status are increased in the local community.

The local government gives handicraft makers in this project the opportunity to attend exhibitions in major Chinese cities, which also facilitates intercultural communication. There is a mutual study of multicultural environments where local women acquire knowledge of modern modes of production and outsiders are educated about Shangrila's traditional handicrafts. Dolma said during the interview:

You improve your economic condition, on the other hand your family becomes more harmonious and you are happy, this seldom happens. More money doesn't mean happiness. But through making handicraft, through this process you know about your culture, you get in touch with more people, you know about others' cultures. This [open and communicating] state, I really like it.

Cultural inheritance is another significant intention of the handicraft project. When doing business in the commercial market, a handicraft maker needs to thoroughly understand the traditional values and aesthetics that are embedded in handicrafts in order to promote her products to tourists. For example, the *Ashtamangala* series consists of handicrafts that illustrate a sacred suite of the Eight Auspicious Signs of Tibetan Buddhism. When making *Ashtamangala* handicrafts, Tibetan women are required to learn what is *Ashtamangala*, what constitutes the eight auspicious signs, why are they are auspicious signs, and what *Ashtamangala's* symbolic meanings are in Tibetan ways of life. During ancient times, the sacred texts and images of Tibetan Buddhism only appeared in monasteries that restricted access to the common people.

By adding religious elements into daily objects, Dolma wishes for handicraft makers and tourists to have access to learn about Tibetan Buddhism and its traditional values. The animal series also allows locals and tourists to learn more about the importance of animals in traditional Tibetan modes of production and the harmonious cosmology between humanity and nature. A Tibetan woman's daily interaction with her family members also carries out the inheritance of traditional values, especially traditional story-telling attached to handicraft motifs, through the family line. In Dolma's handicraft poverty reduction project, the handicraft essentially functions as a carrier of Tibetan values, spirituality, and aesthetics, as well as a bridge that transmits these core ideologies to tourists and the general public.

In all of the preservation activists' "responsible tourism" programs, traditional Tibetan values, spirituality, and aesthetics serve as a moral

standard for Tibetan conducts in the commercial market. When the local government's oversight and market regulations are deficient, local preservation activists hope to gradually resurrect traditional Tibetan ethics, a complementary social regulation to the legal system, and encourage local participants in the tourism industry to perform appropriate commercial behavior through their experience in homestay, "experience it," and handicraft programs.

Conclusion

In my research, Shangrila's tourism is not a unidirectional power that is imposed by a local agency for tourists or by tourists on the local society. It is a complex system, in which the host and the guest both yield influence, and political, economic, cultural and social environments are intertwined. In this system, the political economy of state-sponsored tourism and globalization, as economic and political aggressions from outside, have brought many disruptive socio-cultural changes into local landscapes and threatened the survival of traditional Tibetan values in the local society. However, through its negative influence, these outside aggressions fortunately stimulate local awareness of Tibetan identity and its unique traditions. Receptive to modern perspectives and unrestricted in traditional socio-political boundaries, Tibetan preservation activists negotiate with the overarching structure of tourism and develop a form of "people-centered development" that prioritizes local cultural and social well-being over economic growth in the tourism industry. In this form of sustainable development, preservation activists design "responsible tourism" programs and manipulate tourism into a niche in which traditional social structure is preserved and modern modes of production serve as substantial carriers of Tibetan values, spirituality, and aesthetics. Under the formidable trend of globalization and modernization, preservation activists try their best to incorporate local society into modernity and preserve traditional Tibetan culture as the root of their identity.

However, things do not always work out perfectly to everyone's satisfaction. Problems still exist within Shangrila's cultural preservation and

tourism industry. There is a disconnect among different preservation organizations that lack a holistic understanding of Tibetan culture as a complex whole of elements and address their enthusiasm only for particular Tibetan traditions. Cultural commodification is another intricate problem that is hard to picture in Shangrila's social landscape. Brought up by Western scholars, the concept of cultural commodification is usually associated with notions of race and colonialism in the United States. In the Far East where socio-political structures historically do not accommodate the concepts of race and colonialism, the westernized "cultural commodification" is not applicable to the commodification of culture in Shangrila's tourism industry and cultural preservation.

In my research, with preservation activists' unique perception of culture as flexible and evolving, "over-commercialization" seems to be a better descriptive and less controversial alternative for this phenomenon. In Shangrila, the vague balance between commercial behaviors and sacred knowledge in Buddhism has led to spiritual pollution and many mercenary conducts at the expense of performers' consciences and recipients' well-being. As a result, all of the preservation activists in my research wish the local government would function as a leading force and a legislative and financial backer for local tourism and cultural preservation by establishing considerate oversight system and enforcing market regulations.

If Shangrila is a chess game, then I am a pawn; I am also a chess player. I am an insider; I am also an outsider. In Shangrila, I have witnessed people that escaped from urban restlessness to search for inner tranquility; I have witnessed people that escaped from remoteness for urban life and technology; I have witnessed people that just flow with social transgressions; I have witnessed people that grip their traditions and refuse to yield; I have also witnessed people that hide their faith and choose to take a detour to fight against the good and evil from social transgressions. In reality, Shangrila is not a paradise nor The Peach Blossom Spring far away from worldly conflicts. It is a society with contradictory socio-political dynamics, sacred faith and hopes, and secular emotions and lusts. Everyone views a different

"Shangrila" through their own way of conceptualizing the world.

This is when Shangrila goes back to imagination.

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