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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The Center for Asian Studies is pleased to publish five research papers from the 2017-2018 academic year. Each senior graduating with a degree in Asian Studies must complete a research paper under the guidance of the Senior Seminar instructor on any topic related to Asia. In addition, the journal also accepts a number of excellent Asia-related papers written by students in other classes. Each year, students produce excellent work on a wide variety of topics, and that has certainly been the case this year. This issue contains five papers written by our recent graduates in Asian Studies (Fiona Bradley, Alex Carter, and Lillian Poush) and by students who wrote China-related papers for the ASIA 3900 Urban China class held in China in Summer 2018 (Jessica Yan and Isabelle Boes). These papers cover a wide range of topics and cultures: "Spacial Expressions of Tradition and Modernity in Urban China: An Examination and Comparison of the Origins, Evolution, and Presentation of Identity in Beijing and Shanghai" (Bose); "Sex Matters: Appreciating the Feminine in Tantric Practice" (Bradley) "The Overseas Chinese: The Diaspora's Impact on Local Society in Indonesia and Malaysia" (Carter); "Shifting Indigenous Subsistence Practices in Taiwan and Hokkaido under Japanese Colonization" (Poush); and "Food Authenticity as an Experiential Tourist Attraction" (Yan).

Spatial Expressions of Tradition and Modernity in Urban China: An Examination and Comparison of the Origins, Evolution and Presentation of Identity in Beijing and Shanghai

ISABELLE BOES

INTRODUCTION

Beijing and Shanghai are two of the biggest cities in the world. Each is known distinctively for its culture and history and as the international face of China and its growing economy, population, and world presence. This project examines urban planning and design in these cities, considering specifically the similarities and differences between each city's spatial layout origins, their evolution in the context of Chinese history, and tensions and harmonies that presently exist between tradition and modernity in Beijing and Shanghai. Further, I explore the presentation of information about urban planning in each city as a construction of city identity. Drawing on a combination of existing literature in the field of urban planning and my own observations in each city, I assert that Beijing and Shanghai share some similarities in both their ancient planning origins, conflicts with tradition and modernity in a quickly changing nation, and their present-day identities as contemporary cities. However, they differ significantly in terms of their spatially formative traditions and the way that they present information to the public about these modern identities. These differences are fully grounded in each city's chronological, economic, and political contexts.

In order to understand approaches to city planning in these Chinese cities, it is first important to define the academic subject and professional field. Generally, urban planning refers to the designs, policies and infrastructure of a city and how they affect standards of living, comfort, and the aesthetic of a city.¹ Elements of a city's plan include the style and functionality of

architecture, public transportation, housing design and zoning, public spaces and attractions, and the physical layout of streets and buildings. While their effects are evident to city residents and visitors, the processes and plans themselves are generally limited to planners, designers, policy makers and analysts. This project examines several elements of, and related to, urban planning in China. I focus most heavily on the physical layout of streets and buildings in relation to each other, the design of architecture, and the evolution of residential areas, emphasizing the use of space as a symbol of identity.

Before arriving in China, I expected Shanghai to be the epitome of modernity. An Internet search pulls only images of the tall, shiny, and geometrically harsh skyline of Pudong, the newest neighborhood in the city. The search then suggests queries for "tower" and "Disneyland." At first glance, the city today seems to have embraced modernity, as it looks toward the future and welcomes in the rest of the world.

On the other hand, an image search for Beijing brings a more diverse array of symbols of the city, ranging from crowded ten-lane highways, to a traditional and colorful tower that overlooks the city at Jingshan Park, to the famous silhouettes of Tiananmen Square and the CCTV tower. Before arriving, I wondered what, if any, overall aesthetic the city emitted, and if planning and design aimed to preserve the past or evolve into a modern city like Shanghai.

I aimed to find the nuances in each city's identity. Ultimately, I found that Beijing firmly self-identifies as a strategically modern and innovative city and, though in many ways modern and even Western in style, Shanghai embraces its

¹ See the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee *School of Architecture and Planning* "Urban Planning FAQ" website for more information.

traditions of flexibility and adaptation as it constructs its constantly evolving identity. Though different in their spatial developments and representations of identity, both Beijing and Shanghai constructively embrace their historical traditions as they progress into modern, exuberant, and authentically Chinese cities.

Section 1: Early Urban Planning Origins

This section considers urban planning and city design traditions in China and Asia up until the 20th century. Ancient traditions of the design, usage, and symbolism of spaces are the origins of Beijing and Shanghai and their influence is still evident today.

Ancient China, in comparison to many other societies, exhibited a high degree of overall planning, and the country is known for following a single urban tradition.² In general, Asian cities tend to follow prototypes and plans that focus on benefitting a group or society as whole while Western cities tend to be more solution oriented to location and individual-specific problems.³ While the design origins vary significantly by city according to their geographic limitations and cultural and economic purposes, a few trends are associated with Chinese and even Asian urban planning as a whole.

Particularly, many ancient cities followed the so called magical or cosmological model of the universe. American urban planner Kevin Lynch outlines the fundamental elements of this design model, including: "axial lines of procession, encircling enclosure with gates, dominance of up versus down, grid layout, and bilateral symmetry", all of which serve to illustrate social values and hierarchies.⁴ This layout, while often associated with Asian urban planning, can also been seen in several ancient Latin American civilizations, like the Maya.⁵

Walls and gates were particularly integral to the spatial construction of major Chinese cities,

particularly those that served as capitals either for geographic regions or entire dynasties. They served to create distinctions between the city-proper, which housed powerful leaders, and what today would be considered suburbs, which were governed by their own small, local governments.⁶ Often, within city limits, inner-walls existed, separating the city into zones based on their proximity to the power center.⁷ Industries and spaces were purposely excluded or logistically impossible within the limits of each wall, creating social and economic stratification. Evidence of this tradition exists all over China, from the Great Wall which spans several provinces, to the Xi'an City Wall which is still fully intact as a complete square engulfing the city center, to the Walls of the Forbidden City in Beijing, which housed the Imperial Palace of the Ming and Qing Dynasties.

1.2 Beijing's Planning Origins

In Beijing, ancient traditions focused on symbolism of shapes and lines in the spatial representation of power. One of the most important documents in Chinese spatial planning and architectural history is the *Kao Gong Ji* or *Book of Diverse Crafts* or *Records of Examination of Craftsman*, a Confucian book that provides guidelines for the construction of a capital city. These principles were followed closely by urban planners and other imperial leaders in the Zhou Dynasty and later during the Ming Dynasty in the development of urban Beijing.

Along with emphasizing many of the design elements that the cosmological model follows such as straight axes and gates, the *Kao Gong Ji* iterates the importance of numbers. The ideal imperial city, according to the book, is a symmetric and organized grid that can be divided into sections of a symbolically powerful number such as nine.⁸ Beyond the spatial layout of the city's streets, walls and buildings, the *Kao Gong Ji* also considered water distribution and the creation of green spaces.

² See Smith 29.

³ Seo 3.

⁴ Smith 31.

⁵ Smith 33.

⁶ Qian 3.

⁷ Lee 34.

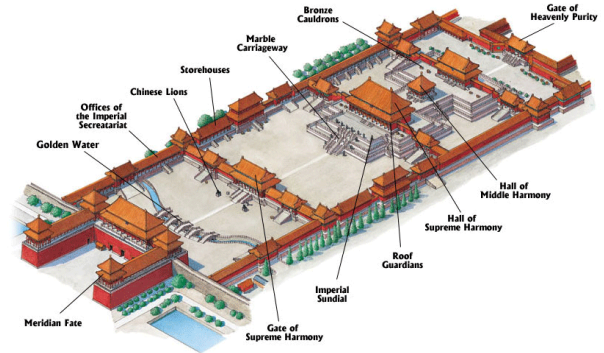
⁸ See "City Planning" from *ChinaCulture.org*.

For centuries, Beijing was the capital of the northern region of China. Its urban design as a major city began in the mid 1200's when the city planners of what was then called Dadu City closely followed Kao Gong Ji principles. It became a model of an ideal imperial city before it even served as the capital of a dynasty. Staples of its design, which now often serve as trademarks of traditional Chinese architecture, include: corridors and courtyards, up-turned roofs, pillars, and pagodas.⁹ However, as Chinese scholar Hou Renzhi points out, though the designs of the city followed the ancient traditions of the Kao Gong Ji, "it was not just a machine-like copy of the ancient ideal form" (38). For example, the city walls did not form a perfect, austere square, but instead a multi-corned rectangular shape. The city design adapted to serve the circumstances of the people, location and economy of the time, creating an innovative and contextually modern city. From its spatial conception, Beijing, though grounded in tradition and history, demonstrated a tendency towards progression and evolution, qualities of a city that embraces modernity.

The Ming Dynasty began in 1368 after the overthrow of the Manchu government. In 1421 the Dynasty moved its capital to Beijing and the city experienced another wave of spatial planning. Upon becoming the power center of the nation, the design of the city became vital in consolidating and displaying imperial power, and creating a space for citizens to interact with the emperor.¹⁰ Following its cosmological roots, the spatial layout of Beijing focused around the Emperor, illustrating his imperial spaces as the center of the universe. The imperial palace, or Forbidden City, was purposely built in the center of the city along a north-south axis.¹¹ The Forbidden City, which is well-preserved and serves as a major tourist attraction in present-day Beijing, provides a replica for what an ideal capital imperial city looked like according to the Kao Gong Lao. Walls and other barriers, like gates and moats encompass the entire structure in harsh right angles (see Figure 1). An outer city wall defined the sacred limits of the city,

excluding the non-imperial sites from Beijing proper.¹²

Figure 1



Source: "Forbidden City Map." *China Tour Map*. Chinatourmap.com, n.d. Web.

Instead of serving as a complete city itself, the imperial palace, and the inner and outer city walls that protected it, would become part of a giant, sprawling city that evolved and adapted with time. It was influenced by, but not constrained by, the traditional guidelines of the past. By 1553, the outer city wall had been destroyed and the city was sprawling and evolving out of its idealistic imperial form.¹³ Although the Forbidden City and other imperial sites like the Temple of Heaven have been carefully preserved to illustrate their original form, today they do not serve as imperial power cores. Instead, tourist sites reflect this tradition in the past tense, featuring museum-like exhibitions and replicas of furniture and artwork. Tourists pour through the sites in huge waves, taking photos and buying souvenirs while embracing the commercialization of a once sacred space.¹⁴ For locals, the Temple of Heaven has evolved into a site of recreation and relaxation; a space they can visit to focus on bettering themselves, instead of connecting to an imperial or religious power as they would have during the Dynasties.

1.3 Shanghai's Planning Origins

⁹ See Cody 354.

¹⁰ Lee 33.

¹¹ Dutton 40.

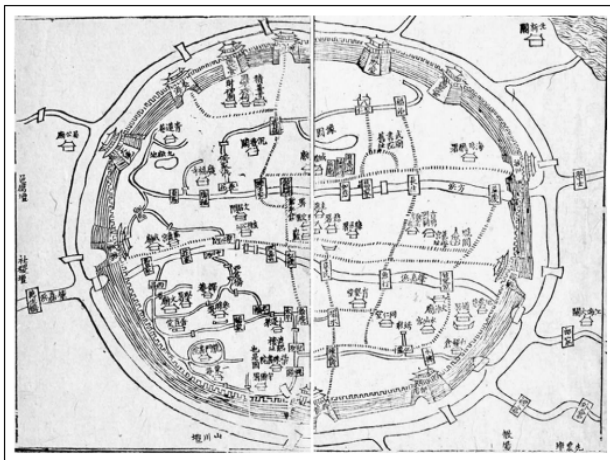
¹² Hou 41.

¹³ Hou 41.

¹⁴ Personal journal, May 2018.

In Shanghai, planning traditions were driven less by ancient blueprints and more by functionality, although some of the staples of Chinese urban symbolism prevalent in Beijing could be found in early Shanghai too. The city began as a medium-sized market and port city, serving the primarily economic purpose of facilitating trade. The city was productive and integrated with other local and regional economies, serving as a trade hub.¹⁵ Likely due to its economic importance, though it was never a capital of a region like Beijing, the general spatial layout of the city followed some of the power-oriented Kao Gong Ji principles. Figure 2 shows an early city map of Shanghai, featuring an outer-city wall just like in Beijing, with structures that mirror traditional architecture trends like the upward-sloping roofs. Instead of a major north-south axis like in Beijing, two east-west streets housed many homes and businesses, surrounded by smaller streets, creating a vague grid shape.

Figure 2



Source: Arkaraprasertkul, Non. "Power, politics, and the making of Shanghai." *Journal of Planning History* 9.4 (2010): 235.

While some of the principal elements of the "ideal city design" were present, several deviations also existed, like the non-linear streets and the circular shape of the wall. Shanghai has always been predominately a financial and international hub instead of a nationalistic political hub. This early city model alludes to the

creative license and tradition of flexibility that that city possesses in comparison to cities like Beijing, which had to follow rigid guidelines to become the ideal imperial capital.

In contrast to Beijing, the existing academic understanding of city planning in Shanghai begins significantly later, reinforcing the image of Shanghai as a modern city. The period up until the mid-19th century is known generally for a combination of commerce, agriculture and suburbanization. In 1842, the Treaty of Nanjing ended the First Opium War between Great Britain and China, ruled by the Qing Dynasty. It turned Shanghai into one of five "treaty ports" for British commerce purposes, allowing for foreign possession of some areas of the city. English traders arrived as early as 1843 and people from all over the United States and Europe followed in the decades to come. However, as Henriot points out, the treaty port area, in what is now The Bund, remained primarily a "landscape dominated by rice fields and waterways, next to a sturdy but massive Chinese walled city" (8). This indicates that by the time there was any foreign possession or development of the city Shanghai was already a bustling Chinese city rooted in its own cultural values and traditions.

Eventually, the treaty port and foreign concession areas were integrated into the city and contributed to its expansion into what Arkaraprasertkul calls a "service hub under foreign rulers with superior weaponry" (233). It entered a huge trade network with other port cities all over the world, developing into an international city loved by foreigners. The Bund became the access point for the port, leading to the construction of several Western-style buildings which held foreign financial institutions and companies.¹⁶

This identity as an internationally inspired city is evident in present day Shanghai in the carefully preserved state of The Bund, which features predominately Western architecture along the Huangpu River, through which several ships pass daily. Perhaps Shanghai seems to embrace its colonial past because foreign involvement in the city undoubtedly expanded the city's economy and increased its population

¹⁵See Arkaraprasertkul 233.

¹⁶ Arkaraprasertkul 238.

and international visibility. As Tianshu points out, the colonial period brought waves of urbanization and industrialization to the city which contributed to the contemporary perception of colonial times being symbolic of progress (30). Modern day Shanghai demonstrates architectural and spatial nostalgia for its colonial period because its past helped it to become the bustling, diverse, self-directed city that it is today.

On a smaller scale, the organization of the neighborhoods in the city also reflected the economic prosperity that the colonial period symbolized, another legacy that lingers in present-day Shanghai. As shown above in Figure 2, the basic layout of the city followed the traditional Chinese tenants of urban design that cities like Beijing are known for: geometrically symmetric blocks created from straight lines and perpendicular angles, all of which made it easy to organize the neighborhoods according to infrastructure, resources, and design.¹⁷ This contributed to a stratification of socio-economic classes. While most of the Chinese in Shanghai were poor, the arrival and involvement of foreign businesses and investors brought economic activity that spilled through the city. This was most evident after 1927 when the Shanghai Municipality and the KMT government under Sun Yat Sen initiated an urban plan focused on expanding urban areas of the foreign concessions predominately into neighborhoods.¹⁸ Tianshu outlines how this period saw the movement of Chinese people from “lower quarters” into “upper quarters”, allowing them to spatially transcend the tangible geometric boundaries that previously confined them (7). This contributed to what many historians refer to as the Golden Age of Shanghai in the 1930s.¹⁹ Again, the symbolism of prosperity and growth associated with Western design explains some of the spatial nostalgia seen today in Shanghai, such as the recently-developed Xintiandi neighborhood shown in Figure 3, which calls itself “the rendezvous of Yesterday and Tomorrow” and it easily recognized by its cobblestone streets and Western-style buildings.

Figure 3



Source: personal photograph, taken 27 May 2018

Section 2: The Evolution of Urban Planning

By the establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, the urban designs of Beijing and Shanghai, though similar in basic geometric tradition, deviated significantly. However, both were impacted by the rise of communism and the Mao government’s use of spatial symbolism to convey political themes. This section considers how designs and urban planning trends in these cities evolved during and after the Mao era and what evidence exists today of these changes.

2.1 Planning Evolution in Beijing

The early PRC government in Beijing enacted careful manipulations and rearrangements of space in order to convey communist values. City planners used the existing axial grid system created according to the Kao Gong Ji to re-organize neighborhoods according to communist economic and social goals and essentially re-shape nearly every aspect of day-to-day life for Beijingers. Each neighborhood became a work unit or “danwei”, housing only people who worked the same sort of job or in the same location.²⁰ This design aimed to promote efficiency. Each person would not only be close to their job, but they would also find everything else they needed in their danwei – schools, healthcare

¹⁷ See Arkaraprasertkul 235.

¹⁸ Arkaraprasertkul 241.

¹⁹ Arkaraprasertkul 239.

²⁰ Wainwright 5.

facilities, shops, and restaurants. Any major decision about job, family, location or any other major aspect life, required permission from the work unit.²¹ Following traditional planning trends, walls outlined most of the neighborhood. Today, many of these neighborhoods are known as “hutongs.” Socio-economic segregation resulted as workers and their families became confined to their neighborhoods. As Wainwright points out, this promoted a form of social segregation too, as people developed a sense of loyalty to their own spaces and jobs (5).

Today, hutongs are a central part of Beijing design and culture. Though the strict permit system and legal requirement to live according to work unit disintegrated after Deng Xiaoping took office and the country began to embrace privatization, many Beijingers still live in hutongs near their jobs and major resources. A walk through a hutong near Jingshan Park in the middle of the city demonstrated a sense of community as I noted: “residents stood on their porches calling down the street to one another and jumped out of the way for scooters and carts carrying kids in uniforms to school.”²²

Since land in China is still publicly owned, local and city-wide planners still control development and upkeep efforts. Some hutongs, especially those near to attractions such as Tiananmen Square and Lake Houhai, have been redeveloped to look contemporary and cohesive, combining traditional building shapes with modern-looking materials like the sleek silver metal shown below in Figure 4.

Figure 4



Source: personal photograph taken on 19 May 2018.

Others have been designed to be quintessentially Chinese, using traditional colors and emitting what Michael Dutton refers to as an ambiance of charming and tranquil laziness in his book, *Beijing Time* (204). Figures 5 and 6 below show hutongs near Tiananmen Square and Lake Houhai respectively. A simple tap on some of the gray walls finds that they are hollow, and simply painted to look like bricks.

Figure 5



Source: personal photograph taken on 18 May 2018.

Figure 6



Source: personal photograph taken on 15 May 2018.

Other hutongs, particularly those further from the north-south axis, house many attractions that have been either destroyed and hidden or completely disregarded. In 2008, the government decided to prioritize “the eradication of impoverished buildings” and began in 2016 what some call “the bricking in.”²³ As part of a population control effort in one of the most populated cities in the world, doors to businesses and houses in poorer, higher-density neighborhoods are literally bricked in,

²¹ See Wainwright 5.

²² Personal journal, 24 May 2018

²³ See Bird, 2017.

encouraging residents and business owners that do not fit with the cohesive vision of the city to move outside its limits.

Besides residential areas, the use of public spaces as symbols evolved in Beijing in the city's post-imperial period and Mao's PRC. Achieving a socialist society meant that city planners had to remove some of the physical and symbolic blockades between the powerful and the common while spatially creating a more open and publicly accessible city. Under the nationalist government of the Republic of China, this brought the creation of several public parks and the opening of existing roads and the construction of new ones.²⁴ In 1913, a Chang'an Avenue or "The Avenue of Eternal Peace" became a new central axis of the city, cutting between Tiananmen Square and Tianan Gate itself while interrupting the order of imperial power along the original north-south axis.²⁵ This road became a symbol of progression and modernity in stark juxtaposition to the ancient sites in which it runs perpendicular to. Today, many international corporations and financial centers sit along or near the avenue, including the futuristic CCTV tower, which has become a staple of the Beijing skyline in art and advertisements.²⁶

Upon the establishment of the PRC, city planners sought to create a new power-center for the city that brought people literally and symbolically closer to Chairman Mao. During the Ming and Qing dynasty, what is today known as Tiananmen Square was a result of the construction of two gates, Qianmen and Tianan leading north from the Temple of Heaven to the Forbidden City. These gates served as a way to reinforce barriers between commoners and the emperor. When the inner-city walls that enclosed these important imperial sites fell, the space opened to the public as a gathering site for both nationalistic and dissenting political exhibitions.²⁷ By the birth of the PRC, the space was entirely public, allowing Beijingers to flood the streets in front of Tiananmen Gate on October 1st, 1949 when Mao gave his famous speech announcing the founding of the PRC. In the

following decade, Mao would mandate the erection of several buildings and monuments that depicted a brave and resilient fight for communism to promote party loyalty and social cohesion, including the Monument to the People's, The Great Hall of the People, and The Museum of the Chinese Revolution.

Today, the tradition of spatial manipulation is evident but not necessarily active in Tiananmen Square. Though known for its politically charged and occasionally violent past, the space emits a surprisingly relaxed and warm ambiance. While the famous portrait of Chairman Mao cannot go unnoticed as it overlooks the crowds and the walkthrough Mao's mausoleum is eerily silent and harshly disciplined with guards every few steps, outside in the Square, people laugh and chat loudly, pose for pictures with their selfie sticks and purchase souvenirs and food.²⁸ Just through the southern gate of the square is Qianmen street, which has become a commercialized pedestrian mall and another important attraction for both domestic and international tourists.

2.2 Planning Evolution in Shanghai

While the period shortly before the founding of the People's Republic of China brought a period of urbanization and relatively more open and progressive spatial planning to Beijing in comparison to its strictly designed imperial origins, Shanghai experienced suburbanization and a more constrictive period of city planning in comparison to its origins. "War, civil war, and Maoism" led to what historian Willian Kirby sees as Shanghai's utter stagnation."²⁹ In contrast to the principles of free market capitalism that prevailed during the colonial period, the transition to communism, which included the public attainment of land, was starker here than in Beijing.

On a large scale, the CCP, which had its very first meeting in Shanghai, promoted

²⁴ Lee 34.

²⁵ Dutton 40.

²⁶ Dutton 40.

²⁷ Lee 36.

²⁸ Personal journal, 18 May 2018.

²⁹ See Arkaraprasertkul 242.

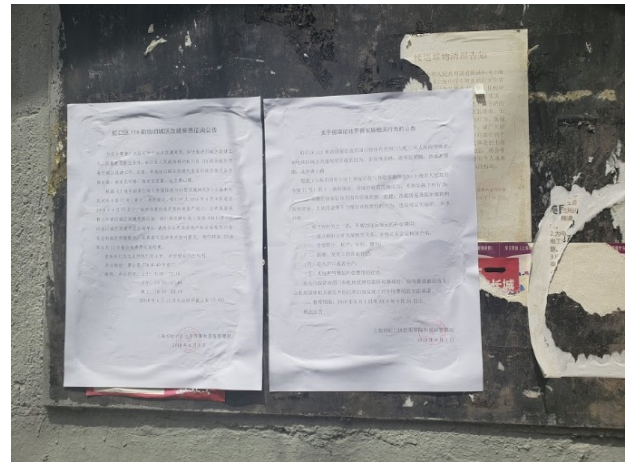
suburbanization to deal with the city's growing population, which likely resulted at least partially from the economic prosperity and development of the colonial period. Economically, the goal of the series of plans aimed at "industrialization with controlled urbanization" was efficiency. The suburbs were the best place for industrialization because their usage would preserve the environment of the inner-city and minimize the use of agricultural land.³⁰ Residence permits inside city limits became increasingly challenging to obtain.

The birth of the PRC and Mao's efforts to create a proudly socialist, unified, and fiercely loyal country brought urban planning efforts that attacked the cities colonial past. Many private properties, especially ones that served foreign interests were converted into public spaces such as People's Park and improvements to infrastructure aimed to improve everyone's access to all parts of the city.³¹ In contrast to the danwei system in Beijing which created a form of segregation, neighborhood policy in Shanghai aimed to intersperse people that were previously separated by the location hierarchy that existed in relation to the foreign concessions and Western-inspired spaces. As Tianshu discusses, communist city planners attempted to "eliminate if not minimize the differences in terms of income and housing condition" in each district (10). This was accomplished by manipulating the traditional grid system and re-drawing neighborhood axes. Just like in Beijing, the traditions of the Kao Gong Ji approach to urban planning were used to shape economic and social dynamics in communist China. This period also brought the conversion of many street names from English to Chinese. In Shanghai, it seems that Maoism, while geared towards its socialist goals for the future, brought a return to some of the Chinese traditions of the past in response to the period of foreign influence.

Just like the Beijing hutongs, today, many of these Shanghai neighborhoods, called "Shikumen," face the threat either of complete demolition or of re-development. Big white flyers are posted on the entrances to these small,

labyrinth-like neighborhoods all over the city, serving residents an eviction notice (see Figure 7). Many of these neighborhoods will be developed into high scale shopping centers and even apartments while the current residents will be offered alternative housing on the outskirts of the city.³² If they follow the trend of the already re-developed neighborhoods such as Xintiandi, they will be uniquely Shanghaiese in style and layout, mixing nostalgic references to the Western style of the colonial period with food and shops from all over the world while referencing some purely Chinese elements of the city's past, all while generating profit and keeping up with the commercialization of modern society.

Figure 7: Notice of neighborhood re-development in Shanghai's Old Jewish Quarter



Source: personal photograph taken on 2 June 2018.

In post-Mao China, under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, Shanghai experienced economic growth and globalization, much of which Arkaraprasertkul attributes to Deng's Open-Door Policy (242). In parallel, many individual neighborhoods experienced prosperity as local governments loosened their reign. In the 1990s, Shanghai was one of fourteen coastal cities to become a special economic zone (SEZ) with decreased government controls on business and commerce to promote foreign investment and trade. This policy suggests a nostalgia for the

³⁰ Qian 1.

³¹ Qian 4.

³² Personal account given by tour guide Bar-Gal in June of 2018.

colonial period of the past, when a strong foreign business presence brought economic prosperity.

Spatially, this policy resulted in the development of the Pudong neighborhood, which sits across the Huangpu from The Bund. In order to turn it into the financial hub that it is today, city planners called for the development of new infrastructure including traffic networks, public transit lines, and water and electric facilities.³³ Shanghai Mayor Zhu Rongji stated that this contributed to his agenda of making Shanghai an “Oriental Manhattan and an international metropolis of the 21st century,”³⁴ suggesting that while urban plans aimed to create an international and modern city, it would be uniquely Chinese, not a replica of the west.

Figure 8



Source: personal photograph taken on 5 June 2018.

Today, the contrast of the two Shanghai skylines visible while from a sidewalk or rooftop along the Bund is striking. As shown in Figure 8, the Western-inspired buildings along the Bund are a regal and well-preserved image of the past, but not of traditional Chinese spatial planning. The sleek skyscrapers of Pudong that manage to sparkle both day and night appear futuristic and modern, invoking a futuristic atmosphere. The fact that Shanghai embraces these skylines as symbols of its present-day identity indicates adaptability and evolution are the true defining elements of the city. The nostalgic Bund in partner with forward-looking Pudong indicates

that Shanghai is not uncomfortable with its past and is even inspired by it as it propels forward.

Section 3: Presentation of Information about Urban Planning in Conveying City Identity

One of the most surprising elements of my on-site research on urban planning in China was the availability of information in each city about their planning history and processes. Both Beijing and Shanghai house urban planning exhibition halls that show how the city has changed over time, explaining what planners and policy makers consider in designing the city, and using giant replicas of cities to give visitors a bird’s-eye-view of the current results of planning. This section compares the museums in each city to determine how planners aim to construct and convey the city’s identity to the public.

3.1 Beijing’s Planning Exhibition Hall

The Beijing Planning Exhibition Hall is inconspicuous, especially to a nondomestic outsider like myself. As extensively as I searched any version of “urban planning in Beijing,” I found no evidence of the museum. Less than a block away from Tiananmen Square, one of the most spatially symbolic places in all of China, the hall hides in a five-story generic building that looks like it should house offices or a bank. Its only identifiers are a small sign a few meters out pointing towards it, and the thick white words running across the top of the building like the name of a company. On the inside, the building looks industrial with concrete walls and minimal décor.

Many of the exhibits tend to be politically focused and emphasize important people in the city planning process. The first-floor houses sculpted busts of the most influential planners in the city’s history, starting with Yuan Dynasty architect Guo Shoujing and ending with modern

³³ See Arkaraprasertkul 247.

³⁴ Arkaraprasertkul 248.

architect Liang Sicheng. The next floors detail much of this same history that this paper outlines. It features a hall showing the evolution of spatial planning using maps from different time periods (Figure 9), blown up images of governmental planning documents and events (Figure 10), and even a room modeling the City Planner's office. Almost all of the exhibits feature explanations only in Mandarin, with just a few title words in English. The Exhibition Hall's website states that the museum is a "patriotism education base", blatantly illustrating its purpose in conveying political messages primarily to Chinese citizens.

Figure 9



Source: personal photograph taken on 23 May 2018.

Figure 10



Source: personal photograph taken on 23 May 2018.

The use of dioramas and timelines serve a distinct purpose in this museum: highlighting Beijing's evolution into a modern city. Even the exhibits that reference the ancient traditions of the city are in some way focused on the future. A small diorama shows a bird's-eye-view of the Forbidden City, showing the neatly organized rectangular buildings with their signature golden

roofs (Figure 11). However, this display is dull compared to the extensive diorama next to it of the central north-south axis in the city (Figure 12) which shows imperial sites like the Temple of Heaven and the Forbidden City itself as well as modern buildings like the futuristic Nest in the Olympic Village built for the 2008 Olympic Games and the National Grand Theater, which many compare to a spaceship.³⁵ One of the few signs in English mentions Chang'an Avenue, describing how it cuts through the famous axis and houses modern buildings like the CCTV building. This highlights the importance of spatial symbolism and order while emphasizing that this tradition has not deterred modernity or progression.

Figure 11



Source: personal photograph taken on 23 May 2018.

Figure 12



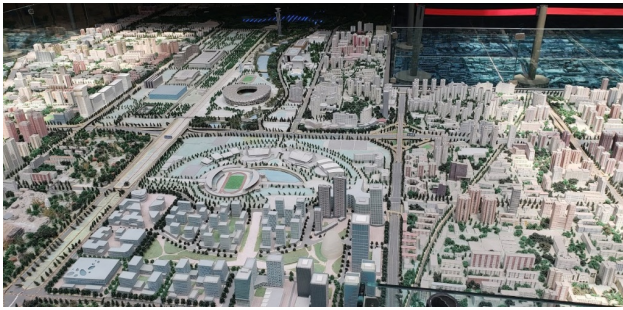
Source: personal photograph taken on 23 May 2018.

Even more dramatic and visually modern is the giant model of Beijing that covers almost the entire third floor (Figures 13 and 14). The buildings are built in shiny blue, pink and white plastic and a small electrical grid on the side lets visitors illuminate major buildings. From this bird's-eye-view, the city appears vast, organized,

³⁵ Dutton 43.

and architecturally diverse but somehow aesthetically cohesive through the consistency of the materials and color scheme. This model shows Beijing not as a preservation of the traditions of the past, but as an evolving city that embraces modernity in the context of its own history.

Figure 13



Source: personal photograph taken on 23 May 2018.

Figure 14



Source: personal photograph taken on 23 May 2018.

Along with the planning museum, I also encountered several other references in Beijing to its layout and design, illustrating the prevalence of space as a social symbol in modern Beijing. Figures 15-16 below are examples of my encounters with spatial pride. A sewage cover near Lake Houhai shows a map of a nearby hutong and there's an intricate city map carved in gold into a giant boulder across the street from a hutong near Tiananmen Square.

Figure 15



Source: personal photograph taken on 15 May 2018.

Figure 16



Source: personal photograph taken on 18 May 2018.

Overall, the presentation of information about urban planning in Beijing is purposeful and strategic in creating a cohesive and unified identity of the city. It illustrates the city as a carefully planned city that effectively serves the changing needs of modern society while acknowledging the past that made it the massive and powerful metropolis that it is today.

3.2 Shanghai Urban Planning Exhibition Center

In contrast to the Beijing Planning Exhibition Hall, the Shanghai Urban Planning Exhibition Center is overt and accessible, a towering building just down the street from the Shanghai Art Museum located in the heart of People's Park. Upon searching "Shanghai urban planning" during the initial research phase of this project, I found a web page for the museum and reviews in English. While Beijing's museum seemed to be designed for urban planning enthusiasts like myself and people with expertise in the field, Shanghai's museum is universally inviting and clearly designed for a wider audience.

The first floor includes a few of the most iconic buildings in the skyline, from both The Bund and Pudong, together in a cohesive giant model that towered above me (Figure 17). In addition, there was a holographic map of the city on the pavilion floor and a video played on a giant screen about contemporary Shanghai. Even my non-urban planning enthusiast friends were impressed and fascinated by the museum, which includes English translations of every exhibit. Following Chinese planning traditions, the museum is meticulously organized. The exhibitions literally and metaphorically rise, beginning on the second floor with the city's earliest history and arriving at the fifth floor which outlines plans for the future.

Figure 17



Source: personal photograph taken on 29 May 2018.

The second floor shows a timeline of the city's early development using maps that illustrate the evolution of the organized grid, just like in Beijing (Figure 18). A semi-animated puppet show and an intricately detailed moving diorama of a residential neighborhood make the exhibit entertaining to audiences of all ages.

Figure 18

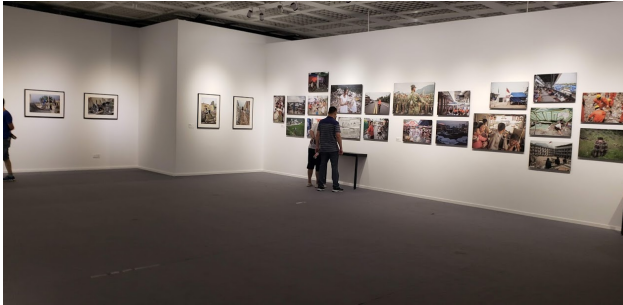


Source: personal photograph taken on 29 May 2018.

The next few couple of floors illustrate a mix of Shanghai's past and present challenges and accomplishments in urban planning, from a photo gallery showing reconstruction after a natural disaster (Figure 19), to a 360-degree video simulating a flight over the city showing each neighborhood and boasting several architectural feats like the Pudong airport and the Pearl Tower. On the fourth floor lies a giant floor-sized replica of the city which bore a striking resemblance to

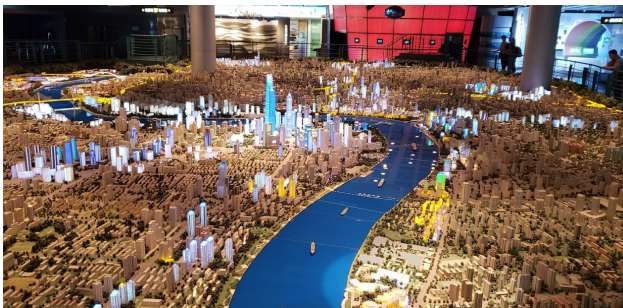
the one in Beijing with blue and white glowing plastic buildings (Figure 20).

Figure 19



Source: personal photograph taken on 29 May 2018.

Figure 20



Source: personal photograph taken on 29 May 2018.

The fifth floor is futuristic and explores city planning issues that impact individuals and families. The transportation exhibit features a brightly colored map of the subway lines on the ceiling and a life-sized model of a subway car (Figure 21). It asks visitors to consider how the city's public transportation system can accommodate the growing population. The sustainability exhibit provides a small model electric car and features a silhouette series in which different members of a family, including the pet dog, explain what they need in the place that they live (Figure 22). This exhibit emphasized the importance of harmony, play, personal space, and health while exploring how the government could account for these in designing the city.

Figure 21



Source: personal photograph taken on 29 May 2018.

Figure 22



Source: personal photograph taken on 29 May 2018.

Just like in Beijing, the museum shows the city as modern, organized and well-equipped with the resources and infrastructure to support its residents as a collective whole. However, this

museum did not convey the overtly political message of control and stagnant sense of achievement that Beijing's did. Instead it provided a holistic illustration of the city as an evolving space designed for a collective society and individuals that is constantly adapting to meet the needs of an evolving world.

politically strategic like in Beijing, but economically strategic. The city leaves its identity up to individual interpretations and remains adaptable to the constant pace of change in today's world.

Conclusion

Beijing is often credited with being a window into the past, known for both its imperial history as the capital of two dynasties, and its communist history as the birthplace of the People's Republic of China. However, in the scope of its own existence and the seemingly infinite history of China, Beijing is, and has been for decades, a truly modern city. The city served as the heart of the nation's evolution from an imperial dynasty to a socialist republic to today's increasingly capitalistic and economically strong world power in only a century. The design and layout of Beijing evolved as quickly and dramatically as the country, always following the tradition of using space as a symbol. Coming from a rigid ancient past, Beijing has followed, in spatial language, a straight axis forward, accumulating elements of the past while embracing progress and looking towards the future. Ancient design traditions and symbols today send messages about society and power in present-day Beijing, which is modern, prosperous, and innovative.

Shanghai is a younger metropolis with a relatively early colonial history that interrupted existing Chinese planning traditions and defined new ones. The city therefore experienced a non-linear path towards modernity. This explains the evidence of nostalgia all over the city. Shanghai grapples with the past because its traditions are less defined and have multi-cultural influences. Change, flexibility, and progression is a tradition of Shanghai. As an economically driven trade and port city, it was destined to fall subject to foreign influences. As one of the industrial hubs of the People's Republic of China, its process of restructuring according to communist economic values was inevitable. While Shanghai is undoubtedly modern, its spatial layout is not

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Sex Matters: Appreciating the Feminine in Tantric Practice

FIONA BRADLEY

INTRODUCTION

The Tantric tradition has deep roots in Vedic India and is much more than the sexual practices Western society has come to associate the tradition with. Tantrism, like Hinduism and Buddhism, is complex in its ideals and practices but has come to be one of the least understood traditions emerging from South Asia. The Tantric tradition is based upon a collection of ancient scriptures illustrating yogic practices, which, when performed correctly, can be used to obtain mystical powers and true knowledge of the Self.¹

The root *tan* means to spread or expand. In the case of Tantra, finding esoteric meaning in mundane acts such as eating, breathing, and sexual intercourse is said to expand one's consciousness.^{2 3} Unlike other religions, whose practices promote a renunciation of the world and its pleasures, Tantrism calls upon practitioners to live in this world, in its fullness and completeness, by placing significance upon common tasks and physical actions.⁴

By utilizing Tantric knowledge, which is open to all regardless of class or gender, practitioners have the ability to reach liberation within one lifetime. Through contemplation of the physical body as a divine vessel, the Tantric practitioner "aspires to transcend ordinary limited external conscious experience associated with bodily incarnation."⁵ The role of the feminine in Tantrism grants the practice an even greater significance in religious history and contemporary society.

The following essay claims that Tantric practice provides women with the space to feel valid and appreciated within a predominantly

patriarchal religious paradigm. The female as a necessary participant in Tantric thought and practice proves that the tradition is considerably more inclusive in regard to gender and sexuality than many other religious practices. In Tantric ritual the woman is seen as a goddess and worshipped as such. She is taught to acknowledge her body as being connected to her spirituality and to her path to enlightenment.

The celebration of the feminine within tantric philosophy is revolutionary. It is in stark contrast to the way women were seen as burdens in the forms of religious thought that Tantrism stems from.

Misogyny in Buddhism and Hinduism

Following the teachings of Gautama Buddha, when the division of Buddhism split the tradition into about twenty schools, the notion that women were unable to attain Buddhahood became prominent within many sects of the tradition. Although the Buddha himself declared women capable of enlightenment, albeit after some persistence from his stepmother Mahapajapati, they were only granted the ability under a set of conditions known as the Eight Special Rules. These rules included regulations stating that women were allowed to practice only with other women and that they were forbidden from establishing independent practices.⁶

While some Buddhist ideals have become less conservative – the *Mahayana* sect, for example, promotes the idea that women and men are essentially the same and therefore equal. There

¹ Fic, Victor M. "The Origin of the Tantra." *The Tantra*, Abhinav Publications, 2003, p. 23.

² Mumford, John. *Ecstasy Through Tantra*. Llewellyn Publications, 1987.

³ Anand, Margo. "The Art of Sexual Magic", *New Age Journal*, March/April: 74-79, pp. 130-36.

⁴ Sawaswati, Paramhanda Satyaanda. "Tantra I." *Tantra-Yoga Panorama*, p. 3.

⁵ Foulston, Lynn and Stuart Abbott. "Tantrism and Hindu Goddesses." *Hindu Goddesses*, Sussex Academic Press, 2009, p. 101.

⁶ Schireson, Grace. "Zen's Women." *Zen Women: Beyond Tea Ladies, Iron Maidens, and Macho Masters*, Wisdom Publications, 2009, p. 5.

are still many teachings that declare women unable to gain enlightenment.⁷ In countries where *Theravada* Buddhism is the most adhered to tradition it is still widely believed that a female birth, rather than that of a male, is inauspicious, as a female birth is the result of less favorable *kamma* (karma).⁸

In regard to Hinduism, the rejection of women in religious spaces when they are menstruating is an obvious example of discrimination. To refuse women participation in religious activities due to natural bodily processes that allow for the creation of life is paradoxically unnatural. On a larger scale, there exists a hegemonic Hindu nationalist masculinity in India. Minorities (read Muslims) who oppose the Hindu nationalist agenda are considered disrespectful of their country. The same is true for women who reject the masculinization of the nationalist movement.⁹

These instances make clear the struggle to be seen and heard in male dominated spaces that Buddhist and Hindu women must internalize. Tantrism contrasts this discrimination by giving a woman her voice as a powerful entity worthy of enlightenment and worship.

Gender Equality and Progressive Development

The exclusivity prevalent in religion in regard to female participation and acceptance contradicts the expansion of feminist philosophies that continue to liberate women in modern society. The patriarchal systems that once went unquestioned are now being challenged by all genders as society's collective consciousness moves forward in its moral and ethical ideals to create a future that is more

inclusive. The role and perception of women is changing at all levels of society. Religion must reflect this change in perception if it is to develop at the same pace as the rest of civilization.

Today, countries acknowledged as being the most innovative and forward thinking are often the same countries that are recognizing the great influence that women can have in political and social spheres. Iceland, for instance, has been ranked strong in environmental, research, and employment innovation and at the same time has topped the World Economy Forum's gender equality survey.¹⁰

Around the world women themselves are realizing their power as individuals, as government officials, as activists, and as sexual beings whose sexual nature has previously been shamed and repressed by society. The comfort and connectedness that more women are beginning to feel among themselves regarding their sexuality not only catalyzes positivity in the minds of women but also advocates for self-acceptance among all genders. A feminist paradigm is emerging out of a long period of unrest and frustration. Tantrism embodies this movement of women learning to trust in themselves and in their sexuality.

The Roots of Tantrism

Before furthering the claim that Tantric ideals and practices allow women to express themselves within predominantly male religious spaces, the roots of Tantrism must be made clear. The notions and practices that are now associated with Tantra did not always have this name. Rather, Western Indologists coined the term in the late nineteenth century when they discovered parts of Hindu and Buddhists texts

⁷ Yuichi, Kajiya. "Women in Buddhism." *The Eastern Buddhist*, vol. 15, no. 2, 1982, pp. 53–70. JSTOR, JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/44361658.

⁸ Sirimanne, Chand R. "Buddhism and Women-the Dhamma has no Gender." *Journal of International Women's Studies*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2016, pp. 273-292. *ProQuest*, <https://colorado.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.colorado.idm.oclc.org/docview/1848503639?accountid=14503>.

⁹ Banerjee, Sikata. "Gender and Nationalism: The Masculinization of Hinduism and Female Political Participation in India." *Women's Studies International Forum*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2003, pp. 167–179. *ScienceDirect*, www.sciencedirect-com.colorado.idm.oclc.org/science/article/pii/S0277539503000190.

¹⁰ "Iceland." *World Economic Forum*, reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/economies/#economy=ISL.

that were foreign to their knowledge of religion at the time. The founders of Hindu Tantrism did not believe that the outdated Vedic tradition was acceptable for modern practitioners and so produced a path that would venture outside of the typical human religious experience that they were familiar with.¹¹

This is not to say that Tantrism is separate from Hinduism or even Buddhism for that matter, as forms of the tradition have stemmed from both religions. Rather, certain areas of Indic religions are emphasized less in Tantric practice, lending the tradition a distinctiveness that is all its own. The stress put on mythology and narrative stories of deities in Hinduism, as well as love for god, is significantly less stressed in Tantrism. Moral action is highly regarded in Buddhism, whereas in Tantric practice the importance of such action is not as great. As Tantric ideals are less focused on outward achievements and visible representations, the tradition concentrates less on temple worship, patronage of art, and merit.¹²

Just as there are fundamental aspects of Hindu and Buddhist tradition, Tantrism has two of its own features on which it centers. The first is that the universe has neither a beginning nor an end and all manifestations within it are direct projections of the divine creator, whose energy is instilled in all beings. The second is the belief that Tantric techniques and rituals can be utilized to facilitate the harnessing of this cosmic energy, allowing practitioners to empower themselves as well as empower others.¹³

In addition to these two key aspects of the Tantric tradition, it is necessary to understand a third concept central to Tantric thought: the notion of *Siva-Sakti*, male and female energy interacting to manifest life and the greater cosmos. The monistic spirit described below symbolizes the empowerment of femininity in Tantrism.

Siva/Sakti Spirit

Across cultures an emphasis can be seen on male as opposed to female in regard to strength and authority, making it difficult for women to find their own place within patriarchal institutions and make space for themselves as a collective in societies that are ruled by predominantly masculine religious thought. In Tantric philosophy the idea of spiritual monism serves as a basis for thought and practice.

The notion of *Siva-Sakti* embodies this monistic spirit. *Siva*, male, is seen as “pure consciousness... all pervading, eternal and absolute”, but is also endowed with a female principle, *Sakti*.¹⁴ The *Sakti* is most widely defined as the divine female energy that lies within all beings. The relationship between the *Siva* and the *Sakti* energies is dualistic in theory but when considered on a deeper level the two are inherently connected and cannot possibly be separated.

Siva is static, transcendental, cosmic consciousness, whereas *Sakti* is dynamic and capable of projecting the male counterpart as a material universe consisting of infinite forms. Thus, the Absolute, the creator and destroyer of Ultimate Reality, consists of both female and male energies. The male energy exists but the source of its development is the female *Sakti*.

Considering that societal ideals expect women to exist in subordination to men, the Tantric philosophy that divine creation is only possible with both the male and female aspects of the creator is empowering for female practitioners. At the core of Tantrism female energy is essential, making space for women to feel appreciated and required within the tradition.

The Tantric Body

In most religious contexts the body is seen as polluted. It, along with the processes that occur within it, particularly within female bodies, is deemed unclean. Tantrism claims the opposite, believing the body to be a microcosmic reflection

¹¹ Padoux, Andre. “What Do We Mean by Tantrism?” *The Roots of Tantra*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 2002, p. 17.

¹² Brown, Robert L. “Introduction.” *The Roots of Tantra*, State University of New York Press, 2002, p. 5.

¹³ Fic, Victor M. “Preface.” *The Tantra*, Abhinav Publications, 2003, p. 7.

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 26.

of the superior cosmos. As the universe is born out of the monism of the *Siva-Sakti* spirit, so too is the body. By associating the body with the greater universe, the functions within the body, as well as its pleasures and desires, are deemed worthy of appreciation and acceptance.

Tantrism claims there to be seven *cakras* (energy points) within the body. These energy points are situated along the spine, along a canal known as the *susumna-nadi*. The first *cakra*, known as the *muladhara cakra* (*mula* meaning 'root'), is red in color and is situated at the base of the spine (sacral plexus). The *svadhisthana cakra* is second and is located just above the *muladhara cakra* below the naval. It is represented by the color white. Third is the *manipura cakra* situated at the naval and represented by the color yellow. Aspects of the *manipura cakra* support the claim that Tantric thought allows women to accept their bodies as natural and will be explained further on. The fourth *cakra*, the *anahata cakra*, can be found near the heart and is represented in green. Following the *anahata cakra* is the *visuddha cakra* located in the throat, represented by the color blue, and associated with speech and truth. The *ajna cakra* is indigo in color and can be found at one's third eye center between their eyebrows. The last *cakra* is known as the *sahasrara cakra* at the crown of the head. A purple thousand-petaled lotus represents this final point of energy.¹⁵

Understanding these seven energy points is of utmost importance when it comes to understanding basic Tantric thought. When performing Tantric yoga, an energy called the *kundalini*, also known as the serpent power, rises up along the spine and through each *cakra*. In an enlightened being with a purified body, the *kundalini* resides at the top of the head at the *sahasrara cakra*. In an unpurified body the same energy, which is represented as a snake, lies coiled at the base of the spine in the *muladhara cakra*. Here, it exists as dormant energy with the potential to yield magnificent spiritual realizations. When the spinal energy has reached the crown *cakra*, the Tantric practitioner will have the vision of a greater reality within her or

himself.¹⁶ The divine *kundalini* energy is considered to be an expression of *sakti* and sexuality. For *kundalini* to be so central to Tantric practice and to also be regarded as a specifically female energy is empowering for women who wish to participate in the tradition and follow Tantric philosophy.

For a woman to lend her body such great spiritual power is an act of resistance against a patriarchal society. Female Tantric practitioners can take the idea of bodily power and transform it into a perception of themselves that fights against societies misogynistic discrimination of their sexuality. In a world where societal expectations and the male gaze often shame their bodies, Tantric women have the freedom to perceive their bodies as entirely spiritual entities derived from the manifestations of the one creator.

Acceptance of this nature cannot be seen in popular religion where the body is either scrutinized in a negative manner or dismissed all together as a subject unworthy of consideration. Tantric awareness of the body and its functions gives value to the female being, inviting and empowering her to define her vessel as something more than its tangible, physical form.

Transgressive Aspects of the Tantric Tradition

Tantrism cannot be discussed in full without mentioning what is known as the tradition's Left-Hand Path, one that consists of the transgressive and often controversial features of Tantra. This is where sex comes in. The repression of sexual energy in religion is not a foreign concept. How interesting it is, though, that many religious traditions urge practitioners to refrain from sexual conduct while society uses sex to fulfill a capitalist agenda.

The use of sex in Tantric ritual as a means of attaining liberation allows practitioners to see their sexuality as something that may be embraced rather than dismissed or rejected. Tantrism offers a perspective on sex that contrasts those of other religions that demonize the act.

¹⁵ "The Nadis." *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, by Mircea Eliade, Princeton University Press, 1958, pp. 241-243.

¹⁶ Saraswati, Paramhansa Satyananda. "Kundalini Yoga." *Tantra-Yoga Panorama*, 1992, p. 65.

Sexuality and spirituality are seen as having a coexisting relationship. Tantrism presents this view on sex in an acceptable way by claiming there to be three levels at which the act can be performed.

While all sex is an expression of divine energy, it is the way in which the participants utilize that energy that makes all the difference. The lowest level (*tamas*) of a sexual relationship is one in which the male and female treat one another as sexual objects. At this level, sex can be seen as a selfish competition. The second level (*rajas*) is one at which partners are passionate but are still acting out of desire and dependency.

The third and most transformative level (*sattva*) yields a sexual relationship that is sacred above all else. Through this sacred sexual relationship comes the divine interpersonal healing necessary to follow a path to liberation.¹⁷ Those who engage in sexual intercourse at the highest level directly transform their sexuality into spirituality by “overwhelming the incessant chatter of the thinking brain (cerebral cortex) with a flood of orgasmic excitement triggered by sensations.”¹⁸

Sex is a sensitive topic for most people, especially when the subject is discussed openly in public. It is especially taboo for women to speak candidly regarding their sexual experiences as society urges them to repress their sexuality while praising men for their sexual feats. The reality is that sex is one of the most natural acts humans can perform and, being one of the only species that can do so for pleasure, to see intercourse as something that can be as sacred as prayer is completely rational.

In her book *Renowned Goddess of Desire: Women, Sex, and Speech in Tantra*, Lorillai Biernacki illustrates sex rites in which the woman holds complete agency over her body and actions as the man views her as possessing goddess-like energy. Some of these rites involve the woman being on top of the man’s body during intercourse,

symbolizing the notion that the female has the ability to hold power over the male.¹⁹

Worship of the woman as a goddess during these rituals is not a shocking concept within Tantric thought and necessitates a female subjective experience within the ritual. Both male and female participants reap the benefits of the ritual they are performing. To emphasize the importance of sex on this Tantric path is also to accept and naturalize female sexuality. Within Tantrism, it is possible for a woman’s sexual drive to be synonymous with her desire to attain liberation.

Mircea Eliade illustrates sexual rites and the importance of sexual union in Tantrism in his book *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*. Specifically regarding sexuality, Eliade describes the transgressive use of sexual fluids in ritual. *Sakti*, he says, is represented by the color red and by *rajas*, the menstrual blood of a woman. *Rajas* is also associated with the third *cakra*. As Tantrism views the body as a microcosm of the universe, it is especially noteworthy that one *cakra* out of the seven in the body is associated with a process that is generally looked down upon in disgust and seen as unclean.

Menstrual blood is not only mentioned as being associated with the energy in the body but is even used during Tantric ritual and is, in some rites, consumed by practitioners. For menstrual blood to be seen as normal and even possess spiritual power is an aspect of Tantrism that demonstrates how welcoming it is to female practitioners.²⁰

The world is pervaded by divine power according to Tantric thought, as are the ordinary acts that humans engage in. This allows sex to be considered something that has the possibility to yield supramundane ends. Even more, as Andre Padoux writes, “The main reason for this antinomian behavior appears to be the wish, by doing so, to participate in the dark, chaotic, undisciplined, and very powerful forces that are

¹⁷ Bullis, Ronald. “Biblical Tantra: Lessons in Sacred Sexuality.” *Theology & Sexuality*, no. 9, 21 Apr. 2016, pp. 101–116. *Taylor & Francis Online*, doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/135583589800500908>.

¹⁸ Mumford, John. *Ecstasy Through Tantra*. Llewellyn Publications, 2002.

¹⁹ Biernacki, Lorillai. “The ‘Kali Practice.’” *Renowned Goddess of Desire: Women, Sex, and Speech in Tantra*. New York: Oxford UP, 2007, p. 54.

²⁰ Eliade, Mircea. “Kundalini.” *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, Princeton University Press, 1958, p. 254.

normally repressed and kept outside the pure, orderly, circumscribed world of the Brahmin.”²¹

Padoux also writes, “Transgression is a universal category of human behavior,” meaning that it is normal to feel the urge to defy societal norms and participate in taboo acts that some may take offense to.²² There is great power in engaging in these transgressive rites, just as there is great power in going against societies norms to repress female sexuality and instead perceive it as a natural, spiritual energy. The practice of Tantra by women is an act of resistance in itself.

Conclusion

Tantrism reimagines the feminine and female sexuality as something to be celebrated rather than shamed and commodified for economic gains. By giving the female freedom to express her sexuality and be unashamed by her natural bodily processes during ritual, the Tantric tradition demonstrates that femininity is just as crucial to the practice as masculinity.

Women are just as much creators of this world as men. Just as reproduction would not be possible without both the female egg and the male sperm, divine manifestation requires the female principle *sakti* to create the world in tandem with the male *siva* energy. A woman’s ability to carry life within her body is a symbol of the spiritual power she holds as a manifestation of the greater cosmos.

Acceptance of the body in Tantric thought lends to a wider recognition of a woman as being her own entity, belonging only to herself, rather than the commodification of her worth.²³ As new generations seek to improve themselves through self-guided spirituality and progressive ideals, society continues to develop in such a way that is more inclusive of all genders. Should religion not reflect this progressive development?

It is naïve to believe that future religions will not have to adhere to the changes society is

making by embracing feminist ideals. Technological advancements allow for rapid societal changes in the modern world. If religious thought is to remain stagnant in its views on feminism and sexuality, it will not thrive in a contemporary society that seeks to embrace these values.

In a modern context, Tantrism and its practices can be associated not with the occult, with danger, or with secrecy, but instead with sexual liberation and pleasure within the physical world. Just as the transgressive rites of Tantrism have been looked down upon and scrutinized, women and femininity have been ‘othered’ in a similar manner.²⁴ When Tantric philosophy is viewed in a feminist light, the patriarchal ideas that society has held for so long can begin to be dismantled.

While the acceptance of Tantric thought would be beneficial to all societies, there is a fine line between cultural appropriation and the acceptance of another cultural or way of thought for the sake of the advancement of society. While it is important to recognize the roots of cultural traditions, it is also foolish to believe that civilization can improve itself without the melding of cultures and traditions. In the case of women, it is healing to see circumstances in which women are being valued around the world and in separate religious traditions.

Tantrism provides women with a path on which they can feel validated in the same way the patriarchy values men and their contributions to society. By embracing Tantric ideals, a woman can accept her body and her sexuality by reimagining herself as a spiritual entity. The macrocosm of the universe is manifested in her physical being and the powerful energies that reside within it. If contemporary civilization wishes to acknowledge female sexuality in a religious context in order to progress beneficial feminist ideals, it may look no further than Tantrism.

²¹ Padoux, Andre. “What Do We Mean by Tantrism?” *The Roots of Tantra*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 2002, p. 20.

²² Ibid.

²³ Biernacki, Lorilai. “The “Kali Practice”.” *Renowned Goddess of Desire: Women, Sex, and Speech in Tantra*. New York: Oxford UP, 2007. 104.

²⁴ Urban, Hugh B. *Tantra: Sex, Secrecy, Politics, and Power in the Study of Religion*, University of California Press, 2003. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucb/detail.action?docID=223909>.

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The Overseas Chinese: The Diaspora's Impact on Local Society in Indonesia and Malaysia

ALEX CARTER

Although they make up a relatively small portion of the overall population, the ethnic-Chinese have a very influential yet marginalized presence in Malaysia and Indonesia. Making up less than a quarter of the population in Malaysia and less than 2% of the population in Indonesia, one might assume that they are no different than the other ethnic minorities found in both countries. The reality is, despite having a well-established presence in each country for generations, the Chinese have been heavily discriminated against for several reasons. For decades, indigenous Malays and Indonesians, referred to as *bumiputeras* and *pribumis* respectively, have resented the presence of Chinese citizens in their countries, and the heads of government have implemented policies with the intention of discriminating against them.

Due to their dominant control of the economies of both countries¹ and to their perceived loyalty to China, the ethnic-Chinese have faced many accusations that have led to open discrimination against them. Despite decades of discrimination, however, they continue to live in both countries and have made significant efforts to increase the number of opportunities available to themselves. Despite facing constant racial discrimination, societal inequalities, and political exclusion, the relatively small population of ethnic-Chinese in Malaysia and Indonesia have proven to be one of the most resilient and influential diasporas in the world.

The presence of the Chinese diaspora across Southeast Asia is nothing new. In the case of Malaysia, Chinese are thought to have begun to set up widespread permanent residence centuries ago, coinciding with some of the first known

interactions between Chinese traders and local Indonesians. For hundreds of years, the Chinese have persevered through race riots, racially motivated mass killings, and discriminatory policies. Today, they are now considered non-migrants in some regions of Malaysia and Indonesia due to many generations of established presence. For example, according to a 2010 population census,² many ethnic-Chinese actively choose to identify as Indonesian rather than Chinese and believe their efforts to integrate into local societies have been positive enough that anti-Chinese sentiment is finally disappearing. Their efforts to improve their standing in society, however, have still been relatively ineffective.

Chinese dominance of the economy was an important factor in the implementation of many anti-Chinese policies in Indonesia in the late 1960s, but it was not the primary motivation. "In 1965, six Indonesian army generals were killed by other high-ranking officers, and conservative generals... responded by accusing Communist Party leaders of attempting to orchestrate a coup."³ The Indonesian communist party (PKI) - the third largest communist party in the world - was immediately blamed. Whether they are actually guilty of a failed coup is still debatable, but the response by Indonesians was devastating for the ethnic-Chinese in Indonesia. Because some identify as Chinese and not Indonesian, and are presumed to maintain loyalty to communist China, the ethnic-Chinese were an easy target for the Indonesian population to blame. What followed was a series of mass killings targeted at suspected communists, communist sympathizers, and ethnic-Chinese. While the Chinese were not the only group targeted in the mass killings, their perceived involvement in an alleged communist

¹ Eugene K. B. Tan (2001) "From sojourners to citizens: managing the ethnic Chinese minority in Indonesia and Malaysia", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 24:6, 949-978, DOI: 10.1080/01419870120077922, pg. 952

² Arifin, Evi Nurvidya, et al. "Chinese Indonesians: How Many, Who and Where?" *Asian Ethnicity*, vol. 18, no. 3,

2016, pp. 310-329, doi:10.1080/14631369.2016.1227236.

³ Bevins, Vincent. "Ethnic Chinese Still Grapple with Discrimination despite Generations in Indonesia." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 18 Mar. 2017

coup was one of the primary motivations for the implementation of anti-Chinese policies.

Following the 1967 ousting of President Sukarno, Sukarno's successor, General H. Muhammad Suharto, began his efforts to ensure that a real communist coup would never happen in Indonesia. He implemented a series of anti-Chinese policies designed to limit the levels of Chinese influence within his country. These policies were implemented in order to exclude the Chinese from participating in government. Moreover, some of Suharto's policies were implemented to prohibit three key aspects of overseas Chinese life: Chinese media, schools, and organizations were all banned in Indonesia. The implementation of such policies bolstered a pre-existing set of discriminatory practices the Chinese are still recovering from today.

As a result of the policies implemented by Suharto, the Chinese were made out to be just another ethnic group residing in Indonesia. While there are many ethnic minorities represented in Indonesia, the Chinese were given a specific role when Suharto gave them the keys to the economy. Yet, despite the massive responsibility of rebuilding the Indonesian economy, they had their schools and language banned and were forced to accept a culture different from their own. While the ethnic-Chinese are one of the many ethnic minorities found in Indonesia, their crucial contributions to the state were not rewarded.

With the loss of Chinese schools and media outlets, the ethnic-Chinese were cut off from China and Chinese culture. Moreover, the policies also alienated most ethnic-Chinese from Indonesian society, as "it was discrimination with uneven results. Chinese Indonesians were effectively banned from public life, from participating in politics and the military, while their children found it hard to enter public schools or universities."⁴ Simply put, the ethnic-Chinese were stripped of their identity and made to suffer through forced assimilation, while at the same time being effectively separated from the society in which they had to integrate.

In the time immediately following the rumored Communist coup, Suharto became paranoid that allowing the Chinese political parties to operate at full capacity would lead to them garnering enough support to become the dominant party. Under Suharto, while the Chinese were allowed to operate freely in the economy, their personal financial gains and political involvement were still heavily regulated. In order to combat their exclusion from most branches of society, the Chinese became significantly more involved in the economy, as it was essentially the only branch of society in which Suharto allowed them any freedom. The Chinese have a reputation throughout Asia as being economically successful and highly effective in business dealings. For this reason, Suharto relied on powerful Chinese businessmen to build the economy.⁵ Despite accounting for such a small portion of the Indonesian population, the ethnic Chinese were by far the most dominant players in the economy, controlling over 80% of the national economy.⁶

This did, however, result in higher taxation of the ethnic-Chinese because they were generally better, more successful businessmen. The larger consequence of their dominance, however, was that local populations felt that the Chinese were not using their economic success to benefit the people as a whole. For that reason, the *pribumis* continued to resent the Chinese, resulting in the continuation of the ethnic-Chinese having very limited opportunities. Moreover, since they had no real voice in the government, there was no way to bridge the gap between themselves and Indonesians, making it impossible for the two groups to work together. As a result, there was no way to work towards goals that would benefit all parties involved. For decades this cycle continued and increased the animosity between the ethnic Chinese and Indonesians.

Around the same time that *pribumis* were implementing policies intended to restrict the Chinese in their country, Malaysia was busy dealing with the Chinese language movement that lasted from 1952-1967. Similar to what had

⁴ Bevins, *Ethnic Chinese still grapple with discrimination despite generations in Indonesia*

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Effendi, Tonny Dian, and Mohd Zaini Abubakar. "China Town Magazine and Indonesian-Chinese Identity." *Journal of Politics and Law*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2017, p. 97., doi:10.5539/jpl.v10n2p97.

happened in Indonesia, Malaysia, following independence from colonial rule, tried to limit Chinese influence and indirectly force the ethnic-Chinese to assimilate further into Malay culture. The Malays believed integration was necessary in order to maintain a Malay-Islamic culture, and language represented one of the biggest gaps between the different ethnic groups. For decades following independence, Malays were driven by “the linear ‘one language, one nation, one people’ principle of linguistic or organic nationalism.” This Malay attitude was premised on the notion that “the political and the national unit should be congruent.”⁷

The reason the Chinese fought this idea was born out of the end of colonial rule in Malaysia. In response to the British wanting to establish English and Malay primary schools, Chinese educationalists demanded that Chinese culture and language be recognized to the same capacity as English and Malay, and that Chinese be made into one of Malaysia’s official languages. After increased political support, the movement was stopped due to promises made by the government to safeguard Chinese education.⁸ In the end, the agreement to recognize Chinese as an official language fell through. It did, however, lead to the National Language Act in 1967, which provided increased opportunities for the ethnic-Chinese to learn more about Chinese language and culture.

During the period in which the Chinese language movement was taking place, Malaysia was home to a diverse political atmosphere. The three largest ethnic groups, the Malays, the Chinese (37% of Malaya’s population at the time), and the Indians, were all united under one political organization, the Alliance Party. At the time, the heads of each party were all upper-to-middle class and English educated. They shared similar values and perspectives on what was best for Malaysia.⁹ The United Malays National Organization (UMNO)

was the dominant *bumiputera* political party. It consisted of the Malay administrative elite trained by the British following independence, after which the UMNO was immediately recognized as the ruling political elite.¹⁰ The Chinese were focused on trading, they dominated urban areas and were represented by the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA). The MCA was founded by the rich *towkay* class of Chinese businessmen as a welfare organization, before the *towkays* realized the next step was to become a political party on behalf of the ethnic-Chinese.¹¹ There was also the Malaysia Indian Congress (MIC), which represented the Indian population in Malaysia. Prior to 1969, these three separate parties worked together to ensure everyone had a voice and all the nation’s needs were met. Each party had a specific role in Malaysian society that they would be in charge of. The UMNO held political power in Malaysia, while the MCA was granted permission to operate freely in the economy.¹² The MCA in turn used some of the money they generated to fund the UMNO. Prior to the elections of 1969, Malays and ethnic-Chinese were prospering together, and signs were pointing to a free, multi-ethnic Malaysia.

During the election, however, a new player entered the political atmosphere. The Democratic Action Party (DAP), came out of nowhere to gain increased support from the ethnic-Chinese at the expense of the MCA¹³, causing paranoia among *bumiputeras* that the new Chinese party would soon have more influence than the parties already in place, thus negatively effecting Malay society. The sudden rise in support for a Chinese opposition party, the Democratic Action Party, sparked racial riots in Kuala Lumpur.¹⁴ The race riots mark the start of discrimination against the Chinese in Malaysia. Following the race riots, the UMNO essentially tried to justify the actions of the Malays by saying: “The racial riots in 1969 were an inevitable outcome of the economic imbalance

⁷ Tan & Teoh, *Ethnic contestation and language policy in a plural society: the Chinese language movement in Malaysia, 1952–1967*, pg. 252

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ James Chin (2001) “*Malaysian Chinese politics in the 21st century: Fear, service and Marginalisation*”, *Asian*

Journal of Political Science, 9:2, 78-94, DOI: 10.1080/02185370108434192, pg. 79

¹⁰ Chin, *Malaysian Chinese politics in the 21st century: Fear, service and Marginalisation*, pg. 79

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., 80

¹⁴ Ibid.

between the Chinese and the Malays. The Malay population were unhappy with their negligible share of the economic cake and felt that the Chinese would overwhelm them in the near future.”¹⁵

This economic imbalance was such an issue for some of those in power that the Malays moved quickly to make changes. “The imbalance... had to be corrected by legislation. To achieve this aim, the federal constitution had to be amended.”¹⁶ To counteract Chinese dominance in the economy and remove their voice from the government, *bumiputeras* were awarded “special positions” in Section 153 of the Constitution.¹⁷ The new amendment allowed the government to “enact preferential policies and other laws towards the *bumiputeras*.”¹⁸ Furthermore, once the special rights legislations had been passed, amendments were added to the constitution that disallowed anyone, even congress, to revisit these provisions. “Malay political hegemony was thus perpetually enshrined.”¹⁹ Shortly after, the UMNO was given control of all the key ministries, such as foreign affairs, education, and trade and industry, among others. As a result, the Chinese were relegated to junior portfolios such as transport, housing and health²⁰, vastly limiting their influence and contributions in Malaysia.

Even today, the Chinese are still largely without a voice within the government. In 1981, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad became the Prime Minister of Malaysia, and immediately set out to create a “model Muslim nation.”²¹ With this goal in mind, Mahathir and the UMNO set out to force Islam upon the non-Muslims in Malaysia, and in the case of the Chinese, “culture was repressed and received little to no recognition from the government.”²²

Throughout the period marked by discrimination against the ethnic-Chinese, there have been opportunities for Indonesian Chinese political parties to give a voice to their people. In 1973, Prime Minister Tun Razak proposed the

idea of a united political party and invited all political parties in Malaysia to join the bigger, better coalition, Barisan Nasional (BN). All the parties involved in the Alliance Party accepted the invitation, but the DAP, the Chinese party with the most influence by this point, rejected the offer.²³

More recently, the lack of representation faced by the ethnic-Chinese is partially a fault of the actions of the MCA, or more specifically its lack of action. At the turn of the century, it became clear that the head of the MCA was not going to try to improve Chinese standing within Malaysia. In 2001, Dr. Ling Liong Sik, the head of the MCA, made clear his intentions for the party. Upon the implementation of his political agenda, it became understood that “as a general rule, the MCA no longer believes in ‘fighting’ or ‘struggling’ for the ‘rights’ of the Chinese community.”²⁴ By this point, Chinese political parties in Malaysia no longer held enough support or influence to bring about any real change. The two parties most responsible for supporting the ethnic-Chinese in Malaysia, the MCA and Gerakan (the People’s Movement Party) had now completely let their people down.

When the MCA, Gerakan, and the DAP opposition party all failed to give a voice to the Chinese people, they tried to create change on their own. A huge number of Chinese guilds and organizations came together to create a petition they called Suqiu, which they would deliver to Prime Minister Mahathir, that demanded the Chinese be given the same basic citizenship rights as the *bumiputeras*. In return, Mahathir accused Suqiu of being a communist party, and without the support of the MCA, DAP, or Gerakan, the movement was crushed as fast as it had started. Recently, as the Chinese parties are still afraid to garner enough support to contest the UMNO, the only role they can really fill is to “convey the feelings of the community to the government,”²⁵ to which point the government usually blatantly ignores them. The Chinese have no political voice

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 81

¹⁸ Ibid., 80

¹⁹ Ibid., 81

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., 82

²² Ibid., 82

²³ Ibid., 81

²⁴ Ibid., 85

²⁵ Chin, *Malaysian Chinese politics in the 21st century: Fear, service and Marginalisation*, pg. 88

in Malaysia because their representatives are too weak to do anything about it.

For this reason, among others, many ethnic-Chinese choose to blend in in Malaysia, as they feel there is no reason to draw any attention to themselves. In the town of Bukit Mertajam, in Penang, Malaysia, privacy and modesty are highly valued aspects to everyday life. The *towkay* class, the wealthy Chinese small business owners, is known in Bukit Mertajam as a humble, hard working group of people. They see no point in material possession, such as wearing expensive clothes or owning expensive cars. They simply prefer to own only what they need and blend in with the people. As it turns out, however, these *towkays* sometimes have a hard time simply blending in due to their status as local “celebrities”, but for good reason. Unlike the big shot business owners, who are rarely involved in society at the village level, the *towkays* gained their celebrity reputations by supporting the local community. While they were mostly “revered for their efforts to support institutions of ‘Chinese society’ such as language schools and native-place associations,”²⁶ they also had generally positive reputations among the *bumiputeras* for their community support.

At the same time, however, the *towkay* class in Malaysia has a poor reputation in some circles. The *towkays* are known mainly for their contributions to the community, but also for the way in which they run their businesses. *Towkays* are a group that know how to work for their living. Many of them do their own manual labor, and usually do not share the names of contacts and business partners, for fear that whoever they tell will become competition. For similar reasons, they rarely hire employees to help them, simply preferring to work hard themselves and maintain their secrets to success. The times they do work together, however, they usually work against the Malays. The Malays have earned a reputation for being lazy, and for being rather incompetent businessmen. They expect the government to

support them and complain that the Chinese are responsible for their failures in business.²⁷ For this reason, Chinese business owners often team up to cheat Malay businesses. Knowing that they will benefit greatly, they generally do not care that they will destroy these Malay businesses.

Cheating *bumiputera* businesses is not the only shady practice that some of the ethnic-Chinese utilize for financial gain. Some ethnic-Chinese have gained reputations for their alleged involvement in illegal drug production. In Malaysia, and throughout Southeast Asia, Bukit Mertajam is well known as a heroin distribution center with trade connections spanning all over the world. Known as “The Dark Road,” the drug trade in Malaysia is rather large, but mostly only effects one group at the local level. Within Malaysia, “most heroin addicts were not Chinese, and when it came to the local government-run rehabilitation center, it is noted that most inmates were young Malay men.”²⁸ Chinese drug traffickers were often the ones in charge of the business and distribution sides of the heroin trade in Bukit Mertajam, using the “Dark Road” to “gain wealth through illegal and admittedly antisocial means, especially narcotics trafficking and processing.”²⁹ While most Chinese business men had reputations of being hard working, community minded men, not all gained their wealth through honest measures.

As long as the Chinese community benefits, however, the source of the financial support does not matter to some. “It matters little how one acquired capital *once he has it*, but instead how one *distributes* and *consumes* one’s capital for the benefit of local Chinese society that is esteemed.”³⁰ As long as the ethnic Chinese benefit from the profits of illegal efforts, many will turn the other way.

In the last two decades in both Malaysia and Indonesia, ethnic tensions have mostly subdued. The Chinese have further assimilated, and at this point most of the discrimination they face is generated by the governments of each nation, or

²⁶ Nonini, Donald M. “*Getting By: A Historical Ethnography of Class and State Formation in Malaysia*”, Cornell University Press, 2015. ProQuest Ebook Central, pg. 84

²⁷ Nonini, *Getting By: A Historical Ethnography of Class and State Formation in Malaysia*, pg. 98

²⁸ Ibid., 106

²⁹ Ibid., 103

³⁰ Ibid., 99

generalizations made based on the actions of a small percentage of Chinese. In Malaysia, the amendments that were created to permanently limit ethnic-Chinese involvement in government are still a source of discrimination, but their efforts to integrate into local society have improved. In Indonesia, the ethnic-Chinese are no longer politically marginalized. Following the collapse of the Suharto regime in 1998, most of the discriminatory policies directed at the Chinese were removed,³¹ marking the beginning of the post-reformation era in Indonesia. It is also notably the year in which Suharto's forced assimilation policy was finally abandoned, leading to the creation of several Chinese language print media sources.

Following the beginning of the post-reformation era, Indonesian-Chinese were given significantly more freedoms. They could now freely express their Chinese identities, and those in government began to receive promotions to elevated positions within the government offices.³² With the emergence of new forms of Chinese media, the ethnic-Chinese were provided with a source of connection to mainland China, as well as news regarding Chinese culture within Indonesia. Media outlets such as China Town Magazine have emerged as informative sources that can be used to reconnect the ethnic-Chinese to their cultural heritage. China Town Magazine provides readers with news on local and community happenings, events on mainland China, and, very carefully, Indonesian politics.³³ Sources like the China Town Magazine represent a way to help the ethnic-Chinese develop the "Chineseness" of their Indonesian-Chinese identity.³⁴

The emergence of several media outlets focused on Chinese culture represents a significant step in the end of discrimination against the Chinese in Indonesia, but thanks to

generations of assimilation, the effect has not been as significant as some may think. The new Chinese media sources provide people with a connection to the mainland, but much of its target audience do not necessarily care about what is happening in China. Most of the young ethnic-Chinese families in Indonesia have been there for multiple generations and are likely to happily identify as Indonesian. For this reason, many young ethnic-Chinese are less concerned with what is going on in China than they are with local happenings. Having Chinese media outlets is important for the overall preservation of Chinese culture in Indonesia, but it is mostly consumed by older generations, those who may have lived on the mainland before migrating to Indonesia.

Today, there are millions of Chinese living peacefully in Malaysia and Indonesia. While population statistics have not been recorded in post-colonial Indonesia since 1930, as it was seen as politically incorrect to discuss ethnicity under Suharto, the last two decades of research have provided telling information on the physical presence of the ethnic-Chinese while also hinting at the improved relations between the ethnic-Chinese and indigenous populations. In a 2000 census by Statistics-Indonesia (Badan Pusat Statistik), 0.8% of Indonesia's population identified as ethnically Chinese, and revisions estimated that roughly 1.5% of the population was Chinese.³⁵ In 2005, Indonesia conducted an Intercensal Population Survey, in which 1.2% of the population identified as ethnically Chinese.³⁶ In the 2010 census, considered the most detailed and accurate of the three main population census', 1.2% of the population, or roughly 2.8 million people, again identified as ethnically Chinese.³⁷

There are a couple of things to consider when trying to understand the reason for the differences in the percentage of those who identify as Chinese, even though the difference seems insignificant. In

³¹ Chong, Wu-Ling. "Local Politics and Chinese Indonesian Business in Post-Suharto Era." *Southeast Asian Studies*, vol. 4, no. 3, Dec. 2015, pp. 487–352. pg. 515

³² Effendi, Tonny Dian, and Mohd Zaini Abubakar. "China Town Magazine and Indonesian-Chinese Identity." *Journal of Politics and Law*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2017, p. 97., doi:10.5539/jpl.v10n2p97. pg. 98

³³ Effendi & Abubakar, *China Town Magazine and Indonesian-Chinese Identity*, pg. 100

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 101

³⁵ Arifin, *Chinese Indonesians: How Many, Who and Where?*, pg. 315

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 316

³⁷ Arifin, *Chinese Indonesians: How Many, Who and Where?*, pg. 316

May of 1998, before the start of the post-reformation era, there were widespread anti-Chinese riots all through Indonesia, causing many ethnic-Chinese to hide their true ethnic identity. When the first survey was taken only two years after the riots, many Chinese falsely identified as Indonesian as a means of avoiding discrimination.³⁸ In the 2005 census, more were willing to identify as Chinese, but many still chose not to out of fear of being further discriminated against. However, in the 2010 survey it is noted that twelve years after the race riots, many ethnic-Chinese choose not to identify as so simply because they no longer feel the need to. Part of the change can be attributed to decreased levels of discrimination, but by 2010, many ethnic-Chinese simply felt they were Indonesian.³⁹ The population of ethnic-Chinese had become so involved in Indonesian culture that many no longer wanted to identify as Chinese. Their reputations had improved enough, and they had become involved in the local economies and social atmospheres to the point that they preferred to align their ethnic identities with their regional identity within Indonesia, as opposed to a country in which they have never lived.

The presence of the ethnic-Chinese in Malaysia and Indonesia remains contentious, yet their generally positive influence and improved relations with the indigenous peoples cannot be overlooked. In the last 20 years or so, the ethnic-Chinese have seen many of their social restrictions loosened, if not lifted completely, and their assimilation efforts into local societies have improved greatly. Today, there are more and more ethnic-Chinese identifying with the town or region they live in and choosing not to identify as Chinese. They now have at least a small voice in government, as well as other branches of society. Their economic contributions are no longer resented to the same extent as in the past. Due to the fact that they are still an ethnic-minority, there will still be those who discriminate against them and blame them for some of the social issues still

present in Malaysia and Indonesia, but the positive changes their presence and efforts have generated cannot be ignored.

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³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

Shifting Indigenous Subsistence Practices in Taiwan and Hokkaido under Japanese Colonization

LILLIAN POUSH

INTRODUCTION

Over the past half of a century, land and access to resources have become the key point for asserting indigenous rights and identity. Cultural and historic claims to native land tend to be the bedrock of indigeneity, whether one speaks of the longest inhabited dwelling in North America, a Hopi Pueblo, or the native Ayatal hunting grounds of Taiwan. Taiwan has suffered numerous waves of colonization, of which five decades were Japanese. Those were a harsh five decades, especially for indigenous Taiwanese groups. Japanese colonization up until World War Two showed an immense growth in confidence and power. National identity became strongly cohesive after the Meiji restoration, when Japan rocketed away from its isolationist policies. Japanese expansionism asserted a new national identity and placed the empire on par with Western empires. Robert Tierney terms this a “mimetic” relationship, where Western empires had already established the cultural and political prerequisites for power.⁹⁹

The popular myth of Japanese homogeneity holds that Japan, as an island nation, was separated from the rest of the world and therefore developed a unique culture, before modernization happened in a historical heartbeat. Japanese colonial presence in Asia was undertaken from a standpoint of cultural superiority, framing Taiwanese aborigines foremost from a modernization perspective. The Japanese viewed “savages” of Taiwan and Southeast Asia as the antithesis of civilization. However,

the textbook narrative where Japan only develops as a colonial power during the Meiji Restoration is an historical oversimplification. Hokkaido, part of the Ainu people’s heritage lands, has often been overlooked by colonial theory, when really it was an important political space for the creation of Japanese identity. Considering Hokkaido as a colonial space opens important questions for the rationale behind and execution of Japanese colonialism, regardless of their status as an empire. As one might expect, a good place to start is with land.

ANALYSIS

As has been increasingly articulated, Japanese history is no stranger to conquest. Various tribal civilizations bordered the Yamato Kingdom, as early Japanese civilization is often called. The Ryukyu Kingdom to the south (present-day Okinawa) and hunter-gatherer tribes to the north-east were present within the Yamato conscious from early history. The Emishi of North Honshu dwelled in *kegai* – land that had yet to be brought under courtly control, and were the target of subjugation campaigns from 774-811.¹⁰⁰ Their story resembles that of the Ainu, of whom some historians argue they were ancestral. Karl Friday writes, “despite having adopted rice agriculture, the Emishi continued to depend much more on hunting and fishing than did the peoples of central and western Japan.”¹⁰¹ Japanese characterizations of these northern “barbarians” pre-dated that of the Ainu, but had a similarly harsh and dramatic tone, describing them as lacking in civilization. While Emishi villages came together in times of war, their relatively isolated villages may

⁹⁹ Mason, M. (2016). *Dominant narratives of Colonial Hokkaido and Imperial Japan: Envisioning the Periphery and the Modern Nation-state*. Palgrave Macmillan Publishers, US.

¹⁰⁰ Friday, K. (1997). Pushing beyond the Pale: “The Yamato Conquest of the Emishi and Northern Japan.” *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 23(1), 1-24. doi:10.2307/133122

¹⁰¹ Friday 4

have made it difficult to defeat a common enemy – furthermore, hunting practices may have been deemed savage by the agrarian Yamato people. The Emishi have all but disappeared from Japanese history. But an even more northern people, the Ainu, have not.

Long before Japan set up a colony in Taiwan, central political policies showed an expansionist streak. The Edo Shogunate lasted from 1600 to 1868, and while Japan during this era is known for being isolationist, “a by-product of the “seclusion” of the Tokugawa era was that the political boundaries of the state did not coincide with the geographical boundaries of Japan.”¹⁰² While they may not have been interacting with international neighbors, there was abundant friction with internal populations to the south and north, as well as outcaste populations at the bottom of the Edo social order; this means that during this period the area associated with modern Japan was linguistically and culturally diverse, albeit rigidly monitored by the Tokugawa. The Ryukyu Kingdom remained for the most part out of Japanese hands, but Japanese civilization spread ever northward towards Hokkaido.

Established in the early 1500’s, the Matsumae regime was a Japanese outpost in southern Hokkaido (called *Ezo-chi* until the Meiji era) that lasted nearly three hundred years. Under the Tokugawa, the Matsumae clan functioned as a go-between with the Ainu, who regularly paid tribute in exchange for Japanese goods.¹⁰³ The Matsumae regime focused on “containment and conciliation,” enforced through “restrictions on the inhabitants of the Ainu zone, including forbidding them to speak Japanese, to wear certain items of Japanese clothing... and to practice agriculture.”¹⁰⁴ At this point, the boundary of Japan ended arguably in northern

Honshu. In sequestering the so-called barbarians that the Yamato had struggled against for so long, they were also able to reap benefits from Ainu hunters and trappers. This afforded the Matsumae a unique status in the Tokugawa framework. Prohibiting Ainu assimilation of Japanese dress and lifestyle maintained the illusion of savagery, a key part of which was their subsistence practices. Adopting agriculture in their own way could have made Ainu villages more self-sufficient, just when they were becoming reliant on Japanese rice. Instead hunting, fishing, and trading became mainstays of Ainu life, practices that would eventually be pinned as “barbaric.”

The Ainu, as hunter-gatherer’s, were culturally inferior in the eyes of the Japanese because of their lack of agrarian practices. Noting 19th century literary descriptions of Hokkaido as a wilderness devoid of people, Manson writes that “The ‘failure’ of the Ainu to have marked the natural landscape in a way that showed mastery over the land confirmed their backwardness in the eyes of the Japanese.”¹⁰⁵ While the Ainu system of *kotan* villages had its own complexity, they followed the inland river system of Hokkaido where food was readily available. Each village had associated hunting grounds with strict rules about when and who could hunt there. This meant, however, that there were no large villages or cities in Hokkaido. The concept of Ainu *moshir*, or homeland, was also grounded in the belief that everything has a spirit, and that humans have a mutually supportive relationship with the gods in nature. Gods may visit from the spirit realm in the form of an animal, and so it follows that respect for animals was a cornerstone of Ainu hunting. The Ainu may have developed more agrarian practices had history taken a different course, however their spiritual beliefs regarding

¹⁰² Howell, D. (1994). Ainu Ethnicity and the Boundaries of the Early Modern Japanese State. *Past & Present*, (142), 69-93. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/colorado.idm.oclc.org/stable/651197>

¹⁰³ Cornell, J. (1964). “Ainu Assimilation and Cultural Extinction: Acculturation Policy in Hokkaido.” *Ethnology*, 3(3), 287-304. doi:10.2307/3772885

¹⁰⁴ Cornell 75

¹⁰⁵ Mason, 71

hunting and gathering practices were fundamentally different from an agrarian civilization.

In feedback-loop style, this cycles back to the Matsumae regime. A consensus has long been reached that “the Satsumon people [ancestral to the Ainu] appear to have practiced agriculture until the thirteenth or fourteenth century.” However, their descendants eventually gave this up, due to “Japanese demand for fish and animal pelts in trade, which induced the Ainu to concentrate on hunting to the exclusion of cultivating.”¹⁰⁶ A system of trade was developed between Ainu populations in Northern Honshu and Hokkaido from as early as the eighth century. This included tributary exchanges with the emperor’s court, and with the Matsumae domain.¹⁰⁷ Japanese iron, sugar, and sake were valued highly by Ainu communities. Increasingly, under the Matsumae domain they could provide free labor. By the eighteen-hundreds most Ainu *kotan* had been emptied, their populations forcibly moved to the coast. This relocation “affected the ecology of Ainu society, as hunting, fishing and gathering were supplanted by manual labor under Japanese supervision.”¹⁰⁸ (Howell 70-71) In a slow progression, Ainu people lost autonomy over their homeland.

Developing the myth of an empty “frontier” devoid of civilization places Hokkaido in the narrative of modernization rather than colonization. While Ainu land had significant spiritual as well as subsistence uses for Ainu society, the island became increasingly political as a buffer between Japan and the northern outside world. To claim Hokkaido as legitimately Japanese, starting in the 1870’s Japanese government encouraged settlement of the Hokkaido frontier. One such program was the Todenhei farming militia, which simultaneously helped placate disgruntled former-Samurai, and drive Japanese stakes into Ainu ground. While much of the hard labor to develop Hokkaido’s initial

infrastructure was shouldered by everyday Japanese immigrants and Ainu workers, Todenhei farmers were glorified in the news as soldier-farmers who braved a wild and savage wilderness.¹⁰⁹ Much like the Wild West has its place in the American imagination, Hokkaido added to an image of vitality, of the hardy Japanese spirit. The narrative of northern settlement is overwhelmingly one of progress. In stories of the frontier, confrontations with the Ainu reduce them to no more than part of the natural landscape, much like animals. In this telling, Japanese “civilized” the Ainu for their own good, and brought farming to a land which had, until then, been unplumbed for resources.

By the turn of the 19th century, Meiji government policy was increasingly focused on agrarianizing the Ainu. One among the waves of such policies was The Aboriginal Protection Act of 1888, the key feature of which “was to guarantee the claim of each Ainu family to a minimum of five hectares of subsistence land... an allotment in that the government retained legal title and alienation to non-Ainu was forbidden.”¹¹⁰ In practice this worked out less than well because it was difficult for Ainu people, who were more used to seasonal farming and gathering, to adapt to year-round agriculture as a means to get by. While their plots lay untended after the growing season, it was easier to find manual labor or migratory work elsewhere. Attempts to force Ainu to change their livelihood meant shifting their cultural identity, after centuries of preventing them from assimilating. As in Native America, farming government-allocated plots had low success rates in part because the notion of individual ownership over land went against Ainu beliefs. This imposed farming system put people in an in-between state that led to disenfranchisement, all under the guise of protecting them.

Given their history of geographic displacement under previous colonial forces, aboriginal groups in Taiwan were also at an

¹⁰⁶ Howell, 77

¹⁰⁷ Cornell 288

¹⁰⁸ Howell, 70-71

¹⁰⁹ Mason, 37

¹¹⁰ Cornell, 297

agricultural disadvantage. The longest colonial periods in Taiwanese history were under Chinese dynasties, though notably these were less oppressive than the Japanese. Qing rulers in Taiwan took an “out of sight, out of mind” approach to “raw” indigenes. “Cooked” and “raw” was a distinction between native peoples who had assimilated to Han Chinese culture and those who had not.¹¹¹ Chinese settlers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries “either subjugated the indigenes... or forced them to retreat farther into high mountains unsuitable for agricultural use – at least from the Han Chinese point of view.”¹¹²

This is not to say that mountain-dwelling indigenous people didn’t practice farming. There are wild grains of millet and “hill rice” that can be grown in high, steep climates. However, lack of access to richer soil on the coastal plains would mean that villages relied on hunting-gathering for adequate sustenance. Indigenous groups in Taiwan have different social structures than the Ainu of Hokkaido, but to broadly generalize larger villages were more common in indigenous Taiwan than in Hokkaido, and groups of villages more socially cohesive. Citing various social and ethnic differences, the Japanese described native hunting and foraging practices as backwards and uncivilized. This placed “raw” Taiwanese indigenes lower than both assimilated indigenes and Han Chinese peoples.

Groups such as the Ayatal of Taiwan have spiritual beliefs that structure traditional lifestyles and hunting practices. The Ayatal “norms of *gaga* and the spiritual beliefs of *utux* constitute of a group of concepts in the Atayal people’s cosmological classification system.¹¹³” *Utux* refers to an animistic belief that all life, and even all objects, possess a spirit; in order to live harmoniously, Ayatal people must not overuse their surrounding

resources and respect the natural cycle of seasons. Fang et. al write that “in addition to burning cultivation and crop rotation, hunting is a crucial aspect of life. Hunting provides protein sources for tribes people and encompasses numerous *gaga* and *utux* concepts.”¹¹⁴

This idea seems akin to how the Ainu depict their environment as well; ironically, *utux* also does not sound far off from the Shinto *kami*, either, spirits which dwell in every-day objects. *Gaga*, meanwhile, refers to a set of societal norms and manners the Ayatal live by, and all of this is manifested in hunting and farming practices. Seen from this angle, Ayatal sustenance practices were not only spiritual but sustainable. Careful maintenance of crop rotation and hunting seasons ensured that land can be used for centuries – and for a tribe living on an increasingly crowded island, land was in short supply.

This view differs significantly from a view of resources as potential capital for use in a large economy. To some extent, that can only be expected between small-scale societies and large nations – but how Japan intended to use Taiwanese land affected how they saw indigenous people. Tierney quotes Mochiji Rokusaburo, appointed head the Provisional Section for the Investigation of Affairs in Aboriginal Lands under the Taiwan governor-general, in his 1902 paper *An Opinion on the Aboriginal Problem*.

Let me state clearly that when I refer to the problem of aboriginal lands: from the point of view of the empire, there is only aboriginal land but not an aboriginal people. The problem of aboriginal land must be dealt with from an economic

¹¹¹ Huang, Shu-Min & Liu, Shao-Hua (2016) “Discrimination and incorporation of Taiwanese indigenous Austronesian peoples,” *Asian Ethnicity*, 17:2, 294-312, DOI: [10.1080/14631369.2015.1112726](https://doi.org/10.1080/14631369.2015.1112726)

¹¹² Huang and Liu, 296

¹¹³ Fang, W., Hu, H., & Lee, C. (2016). “Atayal's identification of sustainability: Traditional ecological knowledge and indigenous science of a hunting culture.” *Sustainability Science*, 11(1), 33-43.

¹¹⁴ Fang et. al, 35

perspective and its management is an indispensable part of fiscal policy.¹¹⁵

The first part of interest here is the assertion that there is “not an aboriginal people,” while there is aboriginal land. This is a direct refutation of the close ties between tribes in Taiwan and their homeland(s). It is also reminiscent of the characterization of Hokkaido as an empty frontier – open lands, but no people. Reducing indigenes to no more than part of the landscape dehumanizes them in the most convenient of ways – in this definition they are an unfortunate part of the landscape, but do not exist otherwise. This quotation upholds Tierney’s point that the Japanese “subjugated [Taiwan’s] aboriginal lands primarily in order to exploit their resources but had little use for the indigenous population.”¹¹⁶

While many native tribes of Taiwan may have taken a sustainable approach to farming the land, what the Japanese colonial government needed was profit, on a large scale. Mochiji referred to indigenous land as “an indispensable part of fiscal policy.” Taking on Taiwan in 1895 drained Japan’s economy, already in a recession after the Sino-Japanese war.¹¹⁷ Military suppression, by 1896, “accounted for more than half of the total expenditure in this turbulent island.”¹¹⁸ As the first major venture of colonialism around the turn of the twentieth century, there was pressure in Tokyo to prove that Japanese colonies could support themselves and yield profit. Swathes of indigenous lands appeared from an industrial agrarian perspective to be untouched and underdeveloped. While millet was traditionally the most important grain for native tribes, Taiwan has the perfect environment for growing rice. Sugar plantations could also yield impressive

amounts of sugarcane. From this stemmed a paternalistic idea that the Japanese could manage land usage better than indigenous groups.

At its roots, the Japanese occupation aimed to divorce indigenous people from their close relationship with the land. A period of much bloodshed, the “Five Year Plan to Conquer the Northern Tribes” lasted from 1909-1914.¹¹⁹ It ended with surrender to the Japanese, but not until tens of thousands of indigenous lives had been lost. To the tribes, “giving up their weapons meant submission to labor drafts... the abandonment of their previous lifestyle of hunting and its replacement by agriculture and the raising of livestock.”¹²⁰ Farming of millet was replaced by rice. Instead of a sustainable subsistence model, families had to assimilate to a capitalist agrarian culture. Ainu resistance in Hokkaido was similarly squashed and resulted in assimilation to a Japanese agricultural model. As is too often the mindset, a capitalist lifestyle was synonymous with modernity and progress. By changing their fundamental way of life, the Japanese weakened indigenous people who drew their strength and social coherence from their homeland.

Relocation under Japanese rule further made traditional subsistence practices difficult to continue. As late as 1932, “the Japanese Government in Taiwan reassigned hunting territories of Kanakanavu and Saaroa to their neighbouring Bunun people,” which “initiated another Bunun mass immigration.”¹²¹ Shifting territories could result in linguistic and cultural mixing, or a tribe being split up. Presently, there exist a total of fourteen officially recognized indigenous groups in Taiwan, of which there are culturally distinct sub-groups. As has happened in many

¹¹⁵ Tierney, R. T. (2010). *Tropics of Savagery: the culture of Japanese Empire in Comparative Frame*. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>

¹¹⁶ Tierney, 20

¹¹⁷ Ka, C. (1995). *Japanese colonialism in Taiwan: Land tenure, development, and dependency, 1895-1945*. Boulder, Co.: Westview Press.

¹¹⁸ Ka, 1902

¹¹⁹ Tierney, 59

¹²⁰ Tierney, 60

¹²¹ Liu, Dorinda Tsai-Hsiu, et al. “Language Shift of Taiwans Indigenous Peoples: a Case Study of Kanakanavu and Saaroa.” *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, vol. 36, no. 7, 28 Nov. 2015, pp. 729–749.

colonial spaces, tribes may get squashed together in a shared space regardless of historical enmity. On an even more basic level, this sort of ecological displacement affected an already-shifting lifestyle. The Bunan tribes were among the last to capitulate to the Japanese, doing so a year later than the mentioned mass migration, in 1933.¹²² Geographic relocation had greatly weakened the tribe's ability to organize and resist. It was well apparent by this point that self-determination would not be possible for tribes in colonial Taiwan, at least not for a long time.

Japanese colonization of Hokkaido and Taiwan seen through the lens of modernization offered justification for appropriation of land and resources. The Japanese were not "stealing" land from the Ainu, or native people in Taiwan, they were "developing" land with economic potential. Predicated as just cause for disenfranchisement was the linear progression of converting backwards savages to modern lifestyles. Due to not living a Japanese lifestyle, indigenous people under Japanese colonial rule were denied claims to freedom, and the right to land. It deserves to be stressed that part of this comes from an empire's view of land as a "part of fiscal policy," as Mochiji said, rather than as an *environment*. An older Japanese term for colonization is 拓殖, or *takushoku*, literally means to clear land and then to multiply. That is exactly what they did.

CONCLUSION

Putting Japanese colonization of indigenous Taiwan in historical context shows that the two mirror each other as different parts of the same continuum of Japanese expansionism. But how has the existence of the Ainu in Japan been erased to such an extent? The power struggle for land and resources between the Ainu and the Japanese began centuries ago, but the world took little

notice until the modern era. In comparison, World War Two, which ended with Japan's surrender, is much more at the forefront of our collective global memory. The associated struggles, both in the Atlantic and Pacific theatres, appear more relevant to the Western mind. There is also the carefully skirted subject of outcastes in Japan, here meaning everyone who is "other." Status as Indigenous Ainu, Ryukuan, or even Zainichi Korean is kept hidden, and this contributes to the illusion that Japan is truly homogenous. As fundamentally obvious as this homogeneity might seem to your average Tokyoite, it masks a long and tumultuous history of the northern tribes of Japan. It may simply feel easier for all of us to gloss over indigenous claims to land, rather than to face the complex status of post-colonial spaces today, places that continue to degrade and disenfranchise native communities.

In this short paper, an attempt has been made to compare how Japanese intervention affected indigenous subsistence methods in Hokkaido and Taiwan. The Ainu lived mostly as hunter-gatherers up to the late eighteenth-hundreds. Hunting, gathering, and occasionally cultivation were practiced within each *kotan* village's hunting grounds. To groups in Taiwan like the northern Ayatal, hunting was an important source of protein, while grains such as millet had nutritional and ceremonial purposes.

Both the Ainu and the Ayatal lived within a wider set of principles that governed how to interact with the environment on a seasonal basis. Overall, their approach to subsistence can be termed sustainable. This lifestyle differs greatly from an economically driven agrarian society, where maximum production is sought after. Under the Japanese colonial process, hunting was discouraged as barbaric, and aborigines forced to surrender their weapons. The ensuing switch to a year-round agrarian model had devastating results, especially for the Ainu people. There is no telling to what extent this shifting ecology reconfigured native people's relationships with the land.

¹²² Tierney, 60

Given the history of Western colonization worldwide, it does seem likely that the international climate influenced Japan at the time they expanded into Taiwan, Korea, and Manchuria, to name a few places. Forming colonies seemed necessary to be viewed as equal to the most “civilized” states. Yet Japanese colonialism in Taiwan should not be simply construed as mimetic to Western colonialism.

Japanese society has been subjugating so-called barbarians since the eighth century, long before the nation of “Japan” even existed. Much of the Japanese identity emerged through co-articulation with the peripheral other, who was pushed further and further back until they had nowhere to go. Outright colonization of Hokkaido was undertaken out of a perceived political necessity, and the same can be said for Taiwan. Subjugation of the Ainu people occurred over centuries but accelerated when Japan began to modernize. Treatment of native peoples in Taiwan, of the Amis, Atayal, Bunun, Kavalan, Paiwan, Puyuma, Rukai, Saisiyat, Sakizaya, Sediq, Thao, Truku, Tsou, and the Yami¹²³ also took place from a standpoint of cultural superiority. The shift to agriculture that dissolved social cohesion for indigenous people in Taiwan and Hokkaido was rooted in the notion that they were misusing resources. Rather than living with the land, they needed to make a living off it. This story is etched into the landscape, into farms and villages and the hands of many a factory worker; these are the echoes of indigenous suffering for the homeland, echoes from all over the world.

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Food Authenticity as an Experiential Tourist Attraction

JESSICA YAN

INTRODUCTION

Food is central to our lives, acting as center points for celebrations, traditions, and communities. The importance of food extends beyond that of physiological sustenance. It is a reflection of a culture, region, and a way of living. It is no surprise then that food, and especially authentic food, is a significant driver for tourists visiting new destinations. This paper seeks to understand the role that “authentic” foods play as a driver of tourism from Western countries, and examines both the demand and supply side of the authentic food experience through synthesis of existing literature on food authenticity and tourism, and firsthand accounts in Shanghai, Beijing, Xi’an and Hangzhou, China. Through an understanding of authenticity as an existential authenticity, I ultimately argue that authenticity is largely experiential for tourists, and that food tourists are motivated by experiences that are perceived to be unique and “authentic”. From the supply side, food tourists’ motivations for authenticity, behaviors and demographics can be examined, while from the demand side, this desire for authenticity was capitalized upon by food vendors and restaurants in many ways. This included the utilization of targeted marketing, unique names and storytelling, highly visible preparation techniques, engagement of consumers with their food, and usage of unfamiliar ingredients. Food is one insight into the culture, natural landscape, and lifestyle of China’s large cities, and thus, our interactions with food shape our perceptions of the communities that produce it.

What is Authenticity?

Before delving into more detailed discussion of food authenticity, detailed research into current literature regarding authenticity as a whole was

conducted. With any quick glance, it is clearly apparent that there seems to be as many definitions of authenticity as there are scholars who examine this concept. However, much of the older literature on authenticity can be separated into two disparate views, objectivism and constructivism.

Realists and Objectivists argue that there is a “discernable objective basis for the authenticity of artifacts, events, cuisine, practices, dress and culture, generally underpinned by a fixed and knowable reality.”¹ This view has become increasingly criticized by contemporary scholars, as this is based on a static conception of both culture and place.² Arguably, there are no “pure” cultures, or one particular point in time at which authenticity can be objectively based upon due to the changing nature of all societies. As witnessed in Shanghai, culture and place can change rapidly, with globalization, industrialization and migration influencing the culture of a destination. Furthermore, Objectivists seek to “prove” authenticity of something, which is for one, incredibly difficult and subjective, and additionally based on an unchanging view of a culture or place.

Constructivists argue the opposite, that authenticity is a social construct that is negotiated between an object and a person. According to Rebecca Sims, an anthropologist, Constructivism does not take into account the value judgements of society, which can greatly determine one’s experience of authenticity.³ Additionally, both objectivists and constructivist accounts are limited by the fact that they related to the nature of the object in consideration, and not the person who is experiencing that particular object.⁴

In considering these two views of authenticity, we approach a newer understanding of authenticity, an existential understanding of authenticity. Existential Authenticity focuses on the experience of authenticity, and the

¹ Beer, 158

² Sims, 324

³ Ibid., 323

⁴ Ibid., 324

construction of a more authentic self-identity through new and unique experiences. Because tourists may often be unfamiliar with China, as well as other destinations of their travels, they may not consider the specific historical or cultural backgrounds of each particular food that they consume. Rather, they experience a personalized phenomenon of authenticity through an interaction between themselves, societal value judgements, and the object itself while consuming it. As Sims argues, "Existential Authenticity.... pays attention to the response that food (and other cultural accompaniments) can generate in the tourist themselves."⁵ Thus, this paper utilizes Existential Authenticity as its framework for understanding food authenticity, and focuses on how foods are not just consumed, but also experienced through a variety of means.

Why Should We Care About Authenticity?

If food authenticity can be considered a personalized experience, with no objective reality behind it, then why is its consideration important? On the supply side, competition exists between varying tourist destinations, and places must capture the attention of international tourists. According to Sims, "successful tourist destinations must, therefore, exhibit ... "tourism reflexivity" whereby every destination must develop a range of goods and services that will distinguish it from other destinations and attract a steady stream of visitors."⁶ Promoting and producing food that is perceived to be authentic is one means of doing so, as food can be seen as a reflection of a particular region. Other studies also suggest that food is a significant consideration in tourists' selection of destinations, and can increase the competitiveness of destinations. In one particular study of 565 Western tourists heading to Chongqing, China, the quality and authenticity of food was listed as a top priority, only second to site seeing, and over 60% of respondents stated that food, especially traditional foods, are "important,

or very important" in affecting their motivation to visit China.⁷ It can even be argued that food tourism is an extension of the "experience economy," whereby the buying and selling of unique experiences are a fundamental part of the tourist economy.⁸ Ultimately, food generates one third to one fourth of tourist expenditures⁹ which can generate multiplier effects for local economies.

On the supply side, examination of food authenticity can help us understand Western tourists' motivations and behaviors towards food when visiting new places. Additionally, an understanding of tourists' experiences of food authenticity can further our understanding of the interactions that occur between varying communities in an age of increasing globalization. While there is no objective basis for which traditional cuisine can be based, perceptions and experiences of food still motivate tourist behaviors and generate funds for local economies.

Desires for Authenticity: Analyzing the Demand Side of Food Tourism

While food as a whole remains relatively important for the majority of tourists due to its physiological necessity, there are patterns that discern what types of tourists are interested in authentic food, and their motivations, behaviors, and prior experiences. From the demand side, we can explore why tourists desire authentic food experiences and translate those motivations into tangible behaviors.

As is common with many tourists, food tourists desire authenticity as a higher order component of "self-actualization," whereby the experience and consumption of food can result in a more authentic feeling of self.¹⁰ As stated by Sims, many tourists from highly developed societies may feel the need to find authenticity because they may feel alienated from nature. In particular, everyday modern life may feel inauthentic compared to tourists' adventures in faraway destinations.¹¹ Food, in particular, tends

⁵ Sims, 325.

⁶ Ibid., 322

⁷ Chen and Huang, 46

⁸ Getz, 691

⁹ Ibid., 690

¹⁰ Sims, 325

¹¹ Ibid.

to be a common object to which tourists ascribe authenticity, because food is available year-round, it serves as a reflection of the local culture and physical landscape, and is easily purchased and consumed.¹² Unlike the purchase of physical goods or souvenirs, consuming food is a sensory experience that actually engages consumers with their physical senses, leaving a more ingrained memory of their destinations.¹³ As Chen and Huang state, "While commodities are fungible, goods tangible and services intangible, experiences are memorable."¹⁴

However, not all tourists are as interested in food experiences and authenticity as others. According to Huang, there are two types of food experiences, peripheral and peak experiences.¹⁵ Those that eat solely for physiological needs may be experiencing a peripheral food experience, while those that seek food as a local cultural experience are experiencing food as a memorable peak experience. Generally speaking, those who seek food as a peak experience are also those who seek authenticity within their food. In particular, I'd like to focus on the experiences of those that seek food as a cultural and local experience, because these are the consumers who are most concerned about the authenticity of their food.

These particular food tourists are motivated by unique experiences that specifically included their destination's environmental and cultural elements, and tend to be younger, more affluent, educated, and are typically female.¹⁶ Huang states that for these tourists, "Trying local foods can be a channel to fulfill the quest for an authentic experience that manifests the destination culture."¹⁷ Specifically, these food tourists were motivated by active food experiences, including cooking classes, dining out, visiting a farmers' market, or gourmet foods and festivals. While "foodies" may be concerned with other aspects, including the quality, cost, and taste of the food, they are most motivated by finding a unique and locally authentic experience.

Supply Side: How do Chinese Vendors and Restaurants

¹² Chen and Huang, 43

¹³ Ibid., 50

¹⁴ Getz, 691

Capitalize on Desires for Authenticity?

Examining both definitions of authenticity, its importance, and the motivations and behaviors of food tourists, food is clearly an important driver of the tourism experience. It motivates tourists to visit and engage with a destination, and generate revenue streams for local business owners. As was mentioned before, food tourism is a crucial component of tourism expenditures, and local economies and individual vendors can capitalize upon tourists' desires for authenticity. On the supply side, we can examine how vendors can use the construct of authenticity to market, display, and sell their products. Through a first-hand account of observations in Beijing, Xi'an, Hangzhou, and Shanghai, we can examine the means of which authenticity is marketed, produced, plated, and commercialized by local vendors. Some common themes that emerge in these observations are the marketing of foods as authentic, conflicts between appeal and authenticity, exotic foods and ingredients, engaging consumers in the production of the food, locality of ingredients and dishes, and the names and stories of food products.

Conflicts Between Appeal and Authenticity

Restaurants and food vendors are well aware of the desire and romanticizing of the "authentic," and have attempted to capitalize fully on this phenomenon. However, many face the dilemma of balancing appeal and familiarity with authenticity when dealing with Western tourists. Despite many tourists' desires to try authentic food, their notions of what "authenticity" really is, and unfamiliarity with a new culture or cuisine may place many food vendors in a bind. As stated by Maria Godoy, "A place is more likely to be "authentic" if it corresponds with our

¹⁵ Huang, 118

¹⁶ Getz, 693

¹⁷ Huang, 118

preconceived notions of what it should be.”¹⁸ Tourists may already arrive to new destinations with an idea of what authentic food may be like - strange, cheap, or delicious, which constrains how restaurants and food vendors can present themselves. In addition, there is also the concept of familiarity, whereby “different and novel elements may risk the security and comfort qualities of the tourist experience.”¹⁹ Novel experiences may be associated with discomfort or negativity, threatening a tourist’s experience of authenticity. Thus, many tourism hotspots providing food may become entangled by attempting to deliver an experience that feels “authentic,” caters and even stages preconceived notions of what authentic food should be like, and still retains a sense of comfort and familiarity for the tourist.

For example, the restaurant at the Terracotta Warriors site catered almost exclusively to Western tourist groups, and was an excellent case study for this purpose, exhibiting all three of these conflicting challenges. For example, the restaurant utilized performance techniques such as making noodles in front of their patrons to increase patrons’ perceptions of authenticity, and decorated the restaurant ostentatiously with red lanterns. However, the restaurant also offered Sprite and cold water, as well as forks, none of which were considered traditional locally. Anecdotally, many within our group disliked the restaurant because it appeared “unauthentic,” underscoring the difficulty of creating and presenting memorable, authentic, and enjoyable experiences to Western tourists.

Figure 23



Shown above: The Terracotta Warriors Restaurant catered mainly towards Western tourists.

Figure 24



Shown above: Forks and Sprite at the Terracotta Warriors Restaurant.

Restaurant Marketing and Imaging

Additionally, marketing is another tool that may be utilized to entice consumers to purchase their products, and create an authentic-feeling experience. The words “traditional,” “local,” and “authentic” are ubiquitous in Chinese food marketing, appearing everywhere from local tea houses, to restaurants, and even strip malls. As Dutton mentions in *Beijing Time*, “the word *zhengzong*, which means authentic or genuine, is possibly the most ubiquitous and powerful gastronomic signifier to be found in the city.”²⁰ The marketing seems less focused on the quality of the food, the freshness of their ingredients or the restaurant’s ambiance, but rather the locality

¹⁸ Godoy, 2

¹⁹ Kim and Jang, 2248

²⁰ Dutton, 192

or authenticity of the food. Some signs that were in English seemed especially designed to attract Western tourists, who have little conception of what an authentic dish may present itself like. For example, in this mall featured by the Temple of Heaven, this food court was especially catered to tourists, with English signs indicating its authenticity around the entire building.

Figure 25



Shown above: "Traditional" SzeChwan Cuisine in Beijing shopping mall.

The terms "local," and "traditional," were used analogously to the term "authentic," in many cases. While this food court was filled with what clearly seemed to be Western Tourists and very few locals, restaurants still advertised their products as "authentic."

Whether this aggressive marketing technique was effective was debatable among some Western tourists especially within our group. With regard to those who were very intent on seeking "authenticity," blatant messaging that told them that something is "authentic" was off-putting, and eliminated the mystique of hunting down "authentic" food. Messaging, especially in English, did not entice members of our group to seek out that food, rather, reinforced their desires to find the "real" authentic food. As mentioned before, food tourists who seek authenticity also seek food experiences. As indicated by the anecdotal experiences of Western tourists in our group, solely utilizing unauthenticated claims of "authenticity" does not provide the context, experiential components, or storytelling that tourists need in order to determine that a food is truly authentic from their perspective. However,

there was still an abundance of tourists eating at this particular food court, indicating that there are indeed many tourists who view food as a peripheral experience, or potentially liked the familiarity of that restaurant.

Active Engagement of Tourists with their Food

Not all exercises in commercializing authenticity, however, are futile. One strategy that was utilized extensively to create existential authenticity was the engagement of the tourist in the preparation of the food, including watching, and even participating in their own food experiences. While many Westerners may be used to simply ordering their food and having it delivered to their table, many Chinese foods center around engaging with the food at every stage. As Hyewon Youn and Jong-Hyeong Kim argue, the preparation state of food is equally as important to the actual consumption of the food, as it creates a bond between the self and the object.²¹ Engaging with the food can create experiences that fulfill tourist's desires for authenticity, and leave lasting memories that utilize every sense.

For example, Beijing Roast Duck can be considered an excellent case study in engaging with local Chinese food. According to Huang, Beijing Roast Duck represents the gastronomic identity of Beijing, and is thus an essential part of any food tourist's visit to Beijing.²² As the duck was brought to the table, it was carved ostentatiously in front of the group, heightening curiosity and tension in watching and waiting for the food to be prepared. With great awe, group members created their own "duck pancakes," and placed the meat into a thin pancake, with spring onion, cucumber, and sweet bean or hoisin sauce. Furthermore, they consumed the food with their own hands, utilizing their senses: taste, smell, touch, and sight to create a cohesive experience. These observations match that of Huang's case study on Beijing Roast Duck, as he argues that tourists "were highly cognizant of Beijing Roast Duck as local specialty food, and the meal was

²¹ Youn and Kim, 12

²² Huang, 119

viewed as a cultural experience rather than merely to partake something delicious.”²³ As compared to locals, tourists were concerned with the duck as a cultural and ritualistic experience, as opposed to just a tasty meal. Similarly, the experience at Hot Pot, where participants cooked their own food in a boiling infusion of spices, then drizzled sesame sauce on it, also created memorable experiences within the group. These observations align with the previous observation that food tourists enjoy and seek out active, engaging experiences. By fully engaging tourists in the preparation and consumption of the food, this further fulfills their desires for an authentic experience.

Figure 26



Shown above: Beijing chef carving a Beijing roast duck

The engagement of tourists in their own food experiences can occur in less formal settings as well, including street food. Wangfujing street, otherwise known as “Snack Street,” as well as the Muslim Quarter, proved to be an excellent example of food authenticity as an experiential attraction. Just the act of visiting each food street is an experience within itself, with an onslaught of olfactory, visual and auditory stimuli. At the Muslim Quarter, slaughtered lambs were carved in front of an audience, with the raw meat on a kebab stick ready for onlookers to purchase and cook in front of them. Similarly, at Wangfujing street, adventurous foodies can watch live scorpions scuttle within a glass cage before consuming their own grilled scorpion on a stick. These experiences engage all of the senses, and thus remains more

memorable in the minds of tourists. Ultimately, watching and playing an active role in the preparation of food is absolutely experiential, and can satisfy tourists desires to authentic and unique food experiences.

Figure 27



Shown above: Assorted snacks at Wangfujing street.

The Consumption of Exotic Foods as a Case Study in Authenticity

Beyond engaging with the preparation and consumption of food, the utilization of exotic ingredients can pique a tourist’s perception of authenticity. While discomfort may be associated with novelty and unfamiliarity, there is also a significant amount of evidence that suggests that unfamiliarity with ingredients can increase a food’s perceived authenticity.²⁴ For example, Wangfujing street serves as an excellent example of the commercialization of exotic foods. The street is lined with novelty, with scorpions, seahorses, and beetles grilled on sticks for consumers to sample. Interestingly, while locals seemingly avoid these exotic items in favor for more typical items like kebabs and grilled squid, tourists engaged with these foods fully, shuddering in fear, taking photos, and even consuming these items. Beyond the unfamiliarity and exotic nature of the foods increasing a consumer’s perception of authenticity, the experience in consuming the item itself is novel and memorable. The consumption of these items

²³ Huang, 127

²⁴ Youn and Kim, 11

caused shock or disgust throughout the group, creating dialogues about that particular food experience, regardless if it was tasty or not. Furthermore, these interactions with strange foods were often recorded to send back home by members of our group, further memorializing the experience. These exotic foods simply create memorable experiences, that also translate into stories that shock, intrigue, and disgust those back home. Ultimately, this experience of unfamiliarity and exoticism heighten a tourist's perception of the food being "authentic," while also providing fodder for stories that will be told about that particular place in the future.

The Importance of Local Ingredients and Dishes

Beyond the "exotic" nature of an ingredient, the origin and locality of an ingredient or food can also affect a tourist's experiences of authenticity. As mentioned before, the term "local," is frequently associated with "authentic" and "traditional," and thus carries meaning about whether a food is truly authentic or not. According to Sims, food and ingredients are not only associated with a region, but can be seen as an expression of the brand or character of that region's geography, natural resources, and culture.²⁵ For example, the Longjing Prawns dish, which we consumed in Hangzhou, was made utilizing local resources, including river prawns caught nearby and wok fried with specialty Hangzhou Dragon Well Tea. As another example, Sichuan food gains its characteristic numbing and spicy flavor from the Sichuan peppercorn, which grows plentifully in Sichuan, as well as the temperate belt of China. A tourist's perception of food authenticity may increase if the food is "anchored in local heritage, produced by traditional technologies and handicraft, ... linked to certain places, and perceived as genuine for the places."²⁶ The simple act of being in a specific region, and sampling food from that region, enhances the perception of food authenticity. For example, members of our group took special note of dishes that were implied to be local, and

additionally took great care in distinguishing the different flavors of varying regions. Because of the great size and diversity of China, the act of utilizing and advertising local ingredients increases a food's perception of authenticity and distinguishes itself from other regions. Even if food does not serve as a peak experience for tourists, consuming local food in a specific destination enhances the experience of the entire region, highlighting the rarities and specialties of each locality.

Figure 28



Shown above: Hangzhou shrimp and Dragon Well Tea.

Names and Stories about Food

Aside from the ingredients, preparation, and marketing of the food, other factors like the names, stories, and language surrounding a food can uniquely augment a food's experience. Before a tourist even consumes a dish, the name of the food, and its story, can already imbue certain feelings about its character and authenticity. According to Youn and Kim, Chinese names "are generally mystical, dreamy, fictive, ingenious, original, and poetic."²⁷ For example, rather than presenting Thousand-Year-Old Egg to us as simply "fermented egg," the restaurant utilized its full name to pique interest and curiosity about that food.

²⁵ Sims, 323

²⁶ Huang, 118

²⁷ Youn and Kim, 13

Figure 29

Shown above: Hangzhou Beggar's Chicken.

One excellent case study is the example of Beggar's Chicken in Hangzhou. Rather than present the chicken as "Chicken Baked in Clay," the dish is presented with its original name from folklore. Supposedly, there is a legend that takes place in the Qing Dynasty, where a group of beggars stole a chicken from a farm, and hid the chicken in the mud by a river. Later that night, the beggars returned to the chicken, lit twigs on fire and cooked the chicken within the hardened clay. When cracked open, the chicken was aromatic and tender, and the myth spread about the deliciousness of the chicken. Later, the emperor added the chicken to the imperial menu, and the beggars cooked and sold "Beggar's Chicken," eventually lifting themselves out of poverty.²⁸ This story, when presented to those in Youn and Kim's study, drastically increased the participants' perception of its authenticity.²⁹ Anecdotally, this story also inspired the curiosity of those who consumed Beggar's Chicken in Hangzhou, who quickly braved their fears of eating a whole chicken in order to consume it in its entirety. These stories ultimately create an emotional connection between the tourist and the food, further enhancing the personal experience for that individual.

Conclusion

Ultimately, the pursuit of food authenticity drives the motivations and behaviors of many

Western food tourists, shaping their experiences. What tourists really seek in their culinary escapades is a form of existential authenticity, a construction of self through the active experiences of novelty and perceived authenticity. These experiences can be found everywhere in Chinese gastronomy, as restaurants have wasted no time in capitalizing upon these desires. Though food vendors and restaurants must balance both familiarity and the exotic in their presentations of authenticity, they can construct unique experiences through the utilization of exotic foods and ingredients by: engaging consumers in the production of food, emphasizing the locality of ingredients and dishes, and telling stories about foods and food names. For the Western tourist, authenticity is a personal experience, guided by their own preconceived notions, the values and norms of their destination society, and the constructions of food vendors who seek to create value and offer unique experiences.

These considerations in food authenticity remain incredibly pertinent due not only to their economic implications, but because of what they tell us about Western tourists' motivations and behaviors when visiting new places. Ultimately, an understanding of tourists' experiences of food authenticity can further our understanding of the interactions that occur between culturally different communities in an age of increasing globalization. Food is an insight into the culture, natural landscape, and lifestyle of communities around the world, and thus, our interactions with food shape our perceptions of what is real and "authentic," and the communities that produce that food.

²⁸ Youn and Kim, 13

²⁹ Ibid., 14

Figure 30

Shown above: The aftermath of our first dinner in Beijing.

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